



Discover Hillcrest

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Hillcrest: It's more than a name--it's a *destination!*

Pressed against the sheer face of the cliff, the rock climber looked upward for the next place to grip. Seeing one, he clamped his fingers upon it and lifted himself a few feet higher. Methodically, he repeated the exercise--finding handholds, finding footholds, bracing against the winds that would unbalance him, locking safety anchors in to minute cracks in the wall. Finally, he reached the top and sat on the summit with a quiet contentment from his successful climb.

At Hillcrest, we can identify with a rock climber's passion, because we're climbers, too. In this one-hour class we're going to look at four things that will help you make the most of Hillcrest Church membership:

- **The PLAN of Our Salvation:** We'll look at the message God's plan for our salvation and we'll look at the two symbols of our salvation—baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- **The PURPOSE of Our Lives:** We'll discover the fourfold purpose of your life and how Hillcrest is dedicated to helping you fulfill that purpose.
- **The PARTNERSHIP of Our Church:** We'll look at the strategy we use to reach people for Christ and develop them as disciples.
- **The PATTERN of Our Leadership:** We'll look at how Hillcrest is organized for decision-making and ministry.

Your Classmates:

* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____

* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____

The PLAN of Our Salvation

1. God's plan: God made me to _____ me!

God says, "I have loved you with an everlasting love." Jeremiah 31:3

2. Our problem: _____ keeps us from a close relationship with God.

"All have sinned and fall short of God's glorious ideal." Romans 3:23

3. God's solution: Christ died _____.

"For what I received I passed on to you as of *first importance*: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3, NIV).

4. Our response—as simple as "A-B-C"

- A _____ that God has not been first place in your life and ask Him to forgive your sins.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from every wrong." 1 John 1:9

- B _____ that Jesus died to pay for your sins and that He rose again and is alive today.

"If you confess that Jesus is your Lord, and you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9

- C _____ your life and eternity to God. Tell him you want him to forgive you and lead you.

"To all who receive Him, He gives the right to become children of God. All we need to do is trust Him to save us. All those who believe this are reborn!—not a physical rebirth but from the will of God!" John 1:12-13

"Dear Jesus, thank you for loving me, even when I've ignored you and gone my own way. I realize I need you in my life and I'm sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank you for dying on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. As much as I know how, I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept your gift of salvation. Please help me to grow now as a Christian."

Two Pictures of Our Salvation

Jesus expects us to remember his death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (called "ordinances") as reminders of his death:

The first picture is
b _____.

The second picture is the
L _____ S _____.

We take part in baptism at the start of our Christian life. We take part in the Lord's Supper all through our Christian life.

Today, people tend to have more questions about baptism than the Lord's Supper. So, let's take a look at baptism on the next page....

MEANING— WHY should you be baptized?

Through baptism we _____ our salvation, we do not _____ our salvation.

Jesus told the thief on the cross, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43, NIV).

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT), “God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.”

METHOD— HOW should you be baptized?

In a way that pictures that your old life has been b_____ and you’re living a new life now!

Romans 6:3-4 (NIV), “Don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? “We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”

The Greek word *baptizo* means “_____.”

MOMENT— WHEN should you be baptized?

A _____ you have received Jesus to be your personal Savior and Lord.

Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV), “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. ”

Acts 8:36 (NCV), “What is stopping me from being baptized?”

The PURPOSE of Our Life

Everything we do is aimed at reaching four objectives:

H _____ the Lord of Life

I _____ Your World to Life

L _____ the Fellowship for Life

L _____ the Word in Life

That's our H.I.L.L. to crest!

