

# Articles of Faith of Tabernacle Baptist Church of Litchfield, NH

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# Articles of Faith

## Tabernacle Baptist Church of Litchfield, NH

**NOTE:** An asterisk (\*) before a scripture reference means that it is a reference that contains a quotation in the article.

### 1. Of the Scriptures

A. *Inspiration:* We believe that the Holy Bible (the collection of sixty-six books, from Genesis to Revelation) is supernaturally inspired (literally, “breathed by God”).<sup>1</sup> It was written by men of God who lived in past ages, who were moved by the Holy Spirit in their work<sup>2</sup> in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally and verbally free from error.<sup>3</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. Acts 1:16, 2 Tim 3:16-17.
2. Acts 28:25, 2 Pet 1:19-21.
3. Psa 19:7-11, Mt 5:18.

B. *Authority:* We believe the Bible is the true Word of God without corruption or error. It is and shall remain until the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man.<sup>1</sup> The Bible stands as the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.<sup>2</sup> The Bible is, and always will be, the ultimate authority for Christians and the church. There are no additional revelations from God outside of the closed collection of books called the Bible.<sup>3</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. Psa 119:89, Prov 30:5-6, Lk 16:31 & 24:25-27, 1 Pet 1:23.
2. Psa 119:105, Isa 8:20, Lk 24:44-45, Jn 5:39, 5:45-47, 12:48, & 17:17, Rom 3:4 & 15:4, Eph 6:17.
3. Gal 1:8-9, 1 Jn 4:1, Rev 22:18-19.

### 2. Of the True God

A. *The Nature of God:* We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God<sup>1</sup> and that He is an infinite, intelligent Spirit.<sup>2</sup> He is the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth.<sup>3</sup> He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love.<sup>4</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. Gen 17:1, Ex 20:2-3, Jer 10:10, 1 Cor 8:6, Eph 4:6.
2. Jn 4:24.
3. Psa 83:18, Psa 90:2, Rev 4:11.
4. Ex 15:11, Psa 147:5, Mk 12:30, Rom 11:33, 1 Tim 1:17, Rev 4:11.

B. *The Person of God*: We believe that in the unity of the Godhead, there are three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,<sup>1</sup> equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.<sup>2</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. *Matt 28:19, 1 Jn 5:7.*
2. *Jn 15:26, 1 Cor 12:4-6, 1 Pet 1:2.*

1) God the Father: God the Father is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. He reigns with providential care over all His universe. As the Creator, He presides over human history according to the purposes of His will. “. . . the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.”

**REFERENCES:** *Gen 1:1, 2:7, Ex 15:11, Psa 19:1, Jer 10:10, Mt 6:9-13 & 23:9, Mk 1:9-11, Eph 4:6, \*1 Jn 4:14.*

2) God the Son: God the Son, Jesus Christ, is co-equal, and eternally co-existent with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit and was active in creation.<sup>1</sup> In His incarnation Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and lived without sin. Being fully man while remaining fully God, He came to save sinners from eternal damnation in Hell.<sup>2</sup> By His sacrificial death on the cross He paid the price for all sin and offers eternal life to all who believe.<sup>3</sup> In victory over death and sin He rose physically from the dead on the third day to declare Himself as God and lives forevermore to make intercession for the saints.<sup>4</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. *Jn 1:1-5 & 14, Col 1:16, Heb 1:2.*
2. *Lk 19:10.*
3. *Jn 3:16, Phil 2:4-11.*
4. *Rom 1:4, 1 Jn 2:1, Rev 1:17-18.*

3) God the Holy Spirit: God the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with and of the same nature as God the Father and God the Son.<sup>1</sup> He was active in the creation. In His relation to the unbelieving world, He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled.<sup>2</sup> He convicts of sin, judgment, and righteousness. He bears witness to the Truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony.<sup>3</sup> He is the agent in the new birth and seals, indwells, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer.<sup>4</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. *Mt 28:19, Jn 14:16-17 & 26, Heb 9:14.*
2. *Gen 1:1-3, 2 Thess 2:7.*
3. *Jn 15:26-27, Jn 16:8-13, Acts 5:30-32.*
4. *Mt 3:11, Jn 3:5-6, Acts 1;8, Rom 8:14-16 & 26-27, Eph 1:13-14, 2 Thess 2:13, 1 Pet 1:2.*

### 3. Of Origins

A. *The Creation:* We believe in the Biblical account of creation. It is to be accepted literally, not symbolically or figuratively. Man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness. Creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through time from lower to higher forms. All animal and vegetable life was made directly, and God's established law was that each living thing should bring forth only after its own kind.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to being the Creator, God continues to be active in His creation. By His power, He is the sustainer and preserver of all life. "All things were created by him and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."<sup>2</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. Gen 1:1, 1:11, 1:24, 1:26-27, & 2:21-23, Ex 20:11, Jer 10:12, Jn 1:3, Acts 4:24, Heb 11:3, Rev 10:6.
2. Neh 9:6, Acts 17:23-26, \*Col 1:16-17.

