



## Summary of Basic Beliefs<sup>1</sup>

We do not view our **Summary of Basic Beliefs** as a creed or a statement to which our staff, volunteers, or churches are forced to subscribe, but rather it is a basic summary of beliefs and emphases generally held by Baptists. It does not take the place of the Bible, which is our standard for faith and practice, but emerges out of it.

We believe...

- in one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – co-eternal, co-existent, co-equal and co-operative, as affirmed in Scripture and as summarized in the ancient Christian confessions of faith.<sup>2</sup>
- that the Bible is inspired by God and is the standard against which all Christian belief and behavior is measured.
- that human beings are incapable of saving themselves and stand in need of God's gracious love and that Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully human, has, through His death and resurrection, done everything necessary for us to have a personal one-to-one relationship with God; we begin to experience the benefits of this when we repent from and confess our sin, and commit our lives under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, our only Savior.
- that each local church is an autonomous assembly of believing disciples responsible to discern the mind of Christ for that body of Christ - in the light of Scripture, with the leading of the Holy Spirit, and under the Lordship of Christ.
- that Christ has, according to the Scriptures, instituted two church ordinances for believers:
  - **believer's baptism** as an act of obedience and an expression of a personal commitment to Christian discipleship. The baptism of the believer into and under water "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" is symbolic of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; the end of an old way of life; and the beginning of a new life in Christ. It affirms the Holy Spirit's work that is already experienced by the believer and this public baptism is an outward visible sign of the ongoing and life-long sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit; and
  - **the communion of the Lord's Table** as a repeated and frequent reminder of our communal life in Christ, whose death we remember, whose resurrection we celebrate, and whose return we eagerly await.
- that church membership is only for those who can testify personally of God's saving grace.
- that each local church is to model a better way of life according to the principles of the Kingdom of God. Because a Christian disciple's first and highest loyalty is to God, so also each church, while respecting those secular laws not in conflict with the commands of God, should be free from state control.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted in October 2008

<sup>2</sup> This refers to the Trinitarian formulae of the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed.

- that in every country all people should be entitled to the freedom of religious expression, while respecting the laws of that country and the beliefs of others.
- that we, in response to the Great Commission,<sup>3</sup> have been sent out<sup>4</sup> and given the task of making disciples – disciplined followers of Jesus Christ – from among all ethnic groups (nations).
- that just as the Trinity is the model of eternal co-operation so we as IBC churches are to co-operate together in mission with God, with each other, and with other like-minded Christian churches and organizations: locally, nationally, and internationally - so that the world may believe.<sup>5</sup>

As the International Baptist Convention we celebrate and affirm our unity in diversity as part of the worldwide body of Christ. We seek no uniformity in worship or service but are “many faces, many places, one message” not restricted by national or cultural bounds. We live and serve together here on earth in anticipation of our future celebration and service of God in Glory with the redeemed of every nation and generation.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Matthew 28: 18-20

<sup>4</sup> John 20: 21-22

<sup>5</sup> *ibid* & John 17: 21

<sup>6</sup> Revelation 7: 7-12