

May we introduce ourselves?

Visitors who attend services at the Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church may have questions concerning our beliefs. Sometimes, folks call to inquire. This is a statement about our beliefs and practices, which may be quite different from other Baptists in Alaska, or in other places for that matter. This statement is designed to answer questions more than to be a confession of faith. In other words, this statement is a way of affirming beliefs and practices which state our position in contrast to unbelieving apostate churches and ministers. We have a written confession of faith, which is available to you upon request. We are Baptists in the historical sense of the word, but we are **not** part of a denomination. The Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church is an unaffiliated church. Some years ago, we published a booklet in which we tried to describe our beliefs to others who were interested. In this article, we quote a portion of that booklet with the hope that you will be properly informed about who we are what we believe. Should you have questions, we will be most happy to answer.

Ø **We believe and preach the sovereignty of Almighty God.**

This means that we believe God Almighty, the great creator of all things, to be absolutely sovereign over all things in the universe. He does all things after the counsel of His own will. In His sovereignty, whatever he does, he does righteously. It is his right to do what he pleases and when he does what he pleases, it is right.

Ø **We believe that God saves sinners.**

Since God chose some unto salvation, then provided the means whereby they might be saved, he does all the work in man's salvation. God sent His own son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, to pay the

penalty of sin for the whole world. We believe that Christ died for every elect person in the world. Furthermore, we believe that His sacrificial death was in their behalf. God ordained that men be saved by the preaching of the gospel. We believe that when the gospel is preached, the Holy Spirit quickens sinners (makes them alive - in regeneration) thereby giving them a holy disposition toward God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Regeneration produces both faith and repentance in the sinner. In other words, the new birth (regeneration) is something God does, not something man does. Faith and repentance are the result of regeneration. This is an instant act wrought in the sinner by the Holy Ghost when the incorruptible seed, the Word of God, is preached. God brings the new birth as He pleases and when He pleases.

Ø We believe when people become believers, they are to be baptized with Baptist baptism.

Baptist baptism is the only scriptural baptism there is. Protestants and Catholics alike have confessed this to be the case. Genuine Baptists were never part of the Roman Catholic system, nor are they Protestants. They are the descendants of the ancient Ana-Baptists. This name was given the Lord's churches from the first century on until the prefix "ana" was finally removed sometime during the protestant reformation. The term "Ana-Baptist" means "re-baptizer." This was a term of scorn placed on the Lord's Churches when they refused to take people into their number without baptism, even though they had experienced some form of a baptismal ritual before. The thing that has cost more Baptists their lives than any other is the demand for Scriptural baptism.

We also believe that many Baptists (in name) have departed from the faith once for all delivered to the saints in the area of baptism by church authority and have rendered the baptism they perform questionable, if not

entirely invalid. Each church must be the final arbiter in matters of Scriptural baptism.

Ø **We believe the church is the body of Christ.**

The church is a body of baptized believers who agree together to carry out the commands of Christ, the head of the church. The church is not invisible, nor is it universal. The church is a local, visible, assembly of baptized believers. Once they are agreed together as one of the Lord's churches, they remain a church whether or not they are assembled. This is the body of Christ. Paul said the Church of Corinth was the body of Christ. God places members in the body as it pleases Him. He is the only one who knows who would fit and build up each particular body. Every church with scriptural beginnings, which continues to keep the ordinances correctly is the body of Christ.

Ø **We believe pastors and deacons are the only church officers.**

Pastors (bishops, elders) and Deacons (servants) qualifications are given in First Timothy, chapter 3. We believe that each church chooses its own pastors and deacons based on the objective criteria in Scripture. We believe that churches ordain their own officers and that bible schools and other para-church organizations have no authority to do so.