Let's look at this work in greater detail

Our H.I.L.L. to Crest

H_____ the Lord of Life

Invite Your World to Life

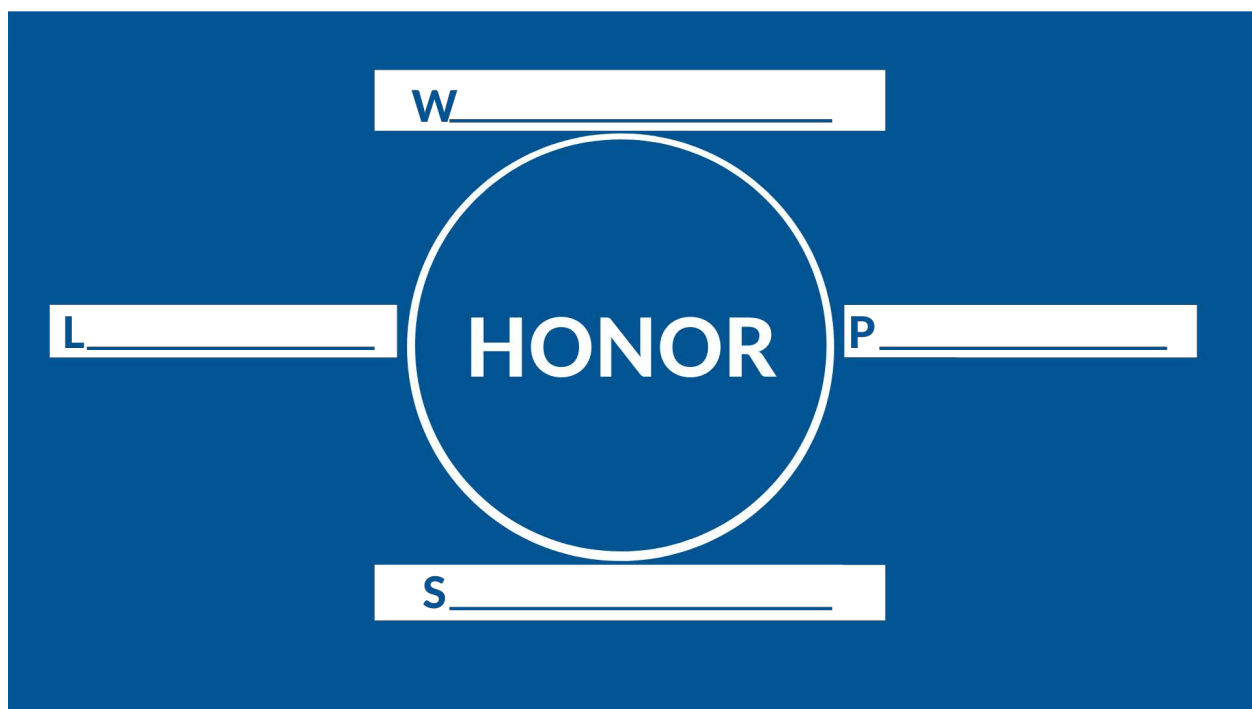
Love the Fellowship for Life

Live the Word in Life

1 Samuel 2:30 (NIV)

“Those who honor me I will honor.”

To “honor” God means to put him in “first place” in your life. Here are Four Ways you can put God first in your life.



1 Timothy 1:17 (NIV)

“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God,
honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

Our H.I.L.L. to Crest

H _____ the Lord of Life
I _____ Your World to Life
L ove the Fellowship for Life
L ive the Word in Life

1 Chronicles 13:2 (NLT)
“Let us invite them to come and join us.”

Powerful Invitations

- Invite people to your own b _____
- Get trained in the I _____ S _____
www.hillcrest.church/INVITE
- Bring someone to *The A* _____ *C* _____
www.hillcrest.church/christianity101
- Invite people to attend church a _____ with you
- Introduce your friends to the st _____
- Give your friends good books. Suggestions:
 - *Mere Christianity*, by C.S. Lewis
 - *The Reason for God*, by Tim Keller
 - *The Case for Christ*, by Lee Strobel
 - *The Anchor Course: Exploring Christianity Together*, by Tom Goodman

Our H.I.L.L. to Crest

H _____ the Lord of Life

I _____ Your World to Life

L _____ the Fellowship for Life

L ive the Word in Life

“We love each other as a result of his loving us first” (1 John 4:19, NLT).

Our church is a f_____

Acts 2:42, “They devoted themselves...to the *fellowship*.”

Our church is a p_____

Philippians 1:4-5, “In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your *partnership* in the gospel.”

Our H.I.L.L. to Crest

H _____ the Lord of Life

I _____ Your World to Life

L _____ the Fellowship for Life

L _____ the Word in Life

Colossians 2:6 (NLT), “And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to live in obedience to him.”

Ephesians 4:1 (NCV), “God chose you to be his people, so I urge you now to live the life to which God called you.”

1. We believe God _____ us in how to live for Him.

“Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God’s way. Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us” (2 Timothy 3:16-17, The Message).

