

# ARTICLES OF BELIEF

## Heritage Bible Church

### Panama City, Florida

#### **I. We believe the Bible is the authoritative and infallible word of God .**

The Bible consists of the sixty-six books beginning with Genesis and concluding with Revelation (2 Tim. 3:16).

#### **II. We believe there is one true God (Deut. 6:4; Mark 12:29), and that in the unity of the Godhead there are three eternal and co-equal Persons -- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19).** These three are one God and have the same nature, attributes, and perfections.

A. The Father is called God (Eph. 4:6);

B. The Son is called God (Isa. 9:6, John 20:28, Heb. 1:8);

C. The Holy Spirit is called God (Acts 5:3,4).

#### **III. We believe in God the Father Almighty, Who made heaven and earth (Gen. 1:1; Heb. 1:2).**

#### **IV. We believe that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah):**

A. All things were created by Him (Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2).

B. He is the only way to eternal life (Jn. 14:6).

He is the only begotten Son of God (Jn. 3:16).

D. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Lk. 1:26-38).

This fact emphasizes the divinity of Christ.

E. He was born of the virgin Mary (Mt. 1:18-25).

This fact supports the humanity of Christ.

F. He suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried (Mat. 27:24-61). As a sinless man (Heb. 4:15) Jesus died for the sins of man (I Cor. 15:3). In so doing He paid the ransom for sin (I Tim. 2:6) and, among other things, reconciled to God those who trust in Him (II Cor. 5:18-19).

G. He rose again from the dead on the third day (I Cor. 15:4), in fulfillment of His own words as in Matthew 17:22,23. The resurrection of Christ is crucial to our faith (I Cor. 15:12-20).

H. He ascended into heaven forty days after His resurrection (Acts 1:2-11).

He sits at the right hand of God the Father (Heb. 10:9-12). This fact emphasizes the completed work of Christ in taking sin away.

J. He will come to judge the living and the dead. He will come personally from heaven as He went into heaven (Acts 1:9-11).

1. Jesus will come for His Church, both for the living and the dead Christians (I Thess. 4:13-18). Their works are judged and they receive reward or loss of reward (II Cor. 5:10).

2. Jesus will come and judge the righteous and the unrighteous (Mt.25:31-46).

**V. We believe in the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3).** The Holy Spirit is a Person with intelligence (I Cor. 2:10-11), emotions (Eph. 4:30), and a will (I Cor. 12:11).

A. The Holy Spirit was active in creation (Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4; Ps. 104:30).

B. The Holy Spirit today convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (Jn. 16:8-11).

C. The Holy Spirit lives within the believer (Ro. 8:9-11; Jn 14:16,17).

The Holy Spirit guides the Christian into all truth (Jn 15:26, 16:13)

The Holy Spirit glorifies the Son of God (Jn. 16:14).

The Holy Spirit empowers and gives spiritual gifts to all Christians for service to God (Acts 1:8; Ro. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:12-30)

**VI. We believe in Christ = s Church.** The true Church is made up of all born again people of the generations between Pentecost (Acts 2) and the time Jesus comes for His Church (I Thess. 4:13-18). The true Church is the pillar and support of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15) and is called The Body of Christ with Christ as the Head (Eph.1:22,23) and the Bride of Christ (or the Wife of the Lamb) (Rev. 19:7,8).

**VII. We believe in the fellowship of the believers.** All Christians should have fellowship one with another in a local church (Heb 10:25). Such fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ (I Jn. 1:3). Christian love and encouragement is part of genuine fellowship (Ro. 12:9; Gal. 6:2).

## **VIII. We believe in two ordinances of the Church.**

A. We believe that water baptism is a declaration of what has already happened inside a person when he believes on Jesus Christ. In baptism a person is identifying with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and is signifying that he has a new life in Christ.

B. We believe that the Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ and His work (I Cor. 11:23-29). Since all Christians were given the rite of the Lord's Supper, we believe that any Christian, whether a member of this local church or not, has a right to participate, as long as he has examined himself and does not partake in an unworthy manner.

## **IX. We believe in a physical and a spiritual death.**

A. Physical death is the separation of the soul and spirit from the body.

1. Physical death is not extinction, annihilation, nor reincarnation (Heb. 9:27).

2. Physical death is caused by sin (Ro. 5:12-14).

3. Physical death comes to both the believer and the non-believer (1 Cor. 15:22).

a. Before Christ = s ascension, at the death of the believer, the spirit and soul went to a place called A Abraham = s bosom @ (Lk. 16:22), also called A Paradise @ (Lk. 23:43).

b. Since Christ = s ascension, the spirit and soul of a believer who dies goes immediately to be with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:6-8; Phil. 1:23).

c. Upon the death of an unbeliever, the spirit and soul goes to a place called Hades (Lk. 16:22,23). Hades is ultimately thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:13,14).

