

What We Believe

Who are Free Will Baptists?

Free Will Baptist roots can be traced to England as early as 1611. The first FWB church in America was begun by Paul Palmer in 1727 in Perquimans County, North Carolina. Some years later, in 1780, under the leadership of Benjamin Randall, Free Will Baptists were established in the northeast at New Durham, New Hampshire. From these early beginnings, Free Will Baptists in America have had a continuing ministry. Today, the National Association of Free Will Baptists is active in 40 states and 20 foreign countries. The work of the National Association is promoted from the National Office Building and Randall House Publications, both located in Nashville, Tennessee.

What do Free Will Baptists believe?

- **God** – We believe that God is the Creator, Sustainer, and Righteous Ruler of the universe. He has revealed Himself in nature, and in the Scriptures of the Holy Bible as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: yet as one God.
- **Jesus Christ** - He is God's unique Son; the only one of a kind. The Scripture teaches that He is God revealed in flesh. In His Divine nature He is truly God and in His human nature truly man. He is the One once crucified for man's sin, the now risen and glorified Savior and Lord who mediates between God and man and who gives us access to the Father through His intercession. None can come to the Father unless they come through Him.
- **Holy Spirit** – All of the attributes of God are ascribed to the Holy Spirit by the Scriptures. It is He who convicts and convinces men of their sin. He also convinces man of that which is right, and that a final day of judgment will come. He, it is, who comes to live in us at conversion, to open our understanding to the Scripture, and to lead us into the truth.
- **The Bible** – God used holy men to write the Scriptures. They are, in both the Old and New Testaments, the very words God intended us to have. They are, as given by God, without error and are our only rule of faith and practice. We profit from them by learning the truth about many things: they also speak to us about wrong doing; they even correct us and get us back on course as well as instructing us in right living.
- **Man** – God created man in a state of innocence. Man, being tempted by Satan, yielded and willfully disobeyed God, becoming a sinner and incurring God's judgment upon sin. All of Adam's descendants inherit his fallen nature and thus have a natural inclination to sin. When one comes to an age of accountability, he is guilty of sinning before God and in need of salvation.
- **God's Relationship to His Creatures and Creation** – God exercises a wise and benevolent providence over all beings and things. He maintains the laws of nature and performs special acts as the highest welfare of mankind and His created order of things require.
- **Salvation** – Man receives pardon and forgiveness for his sins when he admits to God that he is a sinner, when in godly sorrow he turns from them and trusts in the work of Christ

as redemption for his sin. This acceptance of God's great salvation involves belief in Christ's death on the cross as man's substitute and the fact of God's raising Him from the dead as predicted. It is a salvation by grace alone and not of works.

- **Who Can be Saved?** – It is God's will that all be saved, but since man has the power of choice, God saves only those who repent of their sin and believe in the work of Christ on the cross. Those who refuse in this life to repent and believe have no later chance to be saved and thus condemn themselves to eternal damnation by their unbelief.
- **Perseverance** – We believe that there are strong grounds to hope that the saved will persevere unto the end and be saved because of the power of divine grace pledged for their support. We believe that any saved person who has sinned (whether we call him a backslider or sinner), but has a desire to repent, may do so and be restored to God's favor and fellowship. Since man, however, continues to have free choice, it is possible because of temptations and the weakness of human flesh for him to fall into the practice of sin and to make shipwreck of his faith and be lost.
- **Gospel Ordinances** – Free Will Baptists believe the Bible teaches three ordinances for the church to practice: Baptism in water by immersion, the Lord's Supper, to be perpetuated until His return, and the Washing of the Saints' feet, an ordinance teaching humility.
- **Resurrection** – Free Will Baptists believe the Scriptures teach the resurrection of the bodies of all men, each in its own order; they that have done good will come forth to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.
- **Church Government** – Free Will Baptist churches enjoy local church autonomy (self-governing). The local church is the highest authority in the denomination. Local churches voluntarily organize themselves into quarterly meetings, district, state, and national associations for the purpose of promoting the cause of Christ on the local, state, district, national, and world-wide level.
- **Christ's Second Coming** – The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ, who ascended on high and sits at the right hand of God, will come again to close the Gospel dispensation, glorify His saints, and judge the world.
- **Missions** – Free Will Baptists believe that Jesus commanded the church to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. For an in-depth study of Free Will Baptist beliefs and practices, ask for a copy of the Free Will Baptist *Treatise*.