

Affirmations and Denials Regarding Theological Differences

We affirm the responsibility and privilege of every member of the church to advocate his or her doctrinal convictions and we deny that theological discussion can be healthy if our primary aim is to win an argument or to triumph in a debate. First Baptist Duncan has pastoral staff, deacons, and members who differ theologically, but those differences are minimized and left to friendly discussion due to our overwhelming unity in these affirmations and denials:

The Bible

We affirm that the Holy Scriptures are the inerrant, infallible, and totally trustworthy Word of God and our supreme authority on all matters of truth. We affirm that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the great theme of all Scripture and that the Bible is sufficient to reveal all we need to know concerning God's purpose to save sinners (Deut 4:1-2; Matt 5:17-18; John 17:17; 2 Tim 3:15-17; Heb 4:12).

We deny that any human system of thought or any theological tradition can assume supreme authority or be allowed to supplant dependence upon the Bible and all that it reveals. Neither Calvinism nor non-Calvinism ought to be equated with sound Southern Baptist doctrine nor be considered inconsistent with it.

The Lostness of Humanity

We affirm that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and that the universal condition of humanity is lostness, as every single human being, Jesus alone excepted, is a sinner whose only hope of salvation is the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 17:30-31; Rom 1:19-32; Eph 2:1-22).

We deny that any human being is without need of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and we deny any teaching that minimizes the truth about sin and the need of all persons to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Power of the Gospel

We affirm that our Lord is mighty to save and that He saves to the uttermost. We affirm the power of the Gospel to redeem every single human being through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, whom the Father has now declared to be both Lord and Christ, the Savior of the world (Rom 1:16-17; 1 Cor 15:1-5; Heb 7:25).

We deny that the Gospel is without power to save anyone who repents and believes in Jesus Christ. We also deny that the Gospel as revealed in Scripture lacks anything needful for our salvation.

The Offer of the Gospel

We affirm that the Gospel is to be made known freely to all in the good faith offer that if anyone confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord and believes in his heart that God has raised Christ from the dead, he will be saved (Matt 28:18-20; Rom 10:9-19,13; 2 Cor 5:18-20).

We deny that the Gospel lacks any power to save anyone who believes in Christ and receives Him as Savior and Lord. Anyone who understands the Gospel through the power of the Holy Spirit may, in prayer and petition, trust Christ through repentance and faith, and we should plead with all sinners to do so.

The Atonement of Jesus Christ

We affirm that the death of Jesus Christ on the cross was both penal and substitutionary and that the atonement He accomplished was sufficient for the sins of the entire world (John 1:29, 3:16; 1 John 2:2).

We deny that there is anything lacking in the atonement of Christ to provide for the salvation of anyone.

The Necessity of Conversion

We affirm that salvation involves the conversion of the sinner, whereby the sinner consciously clings to Christ by faith, repents of sin, believes the promises of the Gospel, and publicly professes faith in Christ. We affirm the necessity of conversion and the truth that conversion involves the will of the believer as well as the will of God (Matt 10:32-33; John 1:12; Acts 16:30; Rom 10:9-10) .

We deny that salvation comes to anyone who has not experienced conversion. We also deny that salvation comes to any sinner who does not will to believe and receive Christ.

We, the undersigned, are wholeheartedly and joyfully committed to these affirmations and denials.

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