

HOPE FELLOWSHIP

A PARTICULAR BAPTIST CHURCH

Proclaiming the free and sovereign grace of God in the Gospel

OUR CONSTITUTION

Established October 2021

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1. ARTICLES OF FAITH

These are the same as those used by the Gospel Standard, with scripture proofs

ARTICLE 1 : The Holy Scriptures

We believe in the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and receive them as a gracious revelation of the mind and will of God¹; and we believe that therein are revealed all the doctrines and truths which we here state².

Scripture references:

1. Deut. 4. 2; Ps. 19. 7; Prov. 30. 5, 6; 2 Pet. 1. 19-21; 1 Rev 22. 18, 19; John 5. 39.
2. 2 Tim. 3. 15-17. 2 10

ARTICLE 2 : The Trinity

We believe that there is but one living and true God¹; that there are Three Persons in the Godhead – the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost² – and that these Three Persons are equal in nature, power and glory; and we believe that the Son and the Holy Ghost are as truly and as properly God as the Father³.

Scripture references:

1. Exod. 3. 14; Deut. 4. 35; Deut. 6. 4; Num. 23. 19; 1 Sam. 1 2. 2, 3; Ps. 90. 2; Ps. 115. 3; Ps. 135. 5; Ps. 139. 7-10; Prov. 15. 3; Ecc. 3. 14; Isa. 40. 28; Isa. 45. 22; Isa. 46. 9; Jer. 10. 10; Jer. 23. 24; Mal. 3. 6; Mark 12. 29; John 4. 24; 1 Cor. 8. 6; Col. 1. 16.
2. Matt. 28. 19; John 1. 1; 2 Cor. 13. 14; 1 John 5. 7; 2 Jude 20, 21.
3. John 10. 15, 30; Eph. 2. 22; Heb. 1. 3; Heb. 9. 14.

ARTICLE 3 : The everlasting love of God; Election; Predestination; Adoption; and the eternal Covenant of Grace

We believe in the everlasting and unchangeable love of God¹; and that before the foundation of the world the Father did elect a certain number of the human race unto everlasting salvation, whom He did predestinate unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will²; and we believe that in fulfilling this gracious design, He did make a

covenant of grace and peace with the Son and with the Holy Ghost on behalf of those persons thus chosen³, and that in this covenant the Son was appointed a Saviour, and all spiritual blessings provided for the elect, and also that their persons, with all the grace and glory designed for them, were put into the hands of the Son as their Covenant Head, and made His care and charge⁴.

Scripture references:

1. Jer. 31. 3.
2. Gal. 4. 5; Eph. 1. 2-13; 1 Thess. 5. 9; 2 Thess. 2. 13; 2 Tim. 1. 9; 1 John 3. 1; 1 Pet. 1. 2; 1 Pet. 2. 9.
3. 2 Sam. 23. 5; John 1. 17.
4. Ps. 111. 8, 9; Isa. 42. 6; Isa. 54. 10; Isa. 55. 4; Jer. 31. 3; 4 John 6. 37; John 17. 2; Acts 4. 12; Rom. 8. 29, 30; Eph. 1. 3; Eph. 2. 13; Heb. 2. 13; Heb. 6. 17, 18; Heb. 8. 8, 9.

ARTICLE 4 : The Fall of Man

We believe in the Fall of our first parents, and that by it the whole of the human race became involved in, and guilty of, Original Sin; and that as they are born into the world, the whole of their posterity are, in consequence, actual transgressors against God¹. And we believe that by the Fall all men were rendered both unable and unwilling spiritually to believe in, seek after, or love God until called and regenerated by the Holy Ghost².

Scripture references:

1. Rom. 5. 12-21; Ps. 58. 3.
2. Gen. 6. 5; Gen. 8. 21; Job 14. 4; Job 25. 4; Ps. 51. 5; 2 Jer. 13. 23; Jer. 17. 9; Matt. 15. 19; Rom. 3. 10-24; Rom. 5. 12-19; 1 Cor. 15. 22, 45-50; Eph. 2. 3; 1 John 5. 19.