B. *The Devil Or Satan:* We believe that Satan was once holy and enjoyed heavenly honors but, through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell and drew after him a host of angels.<sup>1</sup> He is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, the unholy god of this world.<sup>2</sup> We hold him to be man's great tempter, the enemy of God and His Christ, the accuser of the saints, the author of all false religions, the chief power behind the present apostasy, the lord of the antichrist, and the author of all the powers of darkness.<sup>3</sup> However, despite his present power, he is destined to final defeat at the hands of God's own Son, and to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire, a place prepared for him and his angels.<sup>4</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. Ezek 28:14-17, Isa 14:12-15, 2 Pet 2:4, Jude 6, Rev 12:7-9.
2. Jn 14:30, Eph 2:2.
3. Mt 4:1-3, Mk 13:21-22, Lk 22:3-4, 2 Cor 11:13-15, 1 Thess 3:5, 2 Thess 2:8-11, 1 Pet 5:8, 1 Jn 2:22 & 4:3, 2 Jn 7, Rev 12:10 & 13:13-14.
4. Mt 25:41, 2 Thess 2:8, 2 Pet 2:4, 1 Jn 3:8, Jude 6, Rev 19:11, 19:16-20, & 20:10.

C. *The Fall of Man:* We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker. By voluntary transgression he fell from his sinless and happy estate.<sup>1</sup> In consequence of Adams sin, all mankind are now sinners,<sup>2</sup> not by constraint, but by choice, and therefore, under just condemnation without defense or excuse.<sup>3</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. Gen 3:1-6, Rom 1:28 & 3:10-19.
2. Rom 5:12 & 19, Gal 3:22, Eph 2:1-3.
3. Ezek 18:19-20, Rom 1:20, 1:18, 1:32, & 5:12.

## 4. Of Institutions

### A. *The Church of God:*

- 1) Definition: We believe that a New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local, autonomous congregation of baptized believers associated together by a covenant of faith and the fellowship of the gospel.<sup>1</sup> The church is subject only to the authority of its Head, Jesus Christ, through the Holy Ghost, and is solely governed by His laws.<sup>2</sup> The members of the church exercise the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word.<sup>3</sup> The local church will determine all matters of membership, policy, government, discipline, and benevolence.<sup>4</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. Acts 1:15-22, 2:41-42, 6:3-6, & 13:1-3, Jude 3-4.
2. Eph 1:22-23, & 5:23-24, Col 1:18.
3. Eph. 4:11, 1 Cor 12:4-11, 2 Cor 8:23-24, 1 Tim 3:8-13.
4. Acts 1:15-26 & 15:22.

- 2) Mission: The true mission of the church is found in Christ's instructions: first, to make disciples; second, to baptize them into the church; third, to instruct them as He has commanded.<sup>1</sup> It is scriptural for a church to cooperate with other churches in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel. Each church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation.<sup>2</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. Mt 28:19-20, Mk 16:15, Acts 1:7-9.
2. 1 Cor 5:11-13 & 6:1-3, Jude 3-4, 1 Pet 5:14

- 3) Offices: There are two offices that God has appointed in the church. The pastor is the overseer and shepherd of the church, and deacons are the servants of the church.

**REFERENCES:** 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9.

- 4) Ordinances: There are two ordinances God has commanded the church to obey. They are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

- a) Baptism: Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a born-again believer in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.<sup>1</sup> Baptism is a solemn and beautiful demonstration of faith in the crucified, buried, risen and coming Savior. It pictures the believer's death to sin and resurrection to a new life.<sup>2</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. Mt 3:6, 3:16, & 28:19-20, Acts 8:36-39.
2. Acts 2:41-42, Rom 6:3-5, Col 2:12.

- b) The Lord's Supper: The Lord's Supper is an observance qualified by doctrine and faith in which born-again believers, by the sacred use of unleavened bread and grape juice, are to commemorate together the death of Christ. The Lord's Supper should always be preceded by solemn self-examination as it represents the continuing relationship of the believer with Christ.<sup>1</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. Mt 26:26-28, Mk 14:22-24, Lk 22:19-20, Acts 2:42, 1 Cor 10:16 & 11:23-28.