Ø **We believe in congregational rule under the leadership of the Pastor.**

We reject both Episcopalian and Presbyterian forms of church government. Episcopalian government is rule by the preacher. Presbyterian government is rule by an oligarchy or board of elders. (We reject deacon boards, trustees, incorporation, ruling elders (other than pastors), and other

innovations of men.) We believe the church rules itself under the leadership of its chosen pastor and its head, the Lord Jesus Christ. Each and every member of the church is equal and is a believer-priest.

Each church of the Lord receives its members, chooses its officers, excludes and restores its members, and administers its affairs within the bounds of the Scriptures. The congregation acts as an executive by executing the commands of the Lord but does not make laws or new rules for the Lord's church. In Acts 1, the church chose an Apostle to replace Judas; in Acts 6, the church chose seven men to serve the church in waiting on tables - apparently deacons, for deacon means servant. In 1 Corinthians 5, the Corinthian Church was commanded to remove a fornicator: in 2 Corinthians 2, we are told he had been punished by the many (majority) and the church was told to receive him back. These are not actions taken by the preacher or a church board, they are congregational (or church) actions.

∅ We believe there are two pictorial ordinances, which the church is commanded to observe.

These two ordinances are baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water at the hands of the New Testament Church through which he is ceremonially qualified to be a church member. *"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."* - Acts 2:41.

The Lord's Supper is a memorial ordinance in which the assembled church remembers the Lord's sinless, broken body, and His blood shed for us through our partaking of unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine. We use grape juice, which we believe is the fruit of the vine and therefore fulfils the design and purpose of scripture. Since the Bible never uses the word "wine" in connection with the Lord's Supper, we use the fruit of the vine. Through it, we remember him and look forward to his coming again for us. We

believe the Lord's Supper is to be partaken of by faithful members of the church. We practice what is commonly referred to as closed communion. The church observing the Lord's Supper is responsible to insure they do not eat with the ungodly. *"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."*
- 1 Corinthians 5:11.

Ø **We believe in the separation of the church from man-made organizations.**

This means that the church should never become joined to an organization, whether convention, synod, fellowship, association, or other man-created organization. When a church joins such a man-made organization, it makes the church subservient to that organization in fact, or by insinuation.

Ø **We reject Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day, and Halloween as pagan traditions.**

We believe Christmas is exactly what the name denotes - "Christ Mass." This gives us the clue of its origin. Anyone can look in the Encyclopedia Britannica and discover that Christmas is of Roman Catholic origin. Early Baptists and others refused to participate in Christmas in the early years of this nation, knowing it was a pagan holiday and had nothing to do with the Lord's birth.

Easter is the also a pagan tradition. Easter is another way of spelling "Astarte" or Ishtar," the Babylonian goddess of fertility. You might want to look up the origin of Easter in the encyclopedia. Halloween and Valentine's Day are both of pagan origin. While neither has found its way into the professing churches as a Christian Holiday, many believers are caught up

with these pagan observances. We do follow the tradition of the first settlers of the United States in observance of Thanksgiving where we pause to especially thank God for his bounty to us through the year.

Ø **We reject the current belief of Dominion Theology among many professing Christians.**

We believe that it is not the function of the church of Jesus Christ to take over the government of the land. We believe that Christians are commanded to be good citizens, to pray for those in authority, and to be obedient to those in authority whether those in authority are good or evil men. We reject the teaching that the church has a mandate to take over the government by force. We reject the teaching that the church has replaced Israel and that the commands to Israel in the Old Testament are relevant primarily to the church. We believe that evil men will wax worse and worse, and that only the second coming of Jesus Christ will put down the evils of our age. We believe that Jesus' appearing is the only hope we have of change in the social order of the world.

Ø **We believe the doctrine of the trinity of God.**

We believe that God is one Lord and that He is in three persons. We believe that God is the Father; that God is the Son; and that God is the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. We reject the teaching that Jesus only is God and that the Father and Holy Ghost are only manifestations of Jesus.