ARTICLE 5 : The sacred Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ and his offices as Mediator, Surety and Substitute.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, being set up from everlasting as the Mediator of the New Covenant, and having engaged to be the Surety of His people, did, in the fulness of time, really and truly assume human nature, and not before, either in whole or in part¹. And we believe that, though He existed from all eternity as the eternal Son of God², the

human soul of the Lord Jesus did not exist before it was created and formed in His body by Him who forms the soul of man within him, when that body was conceived, under the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin Mary³. And we believe that Christ's human nature consists of a true body and reasonable soul, both of which, together and at once, the Son of God assumed into union with His Divine Person, when made of a woman and not before⁴; that this human nature was not sinful, peccable, or mortal⁵, though capable of death by a voluntary act⁶, but essentially and intrinsically pure and holy⁷; and that in it He really suffered, bled and died, as the Substitute and Surety of His church and people, in their room and stead, and for no others⁸; whereby, together with His holy, spotless life, He fulfilled the law, and satisfied all the claims of justice, as well as made a way for all those blessings which are needful for His people, both for time and eternity⁹.

Scripture references:

1. Prov. 8. 23.
2. John 1. 18; Phil. 2. 5-8; Heb. 1. 5, 8; Heb. 13. 8; 2 John 3; 2 Rev. 1. 8.
3. Isa. 7. 14; Matt. 1. 23; Luke 1. 26-38; John 1. 14; 3 Gal. 4. 4.
4. Luke 2. 40; Heb. 2. 14-17.
5. Ps. 16. 10; Acts 2. 27.
6. John 10. 17, 18.
7. Song 5. 9-16; Heb. 7. 26.
8. John 10. 15, 26; John 17. 9, 13.
9. Heb. 9. 22-28. 9 15

ARTICLE 6 : Particular Redemption

We believe that the eternal redemption which Christ has obtained by the shedding of His blood is special and particular¹; that is to say, that it was intentionally designed only for the Elect of God, the Sheep of Christ, who therefore alone share in the special and peculiar blessings thereof².

Scripture references:

1. Gal. 3. 13; Heb. 9. 12-15.
2. Isa. 35. 10; John 10. 15, 25-28; Acts 2. 47; Acts 13. 48; 2 Acts 20. 28; Rom. 5. 8-10; Rom. 8. 33, 34; Rom. 9. 13, 15, 16; Rev. 14. 4.

ARTICLE 7 : Imputed Righteousness; Justification; and Pardon

We believe that the justification of God's Elect is only by the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ imputed to them¹, without consideration of any works of righteousness, before or after calling, done by them, and that the full and free pardon of all their sins, past, present, and to come, is only through the blood of Christ, according to the riches of His grace².

Scripture references:

1. Isa. 45. 24; Isa. 64. 6; Jer. 23. 6; Matt. 7. 18; Luke 18. 13; 1 Acts 13. 39; Rom. 4. 4, 5; Rom. 5. 19; Rom. 10. 4; 1 Cor. 1. 30; 2 Cor. 5. 21; Phil. 3. 9; Titus 3. 5.
2. Rom. 3. 20-27; Rom. 4. 22; Rom. 9. 11; 2 Tim. 1. 9; 2 Heb. 1. 3; Heb. 9. 22; 1 Pet. 3. 18; 1 John 2. 1.

ARTICLE 8 : Regeneration

We believe that the work of regeneration is not an act of man's free will and natural power, but that it springs from the operation of the mighty, efficacious and invincible grace of God.

Scripture references:

Jer. 50. 20; Ps. 110. 3; John 1. 13; John 6. 29, 63, 65; John 16. 8; Rom. 8. 16; Rom. 11. 4, 6; James 1. 18. 18

ARTICLE 9 : Conviction of Sin; Believing in Christ; and Final Perseverance

We believe that all those who were chosen by the Father and redeemed by the Son, and no others, shall, at the appointed time, certainly be convinced in their hearts of sin by the Spirit¹, be brought in guilty before God, and made the recipients of eternal life, coming to Christ for salvation, and believing on Him as the Anointed of the Father, and the only Mediator between God and man²; but that none can spiritually come to Christ unless drawn by the Father³; and that all the elect shall be thus drawn to Christ, and shall finally persevere; so that not one of the elect shall perish, but all arrive safely in glory⁴.

