

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS (Excerpt) OF THE  
HAVEN FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH, RALEIGH, N. C., INC.

ARTICLE 2: Doctrine

This Church accepts the Statement of Faith as set forth herein:

Section 1 – Statement of Faith

- A. The Holy Scriptures: We believe and teach that the Bible (Old and New Testaments) is God's written and complete revelation to man. It is inspired (of divine origin and authority) equally in all parts (plenary), inspired in every word (verbal), and absolutely inerrant in the original documents. Thus it is our only infallible rule of faith and practice. (2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:15-17)
- B. The Godhead: We believe and teach that there is but one living and true God. He is an infinite, all knowing, all powerful, all present Spirit who is perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, and eternally existing in three Persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4; John 4:24; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)
1. The Person and Work of God, The Father: We believe and teach that God the Father is the first Person of the Trinity. He is the Creator of all things and the only absolute and omnipotent ruler of the universe. As Creator He is Father to all men but is a spiritual Father only to believers. (Genesis 1:1; Ephesians 4:6; Romans 8:14; John 1:12)
  2. The Person and Work of Christ: We believe and teach that Jesus Christ is the second Person of the Trinity, yet shares equally in all the attributes of deity with the Father and the Holy Spirit. We teach and believe in His virgin birth, in His incarnation, in His perfect and sinless humanity, in His substitutionary, satisfactory, propitiatory, atoning death on Calvary, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, in His present intercessory ministry, and in His personal return for the Church. (John 10:30; Isaiah 7:14; John 1:1, 14; Romans 3:24; Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:20; Acts 1:9)
  3. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit: We believe and teach in the absolute and full deity of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, who is equal with the Father and the Son. We recognize His work in creation, the incarnation, the written revelation and the work of salvation. The Holy Spirit indwells all believers at the moment of conversion to sanctify, baptize, instruct, empower, guide and seal them. (Genesis 1:2; Matthew 1:18; 2 Peter 1:20, 21; John 3:5-7; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13)
- C. Man: We believe and teach that man was a direct creation of God, made in His image and likeness; that by personal disobedience to the revealed will of God, man became a sinful creature, the father of a fallen race, which is universally sinful in both nature and practice, thus alienated from the life and family of God, under the righteous judgment and wrath of God, and has within himself no possible means of salvation. (Genesis 1:27; 3:6; Psalm 51:5; Romans 3:23; 5:12, 19; Galatians 3:11)
- D. Salvation: We believe and teach in salvation by grace totally apart from any human merit. Salvation is a free gift of God. Salvation is bestowed by a gracious God upon unworthy man conditioned solely upon personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on Calvary. (Ephesians 2:8, 9; John 3:16; Titus 3:5, 6)

1. God's Offer of Salvation: We believe and teach that Jesus died for the sins of the whole world (unlimited atonement) and therefore offers salvation to the whole world; that His atonement was sufficient for all but effective only for those who believe. (John 3:16; 1 John 2:2; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9)

2. God's Choice of Who Will Be Saved: We believe and teach in conditional election, that, according to 1 Peter 1:1-2, God chose from the masses of mankind those who would be saved on the basis of His foreknowledge of their faith. God's foreknowledge was based on His omniscience, which allowed Him to know who would believe, thus He elected or chose to save them.

3. Man's Response to God's Gracious Offer: We believe and teach that an individual can say no to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit and be forever lost (resistible grace). When God extends a call to salvation, it is a legitimate call both to the elect and the non-elect, that the non-elect refuses because of his or her personal belief or rebellion and not because he or she was not one whom God chose to be saved. Every individual who receives a call of the gospel also receives a divine enablement to believe. Yet, they can refuse.

4. Depravity: We believe and teach that man is born dead in trespasses and that apart from the divine enablement of the Holy Spirit, man left to his own will never and can never repent and believe. (Ephesians 2:1)

5. Security of the Believer: We believe and teach the security of the believer, that God will keep securely in His hand those who are trusting in Jesus Christ but offers absolutely no hope for that person who is not trusting in Him. The security of the believer is based upon a continuous faith in Jesus Christ. (John 3:16; 10:25-30; 1 John 2:24; 1 Peter 1:5; Colossians 1:21-23)

E. Separation: We believe and teach that separation from sin is clearly called for throughout the Old and New Testaments. From a deep gratitude for Christ's mercy to us, we should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our love to God and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior. God commands us to separate ourselves from worldly and sinful practices and continually pursue a life of obedience, righteous and holiness. (Romans 12:1, 2; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17; Titus 2:11-12; 1 Peter 1:13-16)