Ø **We believe that the miraculous gift of tongues in the Bible was the ability to speak languages, which people could hear and understand.**

We reject the modern tongues movement as unscriptural. We believe that sign gifts ended with the apostolic age when the Scripture was

finished. The gifts to speak in unknown languages, to interpret unknown languages, to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to cast out unclean spirits, and other such signs ended with the Apostles. There are no apostles today in the sense of apostles in the New Testament. None of these things existed in church history since the first century until the twentieth century.

Ø **We reject the belief that individuals are baptized with the Holy Ghost.**

We believe the baptism of the Holy Ghost happened on the assembled church on the day of Pentecost in fulfillment of the promise of Jesus Christ. *"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."* - Luke 24:45-49.

The promise of the Father was the Holy Ghost himself. The assembled church, which Jesus had instituted during his personal ministry on earth, was baptized once-for-all with the Holy Ghost. This was a sovereign act. The Holy Ghost was given to the waiting church on the fiftieth day after the Lord's resurrection empowering them to do the work Christ had commanded them to do. They did not pray for the baptism, nor is there any record of individuals doing so. We do read where people were *filled* with the Holy Spirit, but this is not indicated to be a *baptism* of the Holy Ghost."

Ø **We believe that women should not speak when the whole church is gathered together.**

We believe the scriptures to teach that women have a supporting role in the ministry of the Lord's church and should seek to do their work under the leadership of their fathers or husbands. Women should *pray*, but not lead in public prayer. Women should expound scripture, but not teach over men. The New Testament shows clearly that all women were active in a supporting role and did not exert themselves into the public area as speakers. None were chosen as Apostles. The qualifications of scripture for pastors and deacons clearly exclude women. *"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."* -- 1 Corinthians 14:34-35.

Ø **We believe it is the responsibility of a father to train his children.**

This being the case, we believe the government schools are not sufficient to train our children in the ways of God. Because this responsibility has been left to fathers, the church instituted a day school several years ago as part of the day-by-day activities of the church. This existed to aid our fathers in teaching and training their children. We endorse and encourage home school or the church day school as the best of all ways to train children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The school was not a tool of evangelism, nor was it a money making endeavor. It was operated without tuition and was staffed by mothers who were faithful church members. *"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* -- Ephesians 6:4.

Ø **We believe and use the *King James Version* of the Bible.**

We believe God inspired Holy Men and moved them to write the Scriptures in the original languages. We believe God has preserved His Holy Word for the English-speaking people of the world best in the King James Bible. We believe the Bible is constituted of the sixty-six books. The Old Testament contains thirty-nine books, to wit: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The New Testament contains twenty-seven books which are: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude, and Revelation. The apocryphal books are not part of the Scriptures.

We believe and use the *King James Version of 1611* with the revisions of that version which updated spelling and corrected printing errors. We do not use the **New King James Version**. We use the King James Bible exclusively. Whatever people believe about this issue, they must admit that other versions of the Bible are different, that most, if not all, cast serious doubt on the Word of God. Such doubts should be enough to cast them aside for the King James Bible or its equivalent based on the received or traditional texts.

Ø **We believe in a literal six-day creation.**

When the Bible says "*And the evening and the morning were the first day,*" that is precisely what it means. It was the first 24-hour period of time. Each of the succeeding days were real evening and morning, 24-hour days. If one believes the literal account of creation in Genesis, he cannot believe the theory of evolution. "*For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.*" - John 5:46. The Genesis account of

creation and man's theory of evolution are mutually exclusive. If you believe one, you cannot believe the other - that is, with any kind of common sense. It is impossible. That includes theistic evolution.

Theistic evolution is a theory that some professing Christians say they believe which accommodates science (falsely, so called) and the Bible. In their view, God used the means of time and survival of the fittest to bring us to man. With this belief comes the Genesis 1:1 gap theory. We reject this theory. No professing Christian that we know of believed the gap theory until Darwin published his "*Origin of Species*." After its publication, we find that theologians began to try to make the Bible and Darwin agree. Theistic evolution and the gap theory are the result. We reject both as unscriptural. "*And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, <it was> very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. (2:1) Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. (2) And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.*" -- Genesis 1:31-2:2.