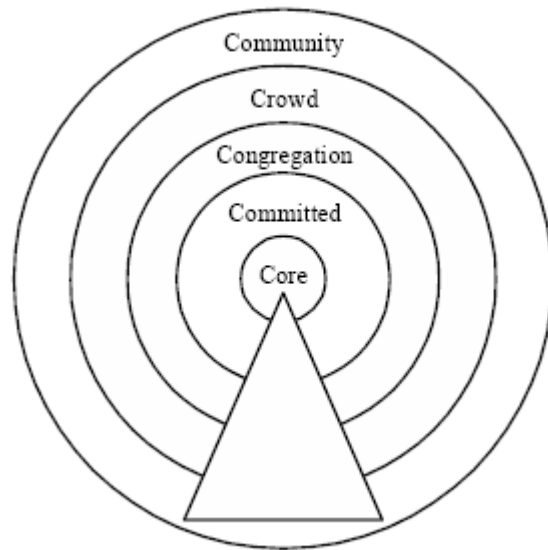
2. We believe God _____ us to live for Him.

Ephesians 5:18 (NLT), “Let the Holy Spirit fill and control you.”

Galatians 5:25 (NIV), “Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”

We believe the only way possible to live the Christian life is by God's power within us. So we seek a daily dependence on God's Spirit to enable us to do what is right.

The PARTNERSHIP of Our Church



As Hillcrest members, we partner together for this work:
to identify each person's level of commitment to Christ and his cause
and
to help them reach the next level

Think of these different levels as concentric circles, looking at the circles from the outermost inward:

The Community: all the _____ people known by those who attend Hillcrest.

The Crowd: our _____ at Bible study and worship.

The Congregation: those who become members of our church through profession of _____ or transfer of _____.

The Committed: those who are climbing the discipleship _____ —Honoring the Lord of Life, Inviting their World to Life, Loving the Fellowship for Life, and Living the Word in Life.

The Core: those in places of i _____ and l _____ who help Hillcrest move people through the Circles.

If someone asks you if we're trying to be
a church that attracts seekers
or
a church that's trying to develop Christians,
what will you tell them?

_____!

The PATTERN of Our Leadership

God is not a God of disorder, but of peace.
Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.
1 Corinthians 14:33, 40 (NIV)

A good structure promotes _____. "Often your meetings do more harm than good because I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you" (1 Corinthians 11:17-18, LB).

The structure of the church is addressed in Philippians 1:1. Paul addresses his letter in this way: "To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons."

God's church is made up of
"saints" who are led by "overseers" and served by "deacons."

Three groups, with three assignments:

God makes *overseers* responsible for the church's
m_____.

God makes *deacons* responsible for the church's
m_____.

God makes *saints* responsible for the church's
m_____.

What If I'm Not Ready to Join?

If you're not ready to join, here are three things to do:

- Keep _____.
- Keep _____.
- Keep _____.

There are no “second-class citizens” at Hillcrest!

What If I'm Ready to Join?

Through this workshop, you've seen what we believe in, what we're trying to accomplish, and how we're trying to accomplish it. By joining, you're committing to supporting this strategy with your—

- In _____: Use your skills, express your opinions
- In _____: Commit your time. Involve yourself in it!
- In _____: Make sure you're financially supporting the cause

Other Important Information

The following pages provide important information. Please keep for future reference.

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Meet Your Ministry Staff



Our Senior Pastor: Tom Goodman

Tom began serving in May 2003. He is a graduate of Baylor University (B.A. '82), Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (M.Div. '86), and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (D. Min. '92). He served churches in Louisiana, north Texas, and overseas in Grand Cayman before coming here. Tom is the author of several magazine articles on church leadership and a book called *The Anchor Course: Exploring Christianity Together*. He is married to Diane and has two sons, Michael and Stephen. Pastor Tom's interests include: scuba diving, woodworking, reading, and chasing mis-hit golf balls.



Minister of Music: John Parker

A native of Louisiana, John holds a Bachelor's Degree in Vocal Performance from Louisiana College and a Master's Degree in Choral Conducting from Northwestern State University. Since 1985 Mr. Parker has served on staff in Baptist churches in Louisiana and Texas, primarily in the area of Music, Worship and Creative Arts Ministry. John is active as a composer of choral music with over 700 titles in print. John is married to Audra, and has three children, Joy, Jay and Jillian, two of whom live locally.



