

THE  
BAPTIST CONFESSION *of*  
FAITH  
& CATECHISM  
*for* DISPENSATIONAL CHURCHES

“For years I have described myself as a confessionalist, in principle, in a theological community that by-and-large does not value shared confessions. I am encouraged that this project is addressing that deficiency and am hopeful that it will bring dispensational Baptists closer to the realization of confessional unity.”

MARK SNOEBERGER

Professor of Systematic Theology and Apologetics  
Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, Allen Park, MI

“An unfortunate tendency of popular dispensationalism has been a disdain for church history and for creeds and confessions in particular. The unique authority of Scripture has been warped into a disregard for the work of ‘the shepherds and teachers,’ gifts to the church from our risen Lord. As dispensationalists, we have Scripture-driven commitments that distinguish us from our other Reformed brothers, and we should make those differences clear. But we still hold much in common with them and we should rejoice to affirm those shared doctrines. I am delighted to see the publication of this confession as a step to accomplish both of these worthy ambitions.”

MICHAEL RILEY

Pastor, Calvary Baptist Church, Wakefield, MI

THE  
BAPTIST CONFESSION *of*  
FAITH  
& CATECHISM  
*for* DISPENSATIONAL CHURCHES

BRANDON JAMES CRAWFORD



AMBASSADOR INTERNATIONAL  
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA & BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND

[www.ambassador-international.com](http://www.ambassador-international.com)

# The Baptist Confession of Faith and Catechism for Dispensational Churches

©2023 by Brandon James Crawford

All rights reserved

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1-64960-489-7

Paperback ISBN: 978-1-64960-387-6

eISBN: 978-1-64960-389-0

Cover Design by Hannah Linder Designs

Interior Design by Dentelle Design

Edited by Katie Cruice Smith

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. The ESV text may not be quoted in any publication made available to the public by a Creative Commons license. The ESV may not be translated in whole or in part into any other language.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, contact the publisher using the information below.

AMBASSADOR INTERNATIONAL

Emerald House Group, Inc.

411 University Ridge, Suite B14

Greenville, SC 29601

United States

[www.ambassador-international.com](http://www.ambassador-international.com)

AMBASSADOR BOOKS

The Mount

2 Woodstock Link

Belfast, BT6 8DD

Northern Ireland, United Kingdom

[www.ambassadormedia.co.uk](http://www.ambassadormedia.co.uk)

*The colophon is a trademark of Ambassador, a Christian publishing company.*

# CONTENTS

FOREWORD 9

INTRODUCTION TO  
*THE BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH* 11

TO THE JUDICIOUS AND  
IMPARTIAL READER 15

CHAPTER 1

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES 21

CHAPTER 2

THE HOLY TRINITY 27

CHAPTER 3

GOD'S DECREE 31

CHAPTER 4

CREATION 35

CHAPTER 5

DIVINE PROVIDENCE 37

CHAPTER 6

THE FALL OF MAN, SIN, AND THE  
PUNISHMENT THEREOF 41

|                                       |    |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| CHAPTER 7                             |    |
| GOD'S COVENANT                        | 43 |
| CHAPTER 8                             |    |
| CHRIST THE MEDIATOR                   | 45 |
| CHAPTER 9                             |    |
| FREE WILL                             | 51 |
| CHAPTER 10                            |    |
| EFFECTUAL CALLING                     | 53 |
| CHAPTER 11                            |    |
| JUSTIFICATION                         | 55 |
| CHAPTER 12                            |    |
| ADOPTION                              | 59 |
| CHAPTER 13                            |    |
| SANCTIFICATION                        | 61 |
| CHAPTER 14                            |    |
| SAVING FAITH                          | 63 |
| CHAPTER 15                            |    |
| REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE<br>AND SALVATION | 65 |
| CHAPTER 16                            |    |
| GOOD WORKS                            | 67 |
| CHAPTER 17                            |    |
| PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS            | 71 |
| CHAPTER 18                            |    |
| ASSURANCE OF GRACE AND SALVATION      | 75 |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| CHAPTER 19                                     |     |
| THE LAW OF GOD                                 | 79  |
| CHAPTER 20                                     |     |
| THE GOSPEL                                     | 83  |
| CHAPTER 21                                     |     |
| CHRISTIAN LIBERTY AND LIBERTY<br>OF CONSCIENCE | 85  |
| CHAPTER 22                                     |     |
| RELIGIOUS WORSHIP                              | 87  |
| CHAPTER 23                                     |     |
| LAWFUL OATHS AND VOWS                          | 91  |
| CHAPTER 24                                     |     |
| THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE                           | 93  |
| CHAPTER 25                                     |     |
| MARRIAGE                                       | 95  |
| CHAPTER 26                                     |     |
| THE CHURCH                                     | 97  |
| CHAPTER 27                                     |     |
| THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS                        | 103 |
| CHAPTER 28                                     |     |
| BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER                  | 105 |
| CHAPTER 29                                     |     |
| BAPTISM  | 107 |
| CHAPTER 30                                     |     |
| THE LORD'S SUPPER                              | 109 |