*B. Marriage and the Family.* We believe that God intended that mankind would “be fruitful and multiply” through the institution of marriage.<sup>1</sup> In the eyes of God, marriage is a lifelong, undefiled commitment between one man and one woman.<sup>2</sup>

Each member of the family has a place. The husband is called to be the head of the family, as Christ is the head of the church.<sup>3</sup> The wife is to honor God through her relationship with her husband and children.<sup>4</sup> Parents are to teach their children the ways of the Lord through both word and action.<sup>5</sup> Children are commanded to honor and obey their parents in the Lord, and to continue to honor them all the days of their lives.<sup>6</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. \*Gen 1:27-28, 2:24, & 9:1.
2. Gen 2:24, 1 Cor 6:16, & 7:1-40, Heb 13:4.
3. Eph 5:23 & 25, Col 3:19.
4. Eph 5:22 & 24, Col 3:18.
5. Deut 6:6-7, Prov 22:6, Eph 6:4, Col 3:21.
6. Ex 20:12, Eph 6:1-3, Col 3:20.

*C. Civil Government:* We believe human government has been appointed by God for the interest and good order of human society.<sup>1</sup> Christians are commanded to pray for those who rule them and to honor them conscientiously.<sup>2</sup> We are called to obey the law as long as it does not oppose the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth.<sup>3</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. Ex 18:21-22, 2 Sam 23:3, Rom 13:1-7.
2. Mt 22:21, Acts 23:4-5, Titus 3:1, Heb 13:17, 1 Pet 2:13-14.
3. Psa 72:11, Dan 3:17-18, Mt 10:28 & 23:10, Acts 4:19-20 & 5:29, Phil 2:10-11, 1 Pet 2:17.

## 5. Of Salvation

*A. Repentance and Faith:* We believe that repentance and faith are necessary actions for the conversion of a sinner to Christ. Repentance and faith are both solemn obligations and inseparable graces wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God.<sup>1</sup> Being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger, helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy while at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Savior.<sup>2</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. Mk 1:15, Lk 13:2-3, Acts 2:37-38 & 20:21.
2. Psa 51:1-7 & 17, Isa 55:6-7, Lk 12:8 & 18:13, Rom 10:9-11 & 13.

*B. Atonement for Sin:* We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly by grace through faith in the Son of God, who, by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature.<sup>1</sup> Being without sin, He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins.<sup>2</sup> His atonement did not consist of setting an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place. The Just died for the unjust. Christ, the Lord, bore our sins in His own body on the tree.<sup>3</sup> Having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection. He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate, and all-sufficient Savior.<sup>4</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. *Jn 1-14 & 3:16, Acts 15:11, Rom 3:24, Gal 4:4-5, Eph. 2:8-9, Phil. 2:6-8.*
2. *Isa 53:4-7, Mt 18:11, Rom 3:25, Heb 2:14, 1 Jn 4:10.*
3. *Isa 53:11, Jn 10:18, 1 Cor 15:3, 2 Cor 5:21, Gal 1:4, Phil 2:8, 1 Pet. 2:24 & 3:18.*
4. *Isa 53:12, 1 Cor 15:20, Heb 7:25, 9:12-15, & 12:2, 1 Jn 2:2.*

*C. Grace in the New Creation:* We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again. New birth is an instantaneous new creation in Christ Jesus, not a process.<sup>1</sup> In the new birth the one who was dead in trespasses and sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God's grace. This new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension. It is solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth,<sup>2</sup> so as to secure a voluntary obedience to the gospel as evidenced by repentance, the holy fruit of the Spirit, and a newness of life.<sup>3</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. *John 3:3-7, 2 Cor. 5:17, 1 John 5:1.*
2. *Rom. 6:23, 2 Cor. 5:19, Eph 2:1 & 8-9, Col. 2:13, 2 Pet. 1:4.*
3. *John 1:12-13 & 3:8, Gal. 5:22-23.*

*D. Freeness of Salvation:* We believe in God's electing grace that makes the blessings of salvation free to all that call upon Him by faith.<sup>1</sup> Nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel. This rejection "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."<sup>2</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. *Isa 55:1 & 6-7, Mt 11:28; Jn 6:37, Acts 2:38, Rom 8:29-30 & 10:13, 1 Thess 1:4, 1 Pet 1:2, Rev 22:17.*
2. *Jn 3:15-18, 3:36, & 5:40, Eph, 2:4-5, \*2 Thess 1:8-9, 1 Tim 1:15.*

*E. Justification:* We believe that justification is the great gospel blessing that Christ secures to all who believe in Him.<sup>1</sup> Justification includes the pardon of sin and the gift of eternal life on principles of Christ's righteousness.<sup>2</sup> It is not bestowed in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, rather His righteousness is imputed solely through faith in the Redeemer.<sup>3</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. *Acts 13:39.*
2. *Isa 53:11, Rom 8:1, Titus 3:5-7.*
3. *Hab 2:4, Rom 1:17, 4:1-8, 5:1, & 5:9, Gal 3:11, Heb 10:38.*

## 6. Of the Believer's Walk

A. *The Eternal Security of the Believer:* We believe that all who are truly born again are sealed with the Holy Spirit and kept in the hands of both the Father and the Son. No man can pluck them out. No power can "separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