Minister of Education and Administration: Karen Raulie

A native Texan, Karen previously served at Hillcrest from 2006-2016 in the roles of Children's Minister, Office Manager and Financial Secretary. Prior to being hired by Hillcrest Church, she served as a volunteer in Hillcrest Church's Children's Ministry. Karen is the current office manager for a private family office where she has served for the past four years. Karen has over 20 years of experience in the corporate and business world in various roles controller, finance, accounts payable, executive assistant, system administration, human resources. Karen holds a Masters in Marriage and Family Counseling from Liberty University and a Bachelors in Corporate Communications from the University of Texas at Austin. Karen is married to, Daniel and they have two children: Neil and Gayla.

Meet Your Ministry Staff



Director of Youth Ministries: John Cameron

John Cameron was raised in Shreveport, LA. He graduated from LA Tech University in 2004 with a BA in Architecture. John served with the US Army National Guard from 1999 - 2007.

John and his wife Nikki met in 2003. She saw something in John so she endured an 18 month deployment and a 5 year engagement! Obviously God wanted John and Nikki together!

In his testimony John says, "I committed my life to Christ when I was on a short deployment in Eastern Europe in 2007. I had been a believer most of my life (in my head) and that day God asked for my heart. I am blessed with two phenomenal boys, Ethan and Logan, my wife Nikki, and the wonderful church he placed in our path, Hillcrest."



Director of Children's Ministries: Diane Goodman

Diane Goodman graduated Summa Cum Laude from Baylor University with a BS in Education and a specialization in Reading. She has been a classroom teacher both in public and private schools. Other duties have included serving on a textbook review committee, teacher mentoring, curriculum supervisor and writer, and librarian. Diane has been involved in religious education for over 40 years. She has served as a teacher for many Sunday School classes and served in leadership for Vacation Bible Schools and Women's Ministry. Her spiritual gifts are administration and teaching. Diane also has an extensive background in music and art and enjoys using those to enhance the learning process. She has written and directed church and school programs and choirs, and has also accompanied them on the piano. Diane loves the Lord and is deeply committed to ensuring that our Hillcrest family members learn to know Christ in a life-changing way.



Pat Stivers
Minister of Preschool Ministries



Margaret Miller
Mother's Day Out Director



Thomas Heritage
Media Director



John Alvis
Facilities Manager

What We Believe

I. The Scriptures

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

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

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 human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary 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, fully God, fully man, 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.

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

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 fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every 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

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.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

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

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.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen 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.

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

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; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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. 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

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.

XVIII. The Family

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.

Our Affiliations

We are an independent church and not accountable to any hierarchy. However, we choose to affiliate with the Austin Baptist Association, the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Facts About the Austin Baptist Association

The ABA is an affiliation of like-minded Baptist churches in the Austin area that have banded together to provide:

- Education, support and training
- Joint missions and evangelism opportunities
- Cooperative ministries and programs
- Ministry to church ministers and staff

Facts About the Baptist General Convention of Texas

The BGCT is an affiliation of like-minded Baptist churches in the state of Texas that have banded together to provide:

- Education, support and training
- Joint missions and evangelism opportunities
- Cooperative ministries and programs
- Ministry to church ministers and staff

Facts about the Southern Baptist Convention

- The largest association of churches in America. One out of every ten churches in America is affiliated with the SBC (43,000 churches)
- It is a diverse association of churches representing many races, nationalities and ethnic groups. Every Sunday services are held in over 80 languages in SBC churches across America.
- It is a missionary-focused convention. The SBC has over 7,000 missionaries serving in over 133 countries around the world.
- We affiliate with the SBC by supporting the Cooperative Program (CP). The CP is the unified budget of the SBC. About half of the CP goes to the projects of the International Mission Board (IMB). The rest supports the work of planting and developing churches in the U.S. and Canada, along with sustaining seminaries and benevolence work.
- We affiliate with the SBC by supporting the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. This was named after a pioneering woman in international missions in the late 1800s. This Christmas Offering goes to support the projects of the IMB.

Find more information about these organizations at:

- Austin Baptist Association: <http://austinbaptist.org>
- Baptist General Convention of Texas: <https://texasbaptists.org>
- Southern Baptists of Texas Convention: <https://sbtexas.com>
- Southern Baptist Convention: <https://www.sbc.net>

MEET SOUTHERN BAPTISTS

FOR MORE THAN 170 YEARS, SOUTHERN BAPTISTS HAVE SOUGHT TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST TO ALL PEOPLE EVERYWHERE.