Scripture references:

1. John 16. 8; 1 Cor. 2. 14; Eph. 2. 1.

2. 1 Tim. 2. 5; Heb. 8. 6; Heb. 9. 15; Heb. 12. 24.
3. John 6. 44, 65.
4. Job 17. 9; Matt. 25. 34; John 4. 14; John 5. 24; John 6. 37, 44-47; John 10. 28; John 17. 6, 12, 24; Acts 2. 47; Rom. 8. 29-39; Phil. 1. 6; 1 Pet. 1. 3-5. 19

ARTICLE 10 : Spiritual Death and Spiritual Life

We believe that all men are by nature so completely dead in trespasses and sins that they cannot, while in that state, know or feel anything of God in Christ, spiritually, graciously, and savingly¹. And we believe that, when quickened into everlasting life in Christ (as the elect alone are, or can be, or will be), the vessel of mercy then first feels spiritually the guilt of sin, and is taught to know, in his own experience, the fall and ruin of man². Thus every quickened child of God is brought, in God's own time and way, through the Spirit's teaching, from necessity to depend for salvation on Christ's blood and righteousness alone³. And we believe that this teaching will not lead him to licentiousness, but make him willing to walk in good works, to which he is ordained, and which are acceptable to God only through Jesus Christ⁴.

Scripture references:

1. Eph. 2. 1-3.
2. Isa. 1. 6; Rom. 3. 10-19; Rom. 7. 18.
3. John 6. 68; John 10. 9; John 14. 6; Acts 4. 12; 3 Eph. 2. 8-10; Heb. 6. 18.
4. Rom. 8. 14; Gal. 5. 16-25; Gal. 6. 14-16.

ARTICLE 11 : Man unable to perform Spiritual good works until he is called by Grace.

We believe that man can never do a good work, properly so called, until the grace of God is implanted in his heart¹, and that nothing is spiritually good but what God Himself is pleased to communicate to, and work in, the soul, both to will and to do of His good pleasure². And we also believe that man's works, good or bad, have not anything to do with his call, or being quickened, by the Holy Spirit³.

Scripture references:

1. Rom. 8. 8.

2. Phil. 2. 13.

3. 2 Cor. 3. 5; Eph. 2. 3-9; Tit. 3. 5; Heb. 13. 21. 3 21

ARTICLE 12 : Effectual calling; the Application of the Law; and the Manifestation of Mercy and Pardon

We believe in the effectual calling of all the elect vessels of mercy out of the ruins of the Fall in God's appointed time, and that the work of regeneration, or new birth, is the sovereign work of God, and His work only, the sinner being as passive therein as in his first birth, and previously thereto dead in trespasses and sins¹. We believe in the application of the Law to the elect sinner's conscience by the Spirit of God², showing the sinner how greatly he has broken that Law, and feelingly condemning him for the same; and in the manifestation of mercy and pardon through Christ alone made known to the soul by God the Holy Ghost³.

Scripture references:

1. John 3. 3-8; John 6. 37-65; Rom. 8. 30; 1 Cor. 1. 26-29; 1 Eph. 2. 4, 5.

2. Rom. 7. 7, 9, 12.

3. Ps. 30. 3; Ps. 130. 7; Isa. 40. 2; Jer. 33. 8; Mic. 7. 18; 3 Rom. 7. 5-10.

ARTICLE 13 : The Effects of Faith

We believe that faith is the gift of God¹, as well as true spiritual repentance and hope; and a manifestation of pardon to the soul; that through faith Christ is made precious to the soul³, and the soul drawn out in love to God⁴; that all are the fruits and effects of the blessed Spirit, and that they will most certainly be productive of good works, and a walk and conversation becoming the Gospel⁵.

