

What We Believe

Longview Point Baptist Church has adopted as its Statement of Faith the *Baptist Faith and Message, 2000 edition*. A link to the full document is provided on our website. Click “about us” then click “our beliefs”, and you will find a link to the 2000 edition of the *Baptist Faith and Message*. The doctrines below are critical doctrines for us, but not all that are included in the Baptist Faith and Message.

The Non-Negotiables:

The Inerrant Word of God
The Triune God
Jesus as the only way of Salvation
Security of the believer
Ordinances of the Church
The Church
Biblical Marriage and Family
Evangelism and Missions

The Bible:

- We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. It is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried.
- 2 Timothy 3:15-17 - “and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

God:

- He is the one and only living and true God. (Jer. 10:10)
- He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being; the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe.
- God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. “*I am the LORD, your Holy One, The Creator of Israel, your King.*” (Isaiah 43:15, NAS)
- God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being. “*Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!*” (Deuteronomy 6:4, NAS)

God the Father:

- God as 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:

- Christ is the eternal Son of God.
 - He was conceived of the Holy Spirit.
 - He was 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.
- In His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin.
- He was crucified, dead and buried.
- He was raised from the dead with a glorified body 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.

- His is the only way of salvation.
 - John 14:6 “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”
 - Acts 4:12 “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”
- He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission.
- He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever-present Lord.

God the Holy Spirit:

- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine.
- He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures.
- Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. “*For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*” (2 Peter 1:21, ESV)
- He exalts Christ.
- He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration.
- At the moment of regeneration, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ.
- He bestows the spiritual gifts by which the believer serves God through His church.
- He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption.
- He indwells every believer “*And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*” (John 14:16–17, ESV)
- He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Salvation:

- Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God’s grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus.
- Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.
- Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God.
- Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

There is no salvation apart from repentance and personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

- **Justification:**
 - Imputed righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21)
- **Sanctification:**
 - Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him.
 - Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.
- **Glorification:**
 - Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Assurance of Salvation:

Can anyone know for sure that he is saved? For someone to declare that he is certain of his salvation may seem to be an act of unspeakable arrogance. Yet the Bible calls us to make our salvation a matter of certainty. Peter commands, “Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure” (2 Peter 1:10).

It is our duty to seek assurance of our salvation with diligence. This is not done out of idle curiosity about the state of our soul, but to enhance our growth in sanctification. Christians who

remain uncertain about the state of their salvation are subject to all sorts of questions that paralyze their walk with Christ. They stumble in doubt and are vulnerable to the assaults of Satan. So we must seek to be assured of our salvation. There are four possible positions with respect to one's assurance of salvation.

Position One: There are people who are unsaved and know that they are unsaved. These people are aware of the enmity they have in their hearts toward God and clearly want nothing to do with Christ as their Savior. They are bold to proclaim that they do not need Christ. Such people are often openly hostile to the gospel.

Position Two: There are people who are saved but do not know they are saved. These people are actually in a state of grace but are uncertain of it. Perhaps they are wrestling with sin in their lives and doubt their own salvation because of a troubled conscience. In this group are those who have not yet made certain that they are among the elect.

Position Three: There are people who are saved and know that they are saved. This is the group who are certain of their election and calling. They have a clear and sound understanding of what salvation requires and know they have met the requirements. They have believed the testimony of the Holy Spirit when He witnessed to their spirits that they are the children of God (Romans 8:16).

Position Four: There are people who are not saved but confidently believe that they are saved. These people have assurance of salvation without salvation. Their assurance is a false assurance.

Because it is possible to have a false assurance of salvation, how do we know if we are in group three or group four? To answer that we must look more closely at group four and ask how it is possible to have a false sense of assurance.

The easiest way to have a false assurance of salvation is to have a false doctrine of salvation. For example, if a person holds to a Universalist view of salvation they may reason as follows:

Every person is saved.
I am a person.
Therefore, I am saved.

Because their doctrine is faulty, their assurance has no firm basis.

Another way that people falsely assure themselves of salvation is by believing that they will get to heaven by trying to live a good life. Those who think they are living a good enough life to satisfy the demands of a holy God are only deluding themselves into thinking they are saved.

But what if a person has a sound doctrine of salvation? Is it still possible to have false assurance? We must answer yes. A person might think he has saving faith but not really possess it. The test for authentic assurance is twofold. On the one hand, we must examine our own hearts to see if we have true faith in Christ. **We must see whether or not we have any genuine love for the biblical Christ. For we know such love for Him would be impossible without regeneration.**

Second, we must examine the fruit of our faith. We do not need perfect fruit to have assurance, but there must be some evidence of the fruit of obedience for our profession of faith to be credible. If no fruit is present, then no faith is present. Where saving faith is found, fruit of that faith is also found.

Finally, we seek our assurance from the Word of God through which the Holy Spirit bears witness to our spirit that we are His children. Romans 8:16

Summary

1. It is our duty to diligently pursue assurance of salvation.
2. Assurance of salvation enhances our sanctification.
3. There are four possible groups or positions regarding assurance:
 - (a) Those who are unsaved and know they are unsaved
 - (b) Those who are saved but don't have assurance that they are saved
 - (c) Those who are saved and know they are saved
 - (d) Those who are unsaved but believe they are saved
4. False assurance is primarily based on a false doctrine of salvation.
5. To gain authentic assurance we must search our own hearts and examine the fruit of our faith.
6. Full assurance comes from the Word of God coupled with the testimony of the Holy Spirit.

Biblical passages for reflection:

Matthew 7:21-23	John 3:1-21	1 John 2:3-6
Romans 8:15-17	2 Corinthians 1:12	1 John 5:13

Security of the Believer:

We know we are secure because.....

- Of Christ's finished work on the cross (Rom 6:10).
- Of the will of the Father *"For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."* (John 6:40, NAS)
- Of the holding power of Christ (John 10:28-29).
- Of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives *"In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory."* (Ephesians 1:13–14, NAS)
- Of the eternal intercession of Christ at the right hand of the Father (Heb 7:24-25).
- Of the unchangeableness of God's character (Num 23:19; Heb 13:8).

The Ordinances of the Lord:

Baptism:

- Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Greek—bapto... "to cover wholly with fluid")
- Baptism 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 testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead.
- Being a church ordinance, it is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.
- It is not salvation and is not a prerequisite to salvation.

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, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming. (1 Cor 11:23-29)

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.
- A New Testament church observes the two ordinances of Christ.
- A New Testament church is governed by God's laws.
- A New Testament church exercises the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeks 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.
- A New Testament church's scriptural officers are pastors and deacons.

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.

Responsibility in Christ's Church:

- Stay in a yielding fellowship with the Head... Jesus Christ. *"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."* (John 15:4–5, NAS)
- Relate rightly to other members of the Body.

- Put the success of others above our own. (Phil 2:2-4; John 15:12-13)
- Clear up relationships that are messed up. (Matt 5:23-24)
- Live an honest open life before each other. (Eph 4:25)
- Give and receive scriptural correction. (Heb 3:13; Prov 10:17)
- Remember you are important and have a role to play in doing the will of the Head.
 - Participate in ministry in the local body. *“As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”* (1 Peter 4:10–11, NAS)
 - Support the ministries God has called us to financially. (2 Cor 9:6-8)
 - Submit to spiritual authority *“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.”* (Hebrews 13:17, ESV)

¹ Sproul, R. C. (1996). *Essential truths of the Christian faith*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House.