The Southern Baptist Convention was formed with a Gospel vision. Its founding charter identifies its singular focus: . . . *for the purpose of eliciting, combining, and directing the energies of the Baptist denomination of Christians, for the propagation of the Gospel.*¹

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has grown to be a network of more than fifty thousand cooperating churches and church-type missions banded together to make an impact for God's Kingdom. Though as many as two hundred could be counted as "mega-churches," the vast majority of Southern Baptist churches run less than two hundred in weekly worship. No two Southern Baptist churches are alike; but there are certain commonalities that bind Southern Baptists together, regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, language, size, or locale. What we offer here is an overview to help tell the story of what God is doing in and through the people called Southern Baptists.



Each Southern Baptist church is **autonomous and unique**; only when viewed together can one grasp the **diversity** that is the Southern Baptist Convention.

Who Southern Baptists Are

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS ARE AS VARIED AND DIVERSE AS THE CITIES, TOWNS, NEIGHBORHOODS, AND RURAL COMMUNITIES WHERE THEY LIVE. Each Southern Baptist church is autonomous and unique; only when viewed together can one grasp the diversity that is the Southern Baptist Convention. Southern Baptist churches represent a broad range in . . .

- **size**—very small to very large
- **culture**—Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, and every subculture within each region
- **age**—very young to very old
- **ministry setting**—inner-city, storefront, suburban, small town, open countryside, cowboy, motorcycle

- **race and ethnicity**—Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, Korean, Chinese, Native American, Russian, and numerous other ethnic groups
- **language**—The Lord is worshipped in more than one hundred languages each Sunday in Southern Baptist churches scattered across the United States
- **worship style**—traditional, contemporary, and everything in between
- **theological perspective**—all within the framework of historic biblical orthodoxy.

But to know Southern Baptists means to understand that the center of who and what we are is the Person and



Work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Southern Baptists are people who have been redeemed through Christ from *sin*—the spiritual brokenness that causes us to resist God’s ways and fall short of His glory.

Southern Baptists hold high the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the unifying center around which everything else is built and from which all ministry flows. We use the phrase *regenerate church membership* to emphasize that the starting point for everything related to a Southern Baptist church is each individual’s personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord of their lives.

Southern Baptists believe that each human being is a sinner by birth and by choice, that *all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23). We believe that Jesus, “in His substitutionary death on the cross,” made

There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

“provision for the redemption of men from sin” and “effected the reconciliation between God and man.”† And we believe that “There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.”†

While the Bible does not teach that the waters of baptism have any saving power (salvation is by *grace* alone through *faith* alone, Ephesians 2:8), in keeping with the biblical emphasis reflected in our heritage and name, and as “a people of the Book” (the Bible), Southern Baptists believe that all true believers will long to be identified fully with their Lord and Savior through the act of believer’s baptism.

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (see Matthew 28:19). It is an act of obedience symbolizing (1) the believer’s faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior; (2) the believer’s death to sin, the burial of the old life, and resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus; and (3) the believer’s trust that his or her mortal flesh shall be clothed with immortality in the final resurrection of the dead.

It is by the Gospel, *because* of the Gospel, and *for* the Gospel that the Southern Baptist Convention exists; so it only makes sense that everything about Southern Baptists is tied directly to the Gospel.

What Southern Baptists Believe

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS BELIEVE THAT THE BIBLE IS GOD’S REVELATION OF HIMSELF TO MANKIND, WITH HIS ULTIMATE REVELATION BEING THE GOSPEL MESSAGE OF REDEMPTION THROUGH JESUS CHRIST. For that reason, Southern Baptists have summarized their biblical convictions in a confession of faith called *The Baptist Faith and Message*. Southern Baptists are not a *creedal* people, requiring churches or individuals to embrace a standardized set of beliefs; but we are a *confessional* people. The *BF&M* represents the confessional consensus of “certain definite doctrines that Baptists believe, cherish, and with which they have been and are now closely identified.”†

The first five articles of *The Baptist Faith and Message* affirm historical, orthodox, evangelical beliefs concerning *The Scriptures*, the Person and Works of *God*, the nature and fall of *Man*, God’s gracious provision of *Salvation* through

faith in Jesus Christ alone, and *God’s Purpose of Grace*—that God is the One who initiates and completes the work of salvation.