Scripture references:

1. Eph. 2. 8.

2. Acts 5. 31; Rom. 15. 13; 2 Thess. 2. 16; 1 Pet. 1. 3.

3. 1 Pet. 2. 7.

4. 1 John 4. 19.

5. Gal. 2. 16-21; Gal. 5. 22-26. 5 23

ARTICLE 14 : The Resurrection of the Body; and Eternal Glory or Damnation

We believe in the Resurrection of the body, both of the just and the unjust; that the just (the elect) shall be raised up in glory and honour², and be openly acknowledged and fully acquitted in the Judgment Day, before angels, devils and sinners, and made fully and eternally blest both in body and soul; and that the wicked shall be raised up to be condemned, body and soul, to the unspeakable torments of hell for ever and ever³.

Scripture references:

1. Acts 24. 15.
2. Matt. 24. 31; Matt. 25. 31-40.
3. Isa. 26. 19; Dan. 12. 2; Matt. 25. 31-46; John 5. 28, 29; 3 Acts 23. 6; Rom. 6. 23; Rom. 8. 11, 23; Rom. 14. 10-12; 1 Cor. 15. 52; 2 Cor. 5. 10; Rev. 20. 12-15.

ARTICLE 15 : Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper¹ are ordinances of Christ, to be continued till His Second Coming; and that the former is requisite to the latter; that is to say, that those only can scripturally sit down to the Lord's Supper who, upon their profession of faith, have been baptised, by immersion, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and that, therefore, what is called "Mixed Communion"² is unscriptural, improper, and not to be allowed in the churches of Christ³.

Scripture references:

1. 1 Cor. 11. 2, 26; 1 Cor. 14. 40; Col. 2. 5-8.
2. Rom. 16. 17.
3. Matt. 3. 13-16; Matt. 28. 19, 20; John 3. 22, 23; Acts 2. 3 37-42; Acts 8. 12; Acts 9. 18; Acts 10. 47, 48; Acts 16. 14, 15, 30, 31, 33; Acts 18. 8; Acts 19. 1-6; Rom. 6. 3; Col. 2. 12.

ARTICLE 16 : The Gospel, not the Law, the Believer's Rule of Conduct

We believe that the Believer's Rule of conduct is the gospel, and not the law, commonly called the Moral Law, issued on Mount Sinai, which hath no glory

in it by reason of the glory that excelleth, that is to say, the Gospel¹; the Gospel containing the sum and substance and glory of all the laws which God ever promulgated from His throne, and the Jews, because of the hardness of their hearts, being permitted some things which the Gospel forbids².

Scripture references:

1. Gal. 6. 15, 16; 2 Cor. 3. 10; Rom. 7. 2-4.
2. Deut. 24. 1; Matt. 19. 8, 9.

ARTICLE 17 : Infant Baptism Denied

We deny and reject, as unscriptural and erroneous, the baptism of infants, whether by immersion, sprinkling, pouring, or any other mode.

Scripture references:

Heb. 11. 6; Acts. 8. 12, 37.

ARTICLE 18 : Baptismal Regeneration Denied

We reject as blasphemous the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration; that is, that the person baptised is or can be regenerated in, by or through baptism, much less, if possible, by infant sprinkling.

Scripture references:

John 1. 13; 1 Pet. 1. 23. 27

ARTICLE 19 : Sanctification

We believe in the sanctification of God's people, the term sanctification signifying a separation and setting apart by and for God. This, in the child of God, is three-fold: 1, by election by God the Father¹; 2, by redemption by God the Son²; and, by the almighty regenerating operation of God the Holy Ghost³. We believe that the blessed Spirit is the Author of 3 what is styled in Scripture the new creature, or creation⁴, or new heart⁵; being, in truth, an implantation of the Divine nature⁶, through which the child of God would, according to the inner man⁷, be holy as God is holy, and perfectly fulfil all the good pleasure of the Father's will; but groans being burdened, being constantly opposed by the

contrary workings of the old man⁸. We reject the doctrine of progressive sanctification, or that a child of God experiences such a gradual weakening, subduing, or rectification of the old nature, called in Scripture the old man⁹, or such a continued general improvement as shall make him at any time less dependent upon the communications of the Spirit and grace of Christ for all goodness, or less a poor, vile, wretched, helpless sinner in himself, and in his own estimation¹⁰.