Ø **We believe the Biblical account of the world-wide flood.**

The flood in the days of Noah was a world-wide flood that covered every mountain and hill on the globe. Every creature that lived on dry land and had the breath of life died in that flood except for the eight people and the creatures in the ark. Denial of the world-wide flood by unbelievers doesn't make it so. In our view, those who reject this doctrine mark themselves as the children of perdition. Their unbelief is an evident token of their perdition (utter destruction). Some of us have sat in college classrooms and listened to those holding to the wisdom of this world utter their slanders against God and his word in this matter. "*And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that <were> under the whole heaven, were covered. (20) Fifteen cubits upward did the waters*

prevail; and the mountains were covered. (21) And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: (22) All in whose nostrils <was> the breath of life, of all that <was> in the dry <land>, died. (23) And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained <alive>, and they that <were> with him in the ark.” -- Genesis 7:19-23.

∅ We believe God Instituted human government for order and protection.

Both order and protection are duties of human government. This includes the slaying of those who have shed the blood of others. Capital punishment is the modern term for killing those who have murdered others. We believe it. We support it. We urge our leaders who are in places of power to learn to fear God who commanded them to do it. It is an awesome responsibility to be in a place of power in human society and refuse to carry out this mandate of Almighty God. We would not want to be a politician with power to make such a decision and then refuse to make it. In our local newspapers of late, many have spent untold dollars to oppose capital punishment. Our land is polluted with the innocent blood of the victims of homicide and abortion. The only way the innocent blood can be removed from the land is to take the life of the person(s) who shed the victim's blood. Jail terms do not remove it. When an individual is judged to be guilty of murder, he should die. Those who speak of forgiveness do not (or will not) understand that forgiveness of sins and consequences for sins are not the same thing. *"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."* - Genesis 9:6.

Ø **We believe the Bible is the basic book of human history.**

There is a lot of vain talk about missing links in the line of human beings. Most of the "educated" human family spend fruitless hours searching for the answers to their past. The answers are already here. Let's take an example. Why is it that the explorers found people in faraway places, on isolated islands and continents when they sailed in their boats? Did these "aboriginals" all slither up on those land masses from the sea and continue evolving until they sprouted eyes, arms, and legs? No! They were isolated there within a few generations after the world-wide flood. A close look at the book of Genesis strongly suggests this to be the case. We notice right in the beginning of creation that God made a firmament to separate the waters below from the waters above. He called that firmament (or expanse) heaven. This is the first heaven where the birds fly. There is the heaven where the sun, moon, and stars are. There is the third heaven where God is.

When this firmament was in place, the earth was like a huge terrarium enclosed in a vapor barrier or a huge bag of water above. Notice: *"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were **above** the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day."* -- Genesis 1:6-8.

You say, "That isn't the way things are now." You are right. The waters above remained there until Noah's flood. The act of God in opening the "*windows of heaven*" poured those waters on the earth. The term "*windows of heaven*" denotes a sluice box. It is like a water spout. That

caused great gouges in the earth such as the Grand Canyon. The fountains of the deep were broken up. When the flood happened, water was pouring like a water spout, it was raining, and it was gushing up from underground springs. The waters above were poured on the earth. If there are undoubtedly plates under the crust of the earth as the scientists claim. These plates were probably broken by the surge of water coming up. We believe the earth was one mass of land when the flood happened and that it was broken apart into fragments as we see it today. Do we have a "thus saith the Lord?" We do. *"And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided; and his brother's name was Joktan."* - Genesis 10:25. After the Lord confounded the language of the earth's peoples at Babel (Genesis 11), he scattered them over the earth (the one continent). During the days of Peleg, the earth (not the people) was divided.