

## Doctrinal Foundation

When you worship, learn, and serve at Dawson, much of what you experience will be based upon what is included in this statement. It is derived from an engagement with God's word and is true to the historic practices of our church. Using the Baptist Faith & Message as a model and foundation, our church leadership has outlined a set of commonly held beliefs. We honor the principles of soul competency and the priesthood of believers, affirming together both our liberty in Christ and our accountability to each other under the word of God.

- 1. The Bible** // The Holy Bible was written by individuals who were divinely inspired and it is God's revelation of Himself to humanity. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its ultimate author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Jesus Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

*Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Joshua 8:34; Psalm 19:7-11; 119:11, 89, 105, 140; Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; John 5:39-40; 17:17; Acts 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:24-25; 2 Peter 1:19-21*

- 2. God** // 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, love, 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.

- A. God the Father** // God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the whole 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 gracious in His attitude toward all people.

*Genesis 1:1-31; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 15:11-18; 20:1-20; 34:6-7; Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-4; 23:1-6; 24:1-2; 90:1-2; 121:1-8; 139:7-12; Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; Lamentations 3:22-23; Matthew 6:9-13; 7:11; 20:1-16; Mark 1:9-11; John 3:16; 17:1-5; Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:6-7; Ephesians 4:6; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 1 John 5:7; 2 Peter 2:5; 1 John 1:5; 1 John 4:7-10, 16; Revelation 1:8*

- B. God the Son** // 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 humanity 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 humanity 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 and fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and people. 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.

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

- C. God the Holy Spirit** // The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired the biblical authors to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables people to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts people of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls people to the Savior, 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 believers 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.

*Genesis 1:1-2; Psalm 139:7-12; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:15-26; 5:26; 16:5-15; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 38; 4:31; 5:1-9; 7:55; 10:44-48; 13:2; Romans 5:5; 8:9-16, 26-27; 14-16; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6-7; 5:22-25; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:1-11, 30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 2 Timothy 1:14; Hebrews 9:14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17*

- 3. Humanity** // Humanity is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning, Adam and Eve were innocent of sin and were endowed by their Creator with freedom of choice.

By their free choice, Adam and Eve sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan, they transgressed the command of God, and fell from their original innocence whereby all humanity inherits a sinful nature and resides in a world tainted by the effect of the Fall.

Only the grace of God can bring us into His holy fellowship and enable them to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of every person is evident in that God created them in His own image, and in that Christ died for them; therefore, every person possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

*Genesis 1:26-30; 3:1-24; Psalm 1; 8:3-9; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; 53:6; Matthew 16:24-26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:18-32; 3:10-23; 6:6-7; 7:14-25; 8:14-18, 29; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; 2 Corinthians 4:16; Ephesians 2:1-10; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-10*

4. **Salvation** // Salvation involves the redemption of the whole person, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. **Regeneration**, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Jesus Christ. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. 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 to Him as Lord and Savior.

B. **Justification** is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. **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 the life of the believer. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. **Glorification** is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

*Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14, 29; 3:3-21, 36; 5:24; 10:9-10, 28-29; 14:6, 15:1-16; 17:3; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:5-11; 16:30-31; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:21-24; 4:3; 5:8-11, 17; 6:1-23; 7, 37-39; 10:9-13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18, 30; 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 2:20; 3:26-27; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7-8; 2:8-9; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:13-14; 3:1-4; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7; Hebrews 2:1-3; 9:24-28; 11:1-3; James 2:14-17; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 1:5-10; 2:1-11; 4:10; Revelation 3:20*

5. **God's Purpose of Grace** // Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of humanity, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end.

Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, bring reproach on the cause of Christ, and temporal judgments on themselves; yet, they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

*Genesis 12:1-3; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matthew 25:31-46; 25:31-46; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-30; 15:16; 17:6, 12, 17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:8-10; 8:28-39; 10:9-11; 11:5-7, 26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 7:25; 10:10; 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10*

6. **The Church** // A church is a local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ (Baptism and the Lord's Supper), governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ expressed through congregational polity. In such a congregation, each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Every member has a calling to use their gifts and talents in ministry. The majority of those ministry roles are filled by lay-volunteers, while some are staffed by individuals called by God and the local congregation to provide specific vocational leadership.

While every member is called to ministry, not all members are called to the two scriptural offices of pastor and deacon. God, through the local church, calls individuals, whose lives best fulfill the biblical qualifications of pastor and deacon, to lead and to serve the local body.

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, tongue, and nation.

*Matthew 16:13-19; 18:15-20; 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-47; 5:12-16; 6:1-4; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-35; 16:5; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 5:4-5; 9:12-14; 12:1-31; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 11:39-40; 13:7, 17; 1 Peter 5:1-5; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3*

7. **Baptism and the Lord's Supper** // The two ordinances of the Church are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

A. **Christian baptism** is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It 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 one's faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership.

B. **The Lord's Supper** is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers, through receiving the bread and the fruit of the vine, remember and proclaim the death of the Redeemer, and anticipate His second coming.

*Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:14-22; 11:23-29*

8. **The Kingdom of God** // The kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His kingship over all humanity who willfully acknowledge Him as King. The kingdom is the realm of salvation into which people enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

*Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10, 23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42-44; John 3:3; 18:36; 17:22-31; Romans 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10, 16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6, 9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22*

9. **Last Things** // God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth. The dead will be raised and Christ will judge all people in righteousness. The unbelieving will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The believing, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and will dwell forever in the New Heaven and the New Earth with the Lord.

*Matthew 16:27; 19:28-30; 24:1-51; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:35-40; 16:19-26; 17:20-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10-12; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:1-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-11; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10; 1 Timothy 6:6-16; 2 Timothy 4:1-8; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7-13; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13*

10. **Evangelism and Missions** // It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of one's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

*Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-17; 24:45-53; John 14:11-12; Acts 1:8; 2:1-39; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:14-15; Ephesians 3:1-13; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Revelation 22:17*

11. **Family** // God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Biblical marriage is a calling of God and the uniting of one biological man and one biological woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Jesus and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

Singleness is a calling of God. While marriage is important it is not the ultimate expression of personhood in God's kingdom. Jesus experienced all of humanity while never being married. Our ultimate family in the New Heaven and the New Earth will not be earthly familial relationships but rather as children of Almighty God.

*Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalm 78:1-8; 127:1-5; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15, 17; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:13-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16, 32-38; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8, 14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; James 1:27; 1 Peter 3:1-7*

## **Doctrinal Foundation**

When you worship, learn, and serve at Dawson, much of what you experience will be based upon what is included in this statement. It is derived from an engagement with God's word and is true to the historic practices of our church. Using the Baptist Faith & Message as a model and foundation, our church leadership has outlined a set of commonly held beliefs. We honor the principles of soul competency and the priesthood of believers, affirming together both our liberty in Christ and our accountability to each other under the word of God.

Questions for reflection:

We know all who serve at Dawson seek to do so with personal and theological integrity.

In light of that desire, is there anything in your behavior or personal values that is inconsistent with our doctrinal foundation?

Are you able to agree to teach according to and not contrary to our doctrinal foundation?