The next six articles affirm historical, biblical Baptist positions on the *Church*, *Baptism and the Lord’s Supper*, the *Lord’s Day*, the *Kingdom*, the doctrine of *Last Things*, and *Evangelism and Missions*.

The final seven articles summarize a number of distinctively Southern Baptist commitments to *Christian Higher Education*, *Stewardship*, *Cooperation*, *The Christian and the Social Order*, *Peace and War*, *Religious Liberty*, and *The Family*.

The entire *Baptist Faith and Message* is available online at SBC.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp.

Southern Baptists believe that the Bible reveals the Gospel message of redemption through Jesus Christ.



At the heart of our mission is the compelling urgency to proclaim the Gospel to everyone.

During the first fifteen years of the twenty-first century, cooperating Southern Baptist churches reported more than four million baptisms in the United States.

This averages more than one hundred baptisms per church during this span of time. While each person who confesses faith in Jesus Christ and identifies with Him through believer's baptism is cause for celebration, in comparison to the darkness of the world, there is much to be done in our efforts to advance the cause of Christ through sharing the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Church Planting

In addition, Southern Baptists are committed to starting new churches to reach the growing populations of our country and the world. The Southern Baptist Convention's North American Mission Board (NAMB) has set a goal to see a net gain of five thousand new congregations (churches and church-type missions) in the United States and Canada by 2022. This would be an increase of 10 percent in the number of Baptist churches working together to penetrate the lostness on the North American continent. In addition, the SBC fully supports more than four thousand overseas missionaries and church planters.

The Gospel truly is Good News, and Southern Baptists are passionate in our commitment to share that Good News until the Lord returns.

What Southern Baptists Do

Southern Baptists Proclaim the Gospel through Evangelism and Church Planting

At the heart of our mission is the compelling urgency to proclaim the Gospel to everyone. The *BF&M* summarizes the biblical expectation this way:

"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."¹

Evangelism

In keeping with this commitment, Southern Baptist churches report their number of baptisms each year through a voluntary reporting form called the *Annual Church Profile*.



Southern Baptists are committed to starting new churches to reach the growing populations of our country and the world.

Southern Baptists Demonstrate the Gospel through Compassion

Southern Baptists take seriously the Lord's example of compassion and His command to love and care for the needy (John 3:16; Luke 10:25–37; Matthew 25:31–46). The *BF&M* summarizes the biblical expectation this way:

“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. . . . We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick.”†

Local Ministry

Southern Baptist churches across the nation demonstrate God's compassion to the needy in their communities as part of their standard, ongoing ministry:

- a church in rural Arkansas sponsors a food pantry and clothing closet in a small town;
- a church in metro New Orleans actively supports the local crisis pregnancy center and provides for the needs of pregnant young girls;
- a church in Lower Manhattan sponsors a soup kitchen on Wednesday nights and offers free lunches in the park on Saturdays for the needy;
- a church in San Francisco ministers directly to homeless street people;
- a church in Atlanta seeks to rescue girls and young women who are held hostage to sexual slavery.

Whether it's through free medical services, offering classes in English as a second language, or helping a local family with rent or utilities, Southern Baptist churches throughout the land actively reflect God's love and compassion in their communities. In fact, the width and breadth of Southern Baptist ministries of compassion are as expansive as the United States itself, for Southern Baptists minister in every part of this nation, and such ministries are the norm for Southern Baptists.

Cooperative Ministry

On a national level, Southern Baptists work with one another to extend the compassion of Christ through numerous means. Two ministry expressions illustrate such collaboration.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDP) teams respond to fires, ice storms, tornadoes, damaging winds,



hurricanes, and flooding across the United States. SBDP is one of the three largest relief organizations in America and includes flood cleanup efforts and long-term rebuilding in the wake of flooding. Southern Baptist volunteers prepare most of the meals distributed by the American Red Cross and provide many other disaster services. Southern Baptists have more than 1,550 mobile disaster response units on call for local, state, and national emergencies, with more than one hundred thousand trained volunteers scattered across the nation.

Southern Baptist Global Hunger Relief (GHR), receives and disburses designated contributions from individuals in local Baptist churches throughout the year. All contributions to the relief fund are divided 80 percent to overseas hunger relief and 20 percent to domestic hunger relief. Fifty-six million dollars was contributed and disbursed during the past decade. Since Southern Baptists' unified missions and ministry budget, called the Cooperative Program, provides administrative costs to the entities of the Convention, every dollar raised through Global Hunger Relief goes directly to meet human hunger needs. In addition to food given and poverty issues addressed through thousands of projects in hundreds of countries, many of the world's neediest people have also been introduced to Jesus as the Bread of Life for their impoverished souls.

