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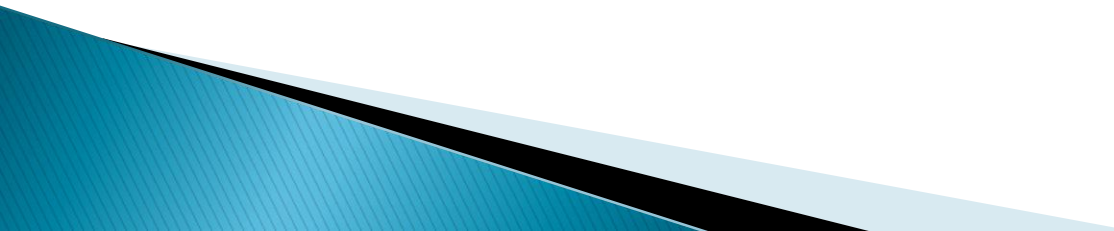
Baptist Faith and Message

A Study

Works Consulted and Cited

- ▶ Timothy and Denise George, eds., *Baptist Confessions, Covenants, and Catechisms*. Vol. 11, Library of Baptist Classics (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Press, 1996).
- ▶ Herschel H. Hobbs, *The Baptist Faith and Message*, rev. ed., (Nashville: Convention Press, 1996 rev.).
- ▶ Charles S. Kelley Jr., Richard Land, and R. Albert Mohler, *The Baptist Faith and Message*, (Nashville: LifeWay Press, 2007).
- ▶ William L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1969 rev.)
- ▶ Paul D. Wegner, *The Journey from Texts to Translations: The Origin and Development of the Bible*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1999).

Why Confessions of Faith?

- ▶ Confessions serve to define and defend the faith.
 - ▶ Confessions answer or speak to cultural issues at a given time.
 - ▶ Confessions are used as a witness to the world.
 - ▶ Confessions are used as instruments of doctrinal accountability.
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Baptist Concepts of the Nature and Functions of Confessions of Faith*

- ▶ A Confession serves as a guide for instruction concerning commonly held Baptist doctrines and beliefs. They are not to add to the simple conditions of salvation as revealed in Holy Scripture.
- ▶ A Confession, by nature, is not a complete statement, nor is it a final or infallible statement. It may be revised.

Adapted from the Preamble of the 1925 *Baptist Faith and Message*.

Baptist Concepts of the Nature and Functions of Confessions of Faith*

- ▶ A Confession, by nature, may be written and published by any group of Baptists, whenever they think it is appropriate.
- ▶ A Confession is only a guide in interpretation. It does not have authority over the conscience. *“The sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.”*
- ▶ A Confession is not to be used to get in the way of freedom of thought nor investigations into other areas of life. It is a statement of religious conviction that is based upon Holy Scripture.

*Adapted from the Preamble of the 1925 *Baptist Faith and Message*.

A Very Brief History of Some Baptist Confessions

▶ English Baptists

- London Confession of 1644
- Second London Confession of 1677, revised 1689

▶ American Baptists

- Philadelphia Confession of 1742
 - New Hampshire Confession of 1833
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History of *The Baptist Faith and Message*

- ▶ 1925
 - Cultural Challenge – Pervasive anti-supernaturalism
- ▶ 1963
 - Cultural Challenge – Assaults upon the authority and truthfulness of the Bible
- ▶ 1998
 - Cultural Challenge – Widespread societal concern about the breakdown of the family
- ▶ 2000
 - Cultural Challenge – What is truth?

The Structure of *The Baptist Faith and Message**

- ▶ Section 1 – Foundations of the Faith
 - Article 1 – The Scriptures
- ▶ Section 2 – Basic Truths of the Faith
 - Article 2 – God
 - Article 3 – Man
 - Article 4 – Salvation
 - Article 5 – God’s Purpose of Grace

*Hershel H. Hobbs, *The Baptist Faith and Message* rev. ed. (Nashville: Convention Press, 1996 rev.)

The Structure of *The Baptist Faith and Message**

- ▶ Section 3 – People of the Faith
 - Article 6 – The Church
 - Article 7 – Baptism and the Lord’s Supper
 - Article 8 – The Lord’s Day
- ▶ Section 4 – Fulfillment of the Faith
 - Article 9 – The Kingdom
 - Article 10 – Last Things

*Hershel H. Hobbs, *The Baptist Faith and Message* rev. ed. (Nashville: Convention Press, 1996 rev.)