Scripture references:

1. Jude 1.
2. John 17. 19.
3. Rom. 15. 16.
4. 2 Cor. 5. 17; Eph. 4. 24.
5. Ezek. 36. 26.
6. 2 Pet. 1. 4.
7. Rom. 7. 22.
8. Rom. 7; Gal. 5. 17.
9. Eph. 4. 22; Col. 3. 9.
10. John 15. part of 5; 2 Cor. 3. 5; Rev. 3. 17.

ARTICLE 20 : Growth in Grace

We believe that the grace of God produces a real change in a man, and teaches him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live godly¹, and that there is a growth in grace², which consists principally in a growing experimental knowledge of a man's sinful self³, the vanity of the creature, the glory of God, the spirituality of His law, and the want and worth of Jesus Christ. This is accompanied by a deepening distrust of everything but the grace and love of God in Christ for salvation, and is not a growth in conscious goodness, but in felt necessity and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ⁴.

Scripture references:

1. Tit. 2. 11, 12.
2. 2 Pet. 3. 18; Phil. 3. 8-10; Mark 4. 26-29; 1 John 2. 12, 13.
3. 1 Kings 8. 38; Ezra 9. 6; Job 40. 4-6; Ps. 73. 22; 3 Dan. 10. 8.
4. John 3. 30; 1 Cor. 2. 2; Tit. 3. 3-8; Eph. 3. 8; 1 Tim. 1. 15.

ARTICLE 21 : Indwelling Sin

We reject the doctrine of perfection in the flesh, or that the believer ever becomes free from indwelling sin in this life, or whilst in the body. “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”

Scripture references:

1 John 1. 8; 1 Kings 8. 46; Job 9. 2; Job 15. 14; Ps.119. 96; Prov. 20. 9; Ecc. 7. 20; Rom. 7. 18. 31

ARTICLE 22 : Backsliding and Chastening

We reject the doctrines that the children of God cannot backslide, and that God does not chastise His people for sin¹. For, though we believe that a child of God is called from a death in sin to a life of righteousness, and would, according to the law of his mind, or new nature, in all respects obey God’s holy will as declared in the Scriptures, yet through the temptations of Satan, the allurements of the world, and the power and deceitfulness of indwelling sin, he may fall for a season like David, Peter, and other Bible saints did². But we believe that when the children of God thus sin against God, and transgress His holy revealed will, God does in various ways and degrees chastise them for it³, not in vindictive anger, but in tender love, as a father does the son in whom he delighteth⁴. We believe, too, that in this matter of chastisement for sin God will deal in a most sovereign way, and as a God of judgment; so that, though the punished child shall be made to discern the reason of the rod⁵, it is seldom safe for others to judge according to the outward appearance. We further believe that no man living in habitual sin gives any proof that he is a child of God, and we cannot, therefore, have fellowship with him, be his profession what it may.

Scripture references:

1. 1 Cor. 11. 32.
2. Jer. 3. 14, 22; Hos. 14.
3. Ps. 89. 30-33; Prov. 3. 11, 12.
4. Job 5. 17; Ps. 94. 12; Ps. 119. 67; Isa. 54. 7, 8; Heb. 12. 4 5-11.
5. Mic. 6. 9.

ARTICLE 23 : Final Perseverance

We believe, as expressed in Article 9, in the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, and that, however much the elect of God may be tried by sin, and opposed by Satan, they shall all eventually attain to everlasting glory. Not one of them shall perish, for none can pluck them out of the Father's hand.

Scripture references:

Isa. 51. 11; John 10. 28, 29.