4. God = s remedy for physical death is resurrection (1 Cor. 15:21,22).

B. Spiritual death is the separation of the soul and spirit from God.

1. Spiritual death is caused by sin (Ro. 6:23).

2. Spiritual death is the condition of all humankind before salvation (Eph. 2:1,5).
3. God = s remedy for spiritual death is salvation through Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:5; Ro. 6:23).
4. Those who do not receive salvation through Jesus Christ will experience the second death, which is the eternal continuation of spiritual death in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14,15).

## **X. We believe in a literal heaven and hell.**

### **A. The Bible reveals certain things about heaven:**

1. It is a place (John 14:1-3).
2. It is where God sits on His throne (Rev. 4:1-3).
3. It is a place of holiness (Rev. 21:27).
4. It is a place of rest (Rev. 14:13).
5. It is a place where there is fullness of joy and eternal pleasures (Psalm 16:11).
6. It is a place of knowledge (1 Cor. 13:8-10).
7. It is a place of service (Rev. 22:3).
8. It is a place of praise and worship (Rev. 19:1).
9. It is a place of rewards (Rev. 22:12).
10. There is no curse and no night there (Rev. 3-5)
11. Tears and sorrow will be removed (Rev. 21:4,5).
12. It is eternal (Mt. 25:46).

### **B. The Bible reveals certain things about hell:**

1. It is a place (Lk. 16:28).
2. It is a place of torment (Lk. 16:23).
3. It is a place of fire (Mt. 25:41; Lk. 16:24) and brimstone (Rev. 14:10).
4. It is the outer darkness (Mt. 8:12).
5. It is a place of great misery (Mt. 8:12; Rev. 14:11).

6. It is the ultimate abode of Satan, the antichrist, and all whose names are not in the Lamb = s book of life (Rev. 20:10, 15).

7. It is eternal (Mt. 25:46).

**XI. We believe in angels, both elect and fallen.** All angels, including Satan, are created beings (Col. 1:16-17). The number of angels is not revealed but their number is not increasing or decreasing.

A. There are elect angels (1 Tim. 5:21).

1. There are cherubim (Gen. 3:24), seraphim (Is. 6:2), and possibly other divisions (Col. 1:16).

2. Specific angels are mentioned: Michael (Dan. 12:1), Gabriel (Dan 9:21; Lk. 1:26).

3. There are myriads of angels (Heb. 12:22).

4. Their ministry to God is primarily in the form of worship & praise (Rev. 4:8; Is. 6:2; Ps. 148:1-2)

5. They are messengers sent from God (Dan. 6:22) and serve as ministering spirits to God = s people (Heb. 1:14).

6. There are guardian angels for children (Mt. 18:10), for believers (Heb. 1:14), and for churches (Rev. 2:1).

7. They are not to be worshiped (Col. 2:18; Rev. 22:8,9).

8. When people die they do not become angels.

B. There are fallen angels or angels that have sinned (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).

1. They are called the devil = s angels (Mt. 25:41; Rev. 12:9); unclean spirits (Mt. 12:43); wicked spirits (Mt. 12:45); seducing spirits (1 Tim.4:1 ), demons, (Mt. 9:34), messengers (lit. angel) of Satan (2 Cor. 12:7), tormentors (Mt. 18:34).

2. There are divisions of authority among fallen angels (Eph. 6:12; Mt. 9:34).

3. They use their power to adversely affect humans (Mt. 9:32,33; 12:22; Lk. 8:26-35; Lk. 13:11-17).

4. God uses demons for His purposes (2 Cor. 12:7; 1 Sam. 16:14; 2 Cor. 12:7; 1 Kings 22:22).

5. They wage unceasing warfare with the believer (Eph. 6:12).

6. They are subject to Jesus = authority (Mt. 8:31,32; 12:22-24; Lk. 10:17;

1 Cor 15:24; James 2:19).

7. Demons were defeated by Jesus on the Cross (Col. 2:14,15).

C. Satan is a fallen angel.

1. Satan was created originally as the anointed cherub (Ezek. 28:14), sinless (Ezek. 28:15), and living in heaven, the mountain of God (Ezek. 28:14).

2. He chose to sin against God (Ezek. 28:15,16; Is. 14:13).

3. God removed him from heaven (Is. 14:12; Ezek. 28:16).

4. His names or descriptive titles include Lucifer, Son of Morning (Is. 14:12), Covering Cherub (Ezek.28:16); Satan (Job 1:6), an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14), the accuser of the brethren, (Rev. 12:10), the great dragon, the serpent, the devil, the one who deceives the whole world (Rev. 12:9), the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2), and the god or prince of this world (2 Cor. 4:4; Jn. 12:31), a murderer from the beginning (Jn. 8:44), a liar and the father of lies (Jn. 8:44), the believer = s adversary, a roaring lion (1 Pet. 5:8).