Southern Baptists take seriously the Lord's example of compassion and His command to love and care for the needy.

How and Where Southern Baptists Advance the Gospel

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCHES ACROSS THE NATION MINISTER IN THEIR OWN NEIGHBORHOODS TO REACH THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES WITH THE GOSPEL; BUT THEY DON'T STOP THERE. The strength of Southern Baptist work is found in their voluntary cooperation to work together to advance an aggressive global vision while maintaining a strong home base of ministry fruitfulness.

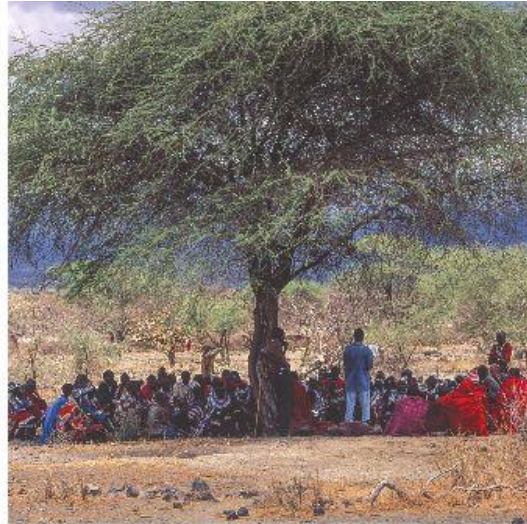
Cooperating together is not a new idea. The Apostle Paul applauded churches in the New Testament that pooled their resources for Kingdom purposes (1 Corinthians 16:1; 2 Corinthians 8:1–2, 16–24; 11:8). The *BF&M* summarizes the biblical pattern of cooperation this way:

“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.”†

The Cooperative Program— Funding the Advance of the Gospel

Cooperation helps fuel the fire of Southern Baptist missions and ministries. Close to home, Southern Baptists advance the Gospel by working together in a local association of churches. Beyond the local level, Southern Baptists promote God’s Kingdom through missions endeavors, focused prayer, and contributions through the Cooperative Program, a unified program for funding Convention work.

Southern Baptist churches support the Cooperative Program by submitting contributions through a network of state and regional Baptist conventions. The state Baptist conventions use a portion of these funds to fuel the ministry and mission goals established by the churches in that state. Each state Baptist convention then forwards a percentage of those funds to the Southern Baptist



Convention, providing financial support for thousands of church planters and missionaries in North America and around the world, theological education through six Southern Baptist seminaries for more than eighteen thousand full-time and part-time students, and moral advocacy and promotion of religious liberty. Cooperative Program funds forwarded from the states also provide support for the SBC operating budget.

Obviously, to spread the Gospel message to the neighborhood and to the nations requires organization and structure to help facilitate the goal. For more information on the structure of the Southern Baptist Convention, see the companion publications on each area of missions and ministry and *The Southern Baptist Convention: A Closer Look*.

The Convention— Working Together for the Gospel

The Southern Baptist Convention was formed “to provide a general organization for Baptists in the United States and its territories for the promotion of Christian missions at home and abroad, and any other objects such as Christian education, benevolent enterprises, and social services which it may deem proper and advisable for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.”†

Representatives, called *messengers*, from cooperating Southern Baptist churches meet once a year to adopt the Cooperative Program allocation budget, elect trustees to oversee the ministry entities of the Convention, receive reports from the SBC entities, and transact the business of the Convention. These messengers come from churches that openly identify with the SBC and

Southern Baptist churches across the nation begin their ministries in their own neighborhoods to reach their local communities with the Gospel.

have contributed to support the missionary, educational, moral advocacy, and benevolent causes of the Convention.

Southern Baptists work together to spread the Gospel throughout the land and around the world. Working through more than one thousand geographically-based associations, dozens of ethnic fellowships, and forty-two state and regional Baptist conventions, Southern Baptists voluntarily unite to engage in the Acts 1:8 pattern of spreading the Gospel—in their local communities, throughout their states, across the nation, and around the world.