ARTICLE 24 : Gospel Invitations

We believe that the invitations of the Gospel, being spirit and life*, are intended only for those who have been made by the blessed Spirit to feel their lost state as sinners and their need of Christ as their Saviour, and to repent of and forsake their sins.

Scripture references:

Isa. 55. 1; John 7. 37; Prov. 28. 13; Matt. 11. 28-30; John 6. 37. 35

** That is, under the influence of the Holy Spirit*

ARTICLE 25 : Universal Redemption Denied

We deny that Christ died for all mankind.

Scripture references:

Matt. 25. 31-46; John 10. 11, 15, 26. (see also Article 6)

ARTICLE 26 : Duty Faith and Duty Repentance Denied

We deny duty faith and duty repentance – these terms signifying that it is every man's duty to spiritually and savingly repent and believe¹. We deny also that there is any capability in man by nature to any spiritual good whatever. So that we reject the doctrine that men in a state of nature should be exhorted to believe in or turn to God².

Scripture references:

1. Gen. 6. 5; Gen. 8. 21; Matt. 15. 19; Jer. 17. 9; John 6. 44, 65.

2. John 12. 39, 40; Eph. 2. 8; Rom. 8. 7, 8; 1 Cor. 4. 7.

ARTICLE 27 :The Non-Elect Incapable of Receiving Grace

We deny that the Holy Spirit ever enlightens the non-elect, to make them capable at all of receiving grace.

Scripture references:

Isa. 6. 9, 10; John 14. 17; Rom. 11. 7, 8; Mark 4. 11, 12; Luke 8. 10; John 12. 39, 40.

ARTICLE 28 : Baxterianism Denied

We reject the doctrine called “Baxterianism”; that is to say, that while all the elect shall assuredly be saved, there is a residuum of grace in Christ for the rest, or any of the rest, if they will only accept it.

Scripture references:

John 3. 27; 1 Cor. 2. 14.

ARTICLE 29 :Indiscriminate Offers of Grace Denied

While we believe that the Gospel is to be *preached* in or proclaimed to all the world, as in Mark 16. 15, we deny *offers* of grace; that is to say, that the gospel is to be *offered* indiscriminately to all.

Scripture references:

Mark 16. 15; 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. (see also Articles 24 and 26)

ARTICLE 30 : Christ’s Glorified Body

We believe that the glorified body of the Lord Jesus Christ is the same flesh and bones now in heaven as that which hung upon the cross.

Scripture references:

1 Cor. 15. 16, 20; Luke 24. 39; Acts 1. 9, 11.

ARTICLE 31 : Annihilation of the Wicked Denied

We reject the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked, and believe that all who die out of Christ shall be turned into hell, the fire of which shall never be quenched, the wicked there suffering for ever the torments of eternal fire.

Scripture references:

Matt. 25. 46; Rev. 19. last part of 20; Rev. 14. 10, 11; Rev. 20. 10, 15.

Note: It is the same word in the Greek which, in Matt. 25. 46, declares the eternity of life for the sheep which declares the eternity of punishment for the goats. So (Rev. 20. 15), those who are “not written in the book of life” are “cast into the lake of fire”, where they are “tormented for ever and ever” (Ver. 10). Now the same words which are there translated “for ever and ever” are also used in Rev. 10. 6, where the angel “swore by Him that liveth for ever and ever”. Therefore, if God is “to live for ever and ever”, the torment in the lake of fire is to be for ever and ever; for the words are exactly the same in both passages.

ARTICLE 32 : Preaching of the Gospel (Apostolic Uniqueness)

We believe that it is the solemn duty of ministers anointed by the Holy Spirit, to preach the gospel in all its parts as the Apostles did¹, according to the measure of grace and ability given², in all matters of doctrine and practice³, they (the Apostles), being inspired to lay down these foundation doctrines of faith and practice in the churches⁴. But we believe from the brief and inspired records we have in the Scriptures⁵ that it would be unwarrantable to adopt universal methods in ministerial addresses⁶ in the present day under vastly different circumstances, thereby implying supernatural powers which only the Apostles possessed⁷, or to assume that ministers in the present day are inspired as the Apostles were, which supposition by some false teachers has led to most grave and destructive errors amongst Romanists and other religious bodies⁸.