**REFERENCES:** *Jn 3:16 & 10:27-29, \*Rom 8:35-39, 1 Pet 1:3-6, 1 Jn 5:13.*

B. *The Priesthood of the Believer:* We believe that as Christians we are a peculiar people born into a royal and holy priesthood.<sup>1</sup> As believer priests, we have complete access to God through the blood of Jesus<sup>2</sup> for the purpose of worshipping and serving God and His High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, we are called to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God: our body, our praise, our words, our deeds, our possessions, our gifts, and our intercession for others.<sup>4</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. *1 Pet 2:5 & 9.*

2. *Heb 10:19-22.*

3. *Mt 4:10, Heb 5:6 & 10.*

4. ***Rom 12:1, Phil 4:17-18, 1 Tim 2:1, Heb 13:15-16, 1 Pet 2:5.***

C. *Individual Soul Liberty and Responsibility:* We believe that every individual has the liberty to choose what he believes is right in the religious realm. No one should be forced to assent to any belief against his will. However, this liberty does not exempt one from responsibility to the Word of God or from accountability to God Himself.

Every Christian has the privilege to study Scripture for himself and the duty to correctly understand it by interpreting it in its own context in a literal, grammatical, and historical perspective. However, no one has the right to twist Scripture out of its context to make it fit any private interpretation.

**REFERENCES:** *Rom 14:1-5, 1 Cor 8:1-13, 2 Cor 5:10, 2 Pet 1:20, 1 Jn 2:27-28, Rev 3:20.*

## 7. Of the End Times

A. *The Righteous and the Wicked:* We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked.<sup>1</sup> The righteous are justified through faith in the name of the Lord Jesus and are sanctified by the Spirit of God. The wicked are those who continue without repentance and faith and, as a result, are under the curse of God.<sup>2</sup> This distinction holds among men both in life and after death, in the everlasting bliss of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost.<sup>3</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. *Gen 18:23, Mal 3:18, 1 Jn 5:19.*

2. *Prov 11:31 & 14:32, Mt 7:13-14, Acts 4:12, Rom 1:17, 6:16-18, & 6:23, Gal 3:10, 1 Pet 4:18-19.*

3. *Mt 25:34 & 41, Lk 16:25, Jn 5:28-29, 1 Cor 15:22, Rev 20:14-15.*

B. *The Resurrection of Christ:* We believe that Christ rose bodily "the third day according to the Scriptures"<sup>1</sup> and ascended "and sitteth on right hand of God."<sup>2</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

1. *Mt 28:6-7, Mk 16:6, Lk 24:39, Jn 20:27, \*1 Cor 15:4.*

2. *Mk 16:19, Lk 24:51, Acts 1:9-11, \*Col 3:1, Rev 3:21.*



C. *The Rapture of the Church:* We believe that when the last trump shall sound, “the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then they which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.” The living saints shall all be changed “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” and shall put on an incorruptible, resurrected body.<sup>1</sup>

**REFERENCES:** *Jn 14:3, 1 Cor 15:42-44, & \*51-53, Phil 3:20-21, \*1 Thess 4:15-17.*

D. *The Second Coming of Christ:* We believe that “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” – bodily, personally and visibly bringing His saints with Him.<sup>1</sup>

**REFERENCES:** *Mt 24:27 & 42 & 25:13, \*Acts 1:11, 1 Thess 4:14, Heb 9:28, Jas 5:8.*

E. *The 1000 Year Earthly Reign of Christ:* We believe that “the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David”; and Christ shall reign a thousand years in righteousness until “he hath put all enemies under His feet.”<sup>1</sup>

**REFERENCES:** *Psa 72:8, Isa 9:6-7 & 11:4-5, \*Lk 1:32-33, \*1 Cor 15:25, Rev 20:1-3 & 6.*

F. *The Future of Israel:* We believe that Israel is still God’s chosen people but is dispersed because of disobedience to God and rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. However, Israel will be re-gathered as a nation after the Rapture and many will be saved.

**REFERENCES:** *Gen 13:14-17, Ezek 20:33-44 & 37:1-28, Rom 11:1-32.*

## 8. Of Human Sexuality (also see Article 4 B)

A. *God’s Command:* We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, transsexuality, transvestism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful perversions of God’s gift of sex. We believe that God rejects any attempt to alter one’s gender by surgery, appearance, acting the part, or claiming the identity of the opposite sex to which they were assigned at conception.

B. *Legitimate Marriage:* We believe that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman as husband and wife.

C. *Spiritual Equality:* We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God, but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church.

**References:** *Gen 2:24, 19:5, 13, & 26:8-9, Rom 1:26-29, 1 Cor 5:1, 6:9, & 7:10, Gal 3:28, Eph 5:22-23, Col 3:18, 1 Thess 4:1-8, 1 Tim 2:8-15 & 3:4-5, Heb 13:4.*