F. The Church: We believe and teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the church, the bride of Christ, of which Christ is the head. The church began at Pentecost and is made up of all born again believers in this present age, being completed at the coming of Christ for His bride at the rapture. (1 Corinthians 12:12, 13; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23, 32; Colossians 1:18; Acts 2:1, 21, 38-47; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

1. We believe and teach that the local church is an autonomous, self-governing, divinely ordained institution whose head is Christ and whose members are commanded to assemble together. The purpose of the local church is to glorify God by evangelizing the lost and edifying the saints. (Ephesians 5:22-23; Colossians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 11:18, 20; Hebrews 10:25; Ephesians 3:21; Ephesians 4:13, 16; Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8)

2. We believe and teach that the local church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again persons. (1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25-27)

3. We believe and teach in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Romans 16:1, 4; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

4. We believe and teach that three ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism, the Lord's supper, and the washing of the saint's feet. (Acts 8:36-39; Luke 22:17-20; John 13:2-17)

G. Christ's Second Coming: We believe and teach in the "blessed hope", the personal, imminent return of Christ Who will rapture His Church prior to the seven-year Tribulation period. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints to establish His earthly kingdom. (1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6)

H. The Eternal State: We believe and teach in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and eternal punishment. (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28, 29; 11:25-26; Revelation 20:5-6, 12-13)

1. The spirit of the redeemed at death go immediately to be with the Lord, where in a conscious state they await the first resurrection when the spirit and body shall be reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:42; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23, 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 20:4-6)

2. The spirits of the unsaved at death remain in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with bodies united they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15)

I. Satan: We believe and teach the existence of a literal personal malicious being called Satan or the Devil. He is a created angel and the author of sin; he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he will be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; Revelation 20:10)

J. Creation: We believe and teach that God created the universe in six literal, twenty-four hour days. We reject any other teaching not consistent with Biblical creation such as the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, Theistic Evolution and Evolution. (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11)

K. Human Sexuality:

1. We believe and teach that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. Also, any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. (Genesis 2:24; 19:5, 13; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)

2. We believe and teach that the only legitimate marriage is joining of one man (who was born male and has always been a male) and one woman (who was born a female and always has been a female). (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 5:22-23)

3. We believe and teach that men and women are spiritually equal in the position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Therefore, only men are eligible to be licensed and ordained by the church. (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:18; 1 Timothy 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)

L. Divorce and Remarriage: We believe and teach that God hates divorce and intends for marriage to last until one's spouse dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of

fornication and the departure of an unbelieving spouse. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for office pastor or deacon. (Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:15; 1 Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

M. Abortion: We believe and teach that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. Partial-birth abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape or incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control or the mental well being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Psalm 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1,5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

N. Lawsuits Between Believers: We believe and teach that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. The church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. However, a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32)

O. Giving: We believe and teach that every Christian, as a good steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to them, is obligated to support their local church financially. God has established the tithe as a basis for giving but every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. (Genesis 14:20; Proverbs 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

## Section 2 – Authority of the Statement of Faith

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing statement of faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible, and therefore, is binding upon all members.

### ARTICLE 3: Covenant

Having given ourselves to God, by faith in Christ, and adopted the Word of God as our rule of faith and practice, we now give ourselves to one another by the will of God in this solemn covenant.

We promise, by His grace, to love and obey Him in all things, to avoid all appearance of evil, to abstain from all sinful amusements and unholy conformity to the world, from all sanction of the use and sale of intoxicating beverages, and to "provide things honest in the sight of all men."

We agree faithfully to discharge our obligations in reference to the study of the Scriptures, secret prayer, family devotions, and social worship; and by self-denial, faith, and good works endeavor to "grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together for Church conferences, public worship and the observance of the ordinances of the Gospel; nor fail to pay according to our ability for the support of the Church, or its poor and all its benevolent work.

We agree to accept Christian admonition and reproof with meekness, and to watch over one another in love, endeavoring to "keep the unity of the Spirit" in the bonds of peace. To be careful of one another's happiness and reputation, and seek to strengthen the weak, encourage the afflicted, admonish the erring, and as far as we are able, promote the success of the Church and of the Gospel.

We will everywhere hold Christian principle sacred and Christian obligations and enterprises supreme; counting it our chief business in life to extend the influence of Christ in society, constantly praying and toiling that the Kingdom of God may come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

To this end we agree to labor for the promotion of educational and denominational enterprises, the support of missions, the success of Sunday Schools, and evangelistic efforts for the salvation of the world. And may the God of peace sanctify us wholly and preserve us blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### ARTICLE 4: Statement of Faith Accord

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the statement of faith of the church.

#### ARTICLE 5: Christian Walk

All officers, administrators, teachers and other participants shall continue or adopt a life-style consistent with the precepts which they teach, whether in or out of the classroom.