Scripture references:

1. Romans 12:6-8; Acts 20:26,27
2. 1 Peter 5:3

3. 1 Corinthians 2:2; Ephesians 5:1,2
4. 2 Timothy 2:16,17; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 3:10,11
5. John 21:24,25; Acts 2:40
6. Matthew 3:7; Matthew 9:12,13
7. Acts 2:3,4; Acts 5:11-13; Acts 8:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10
8. Matthew 7:22,23; Matthew 24:23; Revelation 2:2

ARTICLE 33 : Preaching to the Unconverted

We believe that for ministers in the present day to address unregenerate or unconverted persons as such, in a mixed congregation, calling upon them while in a state of nature as rational creatures savingly to repent, believe, and accept Christ, indicating thereby inherent power of themselves to perform spiritual acts of faith dependent upon the creative power of the Holy Spirit, infringes the sovereignty of God the Father¹, the teaching of Christ Himself², the divine prerogative of the Holy Ghost³ and denies by implication the doctrines of eternal election⁴ and special redemption⁵.

Scripture references:

1. Ephesians 1:4-6
2. John 6:29, 44, 65
3. John 1:11-13; John 3:5-7
4. Romans 9:23
5. John 10: 11, 15

ARTICLE 34 : Preaching of the Gospel (Exhorting the Unregenerate)

We believe therefore that every exercise of a spiritual and saving nature is the effect of the New Birth¹, of being quickened into life from a state of death in trespasses and sins²; and of being called by divine grace from the darkness of fallen nature into God's marvellous light³. Therefore to convey the belief (impression) that unregenerate persons possess independent power of themselves to close in with, and accept Christ savingly apart from the quickening grace and teaching of the Holy Spirit is untrue and is a doctrine to be rejected⁴. And we also deny that we have Scriptural warrant to take the exhortations in the Old Testament intended for the Jews in national covenant with God and apply them in a spiritual and saving sense to unregenerate persons.

Scripture references:

1. John 3:7
2. Ephesians 2:1; 1 Peter 1:23
3. 1 Peter 2:9; Colossians 1:13
4. John 15:4,5

ARTICLE 35 : Degrees of Faith

We believe that there are various degrees of faith, as little faith and great faith¹; that when a man is quickened by the blessed Spirit, he has faith given him to know and feel that he is a sinner against God², and that without a Saviour he must sink in black despair. And we further believe that such a man will be made to cry for mercy, to mourn over and on account of his sins³, and, being made to feel that he has no righteousness of his own⁴, to hunger and thirst after Christ's righteousness; being led on by the Spirit until, in the full assurance of faith, he has the Spirit's witness in his heart that his sins are for ever put away⁵; but that the faith is the same in nature as is imparted in his first awakenings, though now grown to the full assurance thereof.

Scripture references:

1. Matt. 6. 30; Matt. 15. 28.
2. Luke 18. 13.
3. Matt. 5. 4.
4. Isa. 64. 6; Phil. 3. 9.
5. Rom. 8. 16; Eph. 4. 30; Heb. 9. 12, 26; Heb. 7. 27; 5 Heb. 10. 14.

Note

The last four Articles, known as the 'Added Articles' of 1878, have been shown in the revised wording proposed in *A Goodly Heritage*, published by Gospel Standard Trust Publications, 2006. This has the distinct benefit of being clearer and also having scripture proofs.

Overarching Principle of the Sufficiency of Scripture

Where issues arise in the life of the Church that require clarification beyond the fundamentals of the Faith expressed in the above Articles, eg. In the realm of morals, or from technological developments, the principle that the Bible is sufficient to guide all faith and practice shall be followed, with confidence that the Lord will guide the Church's understanding.