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| CHAPTER 31                   |     |
| THE STATE OF MAN AFTER DEATH | 113 |

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| CHAPTER 32            |     |
| THE LAST JUDGMENTS    | 115 |
| APPENDIX ON BAPTISM   | 117 |
| INTRODUCTION TO       |     |
| THE BAPTIST CATECHISM | 139 |
| THE BAPTIST CATECHISM | 143 |
| ABOUT THE EDITOR      | 175 |



## FOREWORD

The author of Hebrews laid upon churches the solemn responsibility, “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God . . . imitate their faith” (13:7 ESV). We “remember” those who have gone before us when we value and perpetuate the doctrinal legacy they bequeathed to succeeding generations. The seventeenth century Baptists who stood up for truth as part of the English Separatist movement, and expressed that truth in The Baptist Confession of 1689, left a legacy worthy to be remembered and imitated. Their heirs suffered and served to advance the cause of Jesus Christ in the centuries that followed. Unfortunately, the value of historic confessions of faith and catechisms has been largely lost in the current generation of Christians. Overlooking the importance of history, many dismiss the idea of a confession of faith as arcane and limiting. Others prefer a “roll your own” approach, each man or church crafting a personal, unique confession.

Brandon Crawford has done a great service for Baptist churches that stand for historic theology and embrace a dispensational hermeneutic. His “gentle” revision of these works upholds the faith of our fathers in the same spirit that

moved them to build on the works of others; he shows “no itch to clog religion with new words,” but simply uses “that form of sound words which hath been, in consent with the Holy Scriptures, used by others before us.” The result is a set of tools that will enable churches effectively to demonstrate their role as the nexus between past and future, uphold the proper catholicity of the faith, and stand against contemporary conceit that equates wisdom with originality. My prayer is that this work will become widely known and widely used.

STEVEN THOMAS

Pastor, Huron Baptist Church, Flat Rock, MI

# INTRODUCTION TO *THE BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH*

In 1677, Baptist pastors Nehemiah Coxe and William Collins drew up a confession of faith for the Petty France Church in London. The confession was approved by the congregation and then distributed to other Baptist churches in Great Britain, where it was enthusiastically embraced. Twelve years later, in 1689, representatives of more than one hundred Baptist churches meeting in general assembly formally adopted the second edition as their doctrinal standard.

*The Baptist Confession of Faith* (also known as the *Second London Baptist Confession*) has since become the most important summary of Baptist teachings in the English-speaking world. Not long after its adoption in Great Britain, it crossed the Atlantic and became the standard for Baptist churches throughout the American colonies. In the North, it was called the *Philadelphia Confession*, and in the South, the *Charleston Confession*. Today, it is used by Baptist churches all over the world.

The authors drew most of the language for *The Baptist Confession* directly from the *Westminster Confession* of the Presbyterians, with some supplemental material coming from the *Savoy Declaration* of the Congregationalists. In places where the authors needed to outline Baptist distinctives, their wording was original.

*The Baptist Confession* is more than just a statement of faith. It is a fully orbed system of doctrine that has stood the test of time. This new edition retains the timeless language of the original with just a few minor alterations to make it compatible with dispensationalism. It is my conviction that dispensational theology has been a largely positive development within the Reformed tradition. Its greatest contribution has been the application of an originalist hermeneutic to all of Scripture, including its poetic and prophetic portions. The results have given us a clearer understanding of the relationship between the Old and New Covenants, the spirituality of the Church, and the doctrine of Last Things—thus the need for a gentle revision of this historic confession.

My hope for this new edition is that it will be used of God to ground thousands of individuals, families, and churches in biblical doctrine, that it will give them a better appreciation of their rich ecclesiastical heritage, and that it will equip them with wisdom for contemporary ministry.

“Be not ashamed of your faith,” Charles Spurgeon once wrote. “Remember it is the ancient gospel of martyrs, confessors, reformers and saints. Above all, it is the truth of God, against which the gates of Hell cannot prevail.”

BRANDON CRAWFORD

Marshall, Michigan

Reformation Day 2021



## TO THE JUDICIOUS AND IMPARTIAL READER

Courteous Reader, it is now many years since divers of us (with other sober Christians then living and walking in the way of the Lord that we profess) did conceive ourselves to be under a necessity of publishing a Confession of our faith for the information and satisfaction of those who did not thoroughly understand what our principles were or who had entertained prejudices against our profession by reason of the strange representation of them by some men of note who had taken very wrong measures and, accordingly, led others into misapprehension of us and them. And this was first put forth about the year 1643 in the name of seven congregations then gathered in London, since which time divers' impressions thereof have been dispersed abroad and our end proposed in good measure answered, inasmuch as many (and some of those men eminent both for piety and learning) were thereby satisfied that we were no way guilty of those heterodoxies and fundamental errors which had too frequently been charged upon us without ground or occasion given on our part.