Southern Baptist Ministry Entities—Assisting Churches in the Advance of the Gospel

The Convention assigns and conducts its work through eleven ministry entities—two mission boards, six seminaries, an ethics and religious liberty commission, a publishing and retail ministry, and a financial resources services ministry—and its Executive Committee. It also works closely with an auxiliary organization called Woman's Missionary Union (WMU). While some of these ministries are self-sustaining, the majority are supported by the churches with financial contributions through the Cooperative Program. Of contributions received by the SBC, 73.2 percent funds missions and church planting and another 22 percent provides ministerial training through our seminaries. Each of these ministry entities exists for the express purpose of assisting churches in the ultimate goal of advancing the Gospel.

- Missions, evangelism, and church planting are facilitated through the **International Mission Board** and the **North American Mission Board**.
- Ministerial preparation and continuing education are provided through **Gateway, Midwestern, New Orleans, Southeastern, Southern, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminaries**.
- Christian ethics and religious liberty ministries are assigned to the **Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission**.
- Church enrichment ministry and literature publication are assignments of **LifeWay Christian Resources**, which receives no Cooperative Program funding.
- **GuideStone Financial Resources**, which also receives no Cooperative Program funding, manages ministerial retirement and insurance needs and administers Mission:Dignity, an assistance ministry for retired ministers and their families.
- The **SBC Executive Committee** is charged to conduct the work of the Convention between annual meetings in all areas not otherwise assigned to one of the ministry entities.
- The **Woman's Missionary Union** is the sole auxiliary of the SBC. It cooperates very closely with the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board to encourage churches to give generously to support missions with contributions through the Cooperative Program and two annual missions offerings.

You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria,
and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8

Why Southern Baptists Do What They Do

THE ANSWER TO WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO IS SIMPLE—Southern Baptists proclaim and minister the Gospel because the love of Christ compels us to do so (2 Corinthians 5:14).

God loved us enough to send His one and only Son to pay the penalty for our sins. Whoever believes in Him has eternal life (John 3:16). In response to the love He has lavished on us, we are called to love one another (John 13:34–35; 15:12–17).

Jesus summarized this truth in what is called the Great Commandment—*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important command. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself* (Matthew 22:37–39).

Southern Baptists know the Way to have our sins forgiven and to have a right relationship with God; the Way to be redeemed from our sin and delivered from its consequences; the Way to have eternal life—not just forever in heaven, but the fullest life possible—the life of knowing *Him* (John 17:3) and *knowing Him* (Philippians 3:10). That Way is Jesus (John 14:6). Love compels us to share the Good News of His love and extend the offer of His forgiveness with as many as possible.



[†]All footnotes are citations from the Convention's primary documents and can be found at the "About" link at SBC.net.
For more information, contact Convention Communications and Relations,
SBC Executive Committee, 901 Commerce St., Nashville, TN 37203,
1-866-722-5433.
June 2016

Love compels us to share the Good News of His love and extend the offer of His forgiveness with as many as possible.

A HISTORY OF HILLCREST BAPTIST CHURCH

In March of 1927, a small group of Baptists met to organize a church in Austin. There were only five Baptist churches in Austin at that time. Emmanuel Baptist (later to become Hillcrest) organized with 30 charter members, and Rev. C. L. Sansing was called as pastor. The first official act of the church was to take an offering for missions.

A building that belonged to the Swedish Baptists located at 18th and San Jacinto streets was purchased. This building was used until 1933, at which time the property was rezoned and sold to an oil company. Hillcrest relocated to 19 ½ St. and East Avenue and began a building program. The first strong tithing program was begun during this time – truly an act of faith during the difficult Depression Era.

The church would again relocate in 1948, when plans were made for the construction of I-35 which would take in the church's property. A fire completely destroyed the building on October 17, 1948, before a new building could be built. The steadfast congregation met in the John B. Winn School until the fall of 1949, when the first unit of the new facility at 28th and Robinson was completed. Hillcrest experienced great growth, and added an auditorium and additional educational space by acquiring the adjoining properties.

Hillcrest made much progress in the 1970's, including another relocation. Once again God provided in a most remarkable way – He gave us a mountain in a strategic location in northwest Austin. In April of 1973, Hillcrest relocated to its present 3838 Steck Avenue address.



HILLCREST
BAPTIST CHURCH
3838 Steck Ave
Austin, TX 78759
www.Hillcrest.Church

Education Annex

