



FIRST BAPTIST of Hayden

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**The Baptist Faith and Message
The Triune Godhead**

Outline

Preface

1. The Scriptures
2. God
3. Man
4. Salvation
5. God's Purpose of Grace
6. The Church
7. Baptism and the Lord's Supper
8. The Lord's Day
9. The Kingdom
10. Last Things
11. Evangelism and Missions
12. Education
13. Stewardship
14. Cooperation
15. The Christian and the Social Order
16. Peace and War
17. Religious Liberty
18. The Family

Preface

As Baptists, in general, and Southern Baptist, specifically, we have historically and continually affirmed the doctrine of the Trinity – what the Bible refers to as the “Godhead.” Romans 1:20 (KJV 1900): *20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:*

Not only does creation reveal that he exists, but it also reveals the nature of God, that he is a triune Godhead. Another way to say that is “his divine nature”, which is three persons in one essence.

The doctrine of the Trinity is essential to our faith and the work of Christ. The Father sends the Son; the Son goes and does the will of the Father, and the Holy Spirit inhabits the repentant believer and convicts humanity of its sinful nature and need of a savior.

Tonight, we will deal with the Second article of our Baptist Faith and Message: The Triune God.

Our Baptist Distinctives:

2. God

We believe in God, who is revealed in the Bible.

Both Old and New Testaments declare that he exists and that he communicates with and within his creation. As a result, we look to the Bible as our guide to understanding who God is and what God expects. Here is what our Baptist Faith and Message (BFM) teaches us regarding God and how scripture has revealed him.

There is one and only one living and true God. 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. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience.

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.

In this summary statement, we see that Baptists believe that God has revealed himself as a triune Godhead, three distinct persons, who are the One true God.

a) God the Father

BFM: 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.

The Father as Creator: Genesis 1:1 (ESV): *1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*

The Hebrew word for beginning is (resit), meaning a starting point with an anticipated ending. We should note that when God created, he already had the end in mind – the consummation of a plan that he would reveal within a certain group of people, the children of Abraham.

It was to those children that God would reveal himself as their protector, deliverer, redeemer, and Lord. When Moses asked Him, “*Who should I say has sent me. . .*” God’s reply was :

The Father who Reveals Himself: Exodus 3:14 (ESV): *14 God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”*

In his revelation, God reveals that he is eternally existent – without beginning, without ending.

God's nature is in stark contrast to the creation. Creation had a beginning and according to scripture, it will have an ending.

The God of Relationships: Psalm 68:4–6 (ESV): *4 Sing to God, sing praises to his name; lift up a song to him who rides through the deserts; his name is the LORD; exult before him! 5 Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. 6 God settles the solitary in a home; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.*

Galatians 4:6–7 (ESV): *6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.*

Not only has God revealed himself, he also demonstrates that he is personal and intimate with those who believe. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the same God who reveals himself to us. This is personal; it is a relationship between individuals.

The very word Father implies a relationship – a relationship between a Father and children. But, regarding our relationship with God, we meet him at the point of faith. As Baptists, we have esteemed the Fatherhood of God highly. We have refused to allow the theological heresy of the “motherhood” of God to enter our churches. While there are passages that imply God as a mother figure, there are no passages that expressly state that God is “Mother”.

We have, by faith, accepted the revelation of God as a Father, and he is a Father to all who come to him through faith.

As one theologian puts it, “Feminist theologians claim that referring to God as “Father” hurts the self-image of women. If this were true, then referring to God as “Mother” would likewise hurt the self-image of men. Men and women will have to worship different deities! But God cannot be reduced to what makes us feel warm and fuzzy! The attempt to create a goddess or god in our own image is futile as well as blasphemous.

The God who revealed Himself in the Bible by “hard” or “male” attributes does not want or need radical feminists to rewrite the Bible in order to get rid of those very attributes. We must accept God as He has chosen to reveal Himself or be guilty of gross idolatry. Morey, Robert A.

Fearing God: The Key to the Treasure House of Heaven. Davidson Press, Inc., 1999, p. 10.

Worship of the Father: John 4:23 (ESV): *23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.*

Someone has said, “Good doctrine leads to good worship.” We worship God properly when we correctly understand his nature.

b) God the Son

BFM: Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and 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. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. 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. 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.

For accuracy's sake, I would change just one small part of the previous statement: *He now dwells in all believers (in the person of the Holy Spirit) as the living and ever-present Lord.*

Eternally existent Son: John 1:1–3 (ESV): *1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

John introduces the Son of God as the Word of God who was with God at the beginning, and who is God before the beginning, and he is also an agent of creation at the beginning.

Literally, the Father and the Son are One. One in unity, One in essence, One in purpose, and One in power.

Power of the Son over creation: John 20:30–31 (ESV):
30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Jesus' miracles were demonstrations of his power over the creation, and the purpose of God's written Word is to point us to Jesus.

Message of the Son to His creation: Mark 1:1 (ESV): *1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.*

The message of the Son was one of redemption and reconciliation. He redeems us by his death and resurrection, and he reconciles us to God by the blood of his sacrifice. That is good news for all who hear it and respond to it in faith. It is the gospel message: man is a sinner at war with God, God loves his fallen creation and has sent his one and only Son into the world so that the world through him might be saved.

Position of the Son over all of creation: Ephesians 1:15–23 (ESV): 15 *For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints,* 16 *I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,* 17 *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,* 18 *having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,* 19 *and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might* 20 *that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,* 21 *far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.* 22 *And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,* 23 *which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

Because of his obedience, and sacrifice, the Father has given to Jesus the Son all authority and a name above all others, and now God, who has added to His nature mortal man, the eternal God/Man sits at the right hand of the Father in all majesty and honor and is the ruler of all creation.

c) God the Holy Spirit

BFM: 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. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

The Work of the Spirit in Creation: Genesis 1:2 (ESV):
2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

God's Spirit was as active in creation as the Father and the Son. He brooded over the waters of creation. The idea of brooding, or hovering, over the waters is to cause it to move and separate. God separated the waters of the earth from the waters of the expanse above the earth.

We could say the Holy Spirit took the work of the Father and Son through his divine agency and made it good. He does the same for new believers.

He takes the work of the Son of God and makes us better, more holy than when we first were saved. He sanctifies us in Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 (ESV): *13 But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.*

The Work of the Spirit in New Creation: John 16:7–11 (ESV): *7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

The Holy Spirit convicts of sin and reveals coming judgment. In so doing, he draws sinners into repentance and conversion. When we are born again, the Bible tells us that we are becoming a new creation. He also guides us into truth, the full truth of the gospel and its implications for all humanity.

John 16:12–13 (ESV): 12 *“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.*

The Holy Spirit glorifies the Son. He points humanity to the Son of God. This flies in the face of those who glorify the Spirit, who push the Spirit of God to the forefront of worship. The sign of God’s Spirit at work in a church service is the glorification of the Son of God.

John 16:14–15 (ESV): 14 *He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.*

The entirety of the work of God is done by the triune Godhead: Father – Son – Holy Spirit. Without each member of the Godhead, his work would be incomplete. Baptists have historically understood and affirmed this doctrine as a cardinal doctrine of our faith.

Additional Scripture:

(ff = and following)

God the Father:

Genesis 2:7; Exodus 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

God the Son:

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

God the Holy Spirit:

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.