

Scripture

The Holy Bible was written by men, inspired by God, and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, and therefore it is wholly without error. It reveals the depths of God's love and 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. It is sufficient as our only infallible rule of faith and practice.

Trinity

We believe in the Trinity, the Godhead. God is revealed in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being, who are eternally One.

- *God The 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.
- *God The Son* is Jesus Christ, 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, His body glorified, 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.
- *God The Holy Spirit* inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination, He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls

men to the Savior and effects regeneration. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows 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 assurance of God to 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.

Salvation

We believe that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone and that one must repent of sin and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Jesus paid the full penalty of sin for all people on the cross, and salvation is available to all who will freely receive that Gift of divine grace.

- *Justification* occurs at the time of conversion. It is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ.
- *Sanctification* is the lifelong process of spiritual growth and maturity by which a believer is set apart for the work of God primarily through the disciplines of personal prayer and Bible study. Because of our fallen world and the residual sin nature in every believer, sanctification can never be made complete during this lifetime.
- *Glorification* is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Human Beings

Mankind was created by God in His own image. Man disobeyed 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 all men inherited a sin nature. Only the grace of God can bring a man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. Because mankind was created in the image of God, every man possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Eternity

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and hell are real places of eternal existence.

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.

Church Ordinances

Baptism

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 Savior; 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 public testimony of his faith in the final resurrection of the dead.

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, remember the death of Jesus and anticipate His second coming.

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.

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.

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.

Cooperation

As an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, Risen Life Fellowship, chooses to partner together with like-minded churches, and is a member of the Southern Baptist Convention for the strategic purpose of the advancement of the Gospel. In so doing, Risen Life Fellowship, affirms the Baptist Faith and Message.