5. Satan always works against God and against people. He brought terrible calamities on Job (Job 1:13-2:7), he tempted Jesus (Lk.4:2), he entered Judas so he would betray Jesus (Jn. 13:2), he tempts believers (1 Cor. 7:5), he weakens the nations (Is. 14:12), he blinds the minds of those who are lost (2 Cor. 4:3,4).

There are many other examples of his work.

6. God uses Satan for His purposes (1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:20; Job 1,2).

7. Satan was defeated by Jesus on the Cross (Col. 2:14,15; Jn. 12:31; 16:11; Heb. 2:14).

8. He will be bound for 1000 years (Rev. 20:1-3), and will ultimately be cast into the lake of fire and be tormented forever (Rev. 20:10).

**XII. We believe in a personal, eternal salvation.**

- A. Everybody has sinned (Romans 3:23).
- B. The penalty for sin is eternal damnation (Ro. 6:23).
- C. But God loves us so much that He sent His Son to pay that penalty (Jn. 3:16).
- D. Any person who trusts in Christ will be forgiven (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:13,14) and receive the gift of eternal life (1 Jn. 5:13).
- E. Salvation is by faith alone (Eph. 2:8,9) in Christ alone (Acts 4:12).
- F. Once a person is truly saved he will not lose his salvation (Jn. 10:28,29; Eph. 4:30).
- G. God disciplines disobedient Christians (Heb. 12:5-7).
- H. God rewards those who obey Him (1 Cor. 3:14).

**XIII. We believe in the resurrection of the physical body.**

- A. Jesus was resurrected (Lk. 24, esp. v-6; 1 Cor. 15:3-8, 20-26).
- B. The Bible teaches a resurrection of the righteous to life (John 5:28-29). The Old Testament saints will be resurrected (Dan. 12:2), Christians will be resurrected (I Cor. 15:42-54; 1 Thess. 4:16), the tribulation saints will be resurrected (Rev. 20:4-6).
- C. There is also a resurrection of the wicked to judgment (John 5:28-29; Dan. 12:2). Unbelievers are resurrected to appear before the Great White Throne to be judged for their works (Rev. 20:11-15).

**XIV. We believe in everlasting life through faith in Christ (Jn. 3:16, 36; I Jn. 5:11-13).**

**XV. We believe in the sanctity of the life of pre-born children.**

- A. A pre-born child is considered to be a person whom God knows and is forming (Ps. 139:13-16; Jer. 1:5; Lk. 1:39-44).
- B. Abortion murders an unborn human being.
- C. No individual has the right to take an innocent life (Ex. 20:13).
- D. A person who has aborted a child can be forgiven of this sin (1 John 1:9) but the life and ministry of the aborted child is lost.

E. Nevertheless, the aborted child is with God (2 Sam. 12:23) so believing parents will see the child in eternity.

**XVI. We believe that God ordained the institution of marriage between one man and one woman.** (Gen. 2:18-25; Mt. 19:4-6; Eph. 5:23,31,33; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Heb. 13:4)

A. The marriage relationship of a man and a woman pictures the covenant relationship of Christ and the Church (Eph. 5:23-27, 32). Christ is the Loving Leader as the husband is to be the wife = s loving leader. As the Church submits to the leadership of Christ, so the wife is to respond to the husband = s leadership.

B. Marriage is to be a permanent commitment (1 Cor. 7:39) in which the husband and wife have different roles (Eph. 5:22-33); 1 Peter 3:1-7) but demonstrate mutual love and respect for one another (Eph. 5:28; Titus 2:4).

C. Sexual intimacy is to be reserved for marriage alone (1 Cor. 7:1-9). We believe that any intimate relationship outside of marriage is sin.

1. Adultery is sin (Ex. 20:14; Lev. 20:10; Deut. 5:18; 22:22-24; 1 Cor. 6:9).

2. Incest is sin (Lev. 18:6-18; 20:11-12; Deut. 27:20, 22-23; 1 Cor. 6:9).

3. Fornication is sin (Ex. 22:19; Lev. 18:23; 20:15; Deut. 27:21).

4. Homosexuality is sin (Gen. 19:7; Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Judges 19:23; Ro. 1:24-28; 1 Cor. 6:9).

5. Other sexual depravity is sin (Ex. 22:19; Lev. 18:23; 20:15; Deut. 27:21).

6. As with all sins, these can be overcome and forgiven through Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 John 1:9).