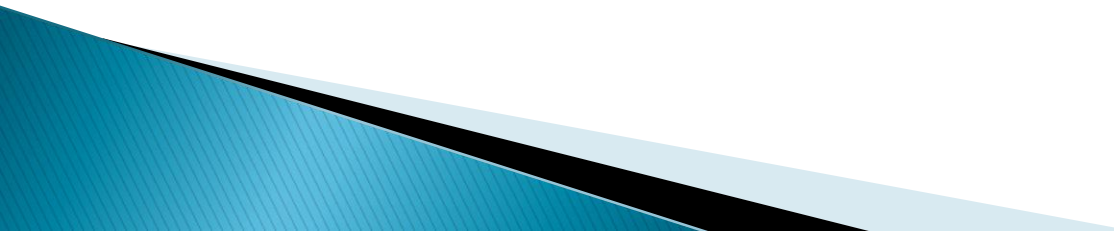
The Structure of *The Baptist Faith and Message**

- ▶ Section 5 – Practices of the Faith
 - Article 11 – Evangelism and Missions
 - Article 12 – Education
 - Article 13 – Stewardship
 - Article 14 – Cooperation
- ▶ Section 6 – Social Implications of the Faith
 - Article 15 – The Christian and the Social Order
 - Article 16 – Peace and War
 - Article 17 – Religious Liberty
 - Article 18 – The Family

*Hershel H. Hobbs, *The Baptist Faith and Message* rev. ed. (Nashville: Convention Press, 1996 rev.)

Article 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.



Inspiration of Scripture

- ▶ Key Text – 2 Timothy 3:16–17
- ▶ Theories of Inspiration
 - Intuition Theory – inspiration is a higher development of man’s natural insight to truth.
 - Illumination Theory – inspiration is an intensification and elevation of man’s religious perceptions.
 - Dynamic Theory – God inspired the ideas only.
 - Dictation Theory – God dictated the texts; humans were passive instruments.
 - Verbal Plenary Theory – The Bible’s inspiration is verbal – extending to the very words themselves
The Bible’s inspiration is plenary, or full.

Richard Land, Chuck Kelley, and Albert Mohler. *The Baptist Faith and Message*

(Nashville: LifeWay Press, 2007) 11.

Inspiration of Scripture

- ▶ Inspiration – “God-breathed”
- ▶ The Holy Spirit used men’s
 - Personalities
 - Writing styles
 - Personal experiences
 - To accomplish His purpose
- ▶ The inspiration was so thorough that they wrote exactly what God intended.
- ▶ The result of divine inspiration – we have exactly the Bible God intends for us to have.

God's revelation of Himself to man

- ▶ General Revelation – God makes known his nature and purpose through nature and history.
 - Key Scriptures
 - Psalm 19:1
 - Romans 1:20
- ▶ Specific Revelation – God makes known his nature and purpose through His Son Jesus Christ and through the written Word.
 - Key Scriptures
 - Luke 24:44–46
 - John 5:39
 - Hebrews 1:1–2

God's revelation of Himself to man

- ▶ Why do we need the Bible if God has revealed Himself through nature and history?
 - To correct our understanding of ourselves
 - Sin distorts how we see God and His truth, so much so that humans exchange the truth for the lie (Rom. 1:25).
 - To teach us
 - About His nature
 - About His redemptive purpose and work through Jesus
 - About His will for our lives
 - To change us
 - “The Bible can be read as great literature, as a history of the nation of Israel and the early church, or as a theological treatise, but it is intended to more than any of these. ***It is God's revelation and is intended to change lives.***”

Paul D. Wegner, *The Journey from Texts to Translations*, p. 23

It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction

- ▶ The Bible is the ideal and complete book that teaches a person how to enter into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and how to live a life that is pleasing to God.
- ▶ Key texts
 - Deut. 4:1–2; 17:19 see also Deut. 6:1–2
 - Ps. 19:7–10; 119:105
 - John 16:13–15
 - 2 Tim. 3:16–17

Salvation for its end

- ▶ God has inspired and provided the Scriptures so that we may know how a person may have a personal relationship with Him through Christ Jesus the Savior.
- ▶ Key text
 - 2 Timothy 3:15–17

Truth, without any mixture of error

- ▶ The Bible presents the reality of creation, mankind's sinfulness, God's solution for sin, the means to evaluate reality, and the final state of all mankind. It does so without any bias, error, or mistake.
- ▶ Key text
 - John 17:17

Revelation of God's Principles of Judgment

- ▶ The Scriptures show God's judgment against sin.
 - Judgment upon fallen man (Gen. 3:16–19; 4:10–12)
 - Judgment upon nations (Ex. 7–12; Amos)
 - Judgment upon individuals (Num. 20:11–12; 2 Sam. 12:10–12)
 - Judgments upon His own chosen people (Isa. 5; Matt. 21:33–45)

The True Center of Christian Union

- ▶ Scripture furnishes a rallying point for God's people to find unity and thus fulfill Jesus' own prayer in John 17:22

Supreme standard for evaluation

- ▶ Evaluation of Human Conduct
 - ▶ Evaluation of Creeds
 - ▶ Evaluation of Religious Opinions
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All Scripture testifies to Christ, who is the focus of divine revelation

- ▶ The Bible gives evidence and bears witness to Christ, who is the center of the God-inspired written unveiling of His person, His presence, and His participation with mankind.
- ▶ Key Scriptures
 - Luke 22:44–46
 - John 5:39