And forasmuch as that Confession is not now commonly to be had, and also that many others have since embraced the same truth which is owned therein, it was judged necessary by us to join together in giving a testimony to the world of our firm adherence to those wholesome principles by the publication of this which is now in your hand. And forasmuch as our method and manner of expressing our sentiments in this doth vary from the former (although the substance of this matter is the same), we shall freely impart to you the reason and occasion thereof. One thing that greatly prevailed with us to undertake this work was not only to give a full account of ourselves to those Christians who differ from us about the subject of baptism but also the profit that might from thence arise unto those who have any account of our labors in their instruction and establishment in the great truths of the Gospel in the clear understanding and steady belief of which our comfortable walking with God and fruitfulness before Him in all our ways is most nearly concerned; and therefore, we did conclude it necessary to express ourselves the more fully and distinctly; and also to fix on such a method as might be most comprehensive of those things we designed to explain our sense and belief of; and finding no defect in this regard in that fixed on by the Assembly, and, after them by those of the congregational way, we did readily conclude it best to retain the same order in our present Confession. And



also, when we observed that those last mentioned did in their Confessions (for reasons which seemed of weight both to themselves and others) choose not only to express their mind in words concurrent with the former in sense concerning all those articles wherein they were agreed, but also, for the most part, without any variation of the terms, we did in like manner conclude it best to follow their example in making use of the very same words with them both in these articles (which are very many) wherein our faith and doctrine are the same with theirs; and this we did the more abundantly to manifest our consent with both in all the fundamental articles of the Christian religion, as also with many others whose orthodox Confessions have been published to the world on the behalf of the Protestant in diverse nations and cities. And also to convince all that we have no itch to clog religion with new words but do readily acquiesce in that form of sound words which hath been, in consent with the Holy Scriptures, used by others before us, hereby declaring, before God, angels, and men, our hearty agreement with them in that wholesome Protestant doctrine which, with so clear evidence of Scriptures, they have asserted. Some things, indeed, are in some places added, some terms omitted, and some few changed; but these alterations are of that nature as that we need not doubt any charge or suspicion of unsoundness in the faith from any of our brethren upon the account of them.

In those things wherein we differ from others, we have expressed ourselves with all candor and plainness that none might entertain jealousy of aught secretly lodged in our breasts that we would not want the world to be acquainted with; yet we hope we have also observed those rules of modesty and humility as will render our freedom in this respect inoffensive, even to those whose sentiments are different from ours.

We have also taken care to affix texts of Scripture at the bottom for the confirmation of each article in our Confession; in which work we have studiously endeavored to select such as are most clear and pertinent for the proof of what is asserted by us; and our earnest desire is that all into whose hands this may come would follow that (never enough commended) example of the noble Bereans, who searched the Scriptures daily that they might find out whether the things preached to them were so or not.

There is one thing more which we sincerely profess and earnestly desire credence in—viz., that contention is most remote from our design in all that we have done in this matter; and we hope that the liberty of an ingenuous unfolding of our principles and opening our hearts unto our brethren with the scriptural grounds of our faith and practice will by none of them be either denied to us or taken ill from us. Our whole design is accomplished if we may have attained that justice as to be measured in our principles and practice and the judgment

of both by others, according to what we have now published, which the Lord (Whose eyes are as a flame of fire) knoweth to be the doctrine which with our hearts we most firmly believe and sincerely endeavor to conform our lives to. And O that, other contentions being laid asleep, the only care and contention of all upon whom the name of our blessed Redeemer is called might for the future be to walk humbly with their God in the exercise of all love and meekness toward each other, to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord, each one endeavoring to have his conversation such as becometh the Gospel; and also, suitable to his place and capacity, vigorously to promote in others the practice of true religion and undefiled in the sight of God our Father! And that in this backsliding day, we might not spend our breath in fruitless complaints of the evils of others, but may everyone begin at home to reform in the first place our own hearts and ways, and then to quicken all that we may have influence upon to the same work, that if the will of God were so, none might deceive themselves by resting in and trusting in a form of godliness without the power of it, and inward experience of the efficacy of those truths that are professed by them.

And verily, there is one spring and cause of the decay of religion in our day which we cannot but touch upon and earnestly urge a redress of, and that is the neglect of the worship of God in families by those to whom the charge and conduct of them is committed. May not the gross ignorance

and instability of many, with the profaneness of others, be justly charged upon their parents and masters, who have not trained them up in the way wherein they ought to walk when they were young, but have neglected those frequent and solemn commands which the Lord hath laid upon them, so to catechise and instruct them that their tender years might be seasoned with the knowledge of the truth of God as revealed in the Scriptures; and also by their own omission of prayer and other duties of religion of their families, together with the ill example of their loose conversation, having inured them first to a neglect of and the contempt of all piety and religion? We know this will not excuse the blindness and wickedness of any, but certainly it will fall heavily upon those who have been thus the occasion thereof; they indeed die in their sins, but will not their blood be required of those under whose care they were, who yet permitted them to go on without warning—yea, led them into the paths of destruction? And will not the diligence of Christians with respect to the discharge of these duties in ages past rise up in judgment against and condemn many of those who would be esteemed such now?

We shall conclude with our earnest prayer that the God of all grace will pour out those measures of His Holy Spirit upon us, that the profession of truth may be accompanied with the sound belief and diligent practice of it by us, that His name may in all things be glorified through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.