



CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

THE ARTICLES OF FAITH

(Global English Version)

This is an easy-to-read version of the Articles of Faith of the Church of the Nazarene. The official articles are elaborated in the denomination's constitution, which is found in the *Manual of the Church of the Nazarene*.

I. The Triune God

We believe in one God who is eternal and without limits. He is the creator and the ruler of the universe. He sustains all things. God is holy in every part of his being. He is holy light and holy love. God is one being who is triune, which means that he is revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Genesis 1; Leviticus 19:2; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Isaiah 5:16; 6:1-7; 40:18-31; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19-20; John 14:6-27; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:4-6; Ephesians 2:13-18; 1 John 1:5; 4:8

II. Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, the second person of the triune God, who has always been one with the Father. He became human by the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus is not a man who became a God, nor is he a God who simply appeared to be a man. Instead, he is fully God and fully human: two natures combined into one, the God-man.

We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins and that he rose from the dead with his perfected human body. He ascended into heaven where he now intercedes for us.

Matthew 1:20-25; 16:15-16; Luke 1:26-35; John 1:1-18; Acts 2:22-36; Romans 8:3, 32-34; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:12-22; 1 Timothy 6:14-16; Hebrews 1:1-5; 7:22-28; 9:24-28; 1 John 1:1-3; 4:2-3, 15

III. The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the triune God, who continually works in Christ's Church. He convinces the world of sin, and he gives new life to those who repent and believe. He sanctifies believers and guides them to all truth as it is in Jesus.

John 7:39; 14:15-18, 26; 16:7-15; Acts 2:33; 15:8-9; Romans 8:1-27; Galatians 3:1-14; 4:6; Ephesians 3:14-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 John 3:24; 4:13

IV. The Holy Scriptures

We believe that the Bible is fully and divinely inspired. The sixty-six books of the Old and the New Testaments show us all that we need to know for our salvation. All our articles of faith must be based on the Bible.

Luke 24:44-47; John 10:35; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Peter 1:10-12; 2 Peter 1:20-21

V. Sin

We believe that sin came into the world when our first parents, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God. Their sin brought death. We believe that sin is of two kinds: original sin and personal sin.

We believe that as a result of the sin of our first parents all people are born with a corrupted nature. This sinful nature separates us from the original state of righteousness that existed at the time that God created Adam and Eve. We are spiritually dead and continually inclined to evil. We believe that the sinful nature remains within the heart of a Christian until it is fully cleansed by the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

Original sin is different from sinning. It is an inner inclination that pushes us to commit sinful acts. People are not held accountable for original sin until they either neglect or reject God's remedy for it.

Personal sin is the act of deliberately breaking one of the known laws of God. Only someone who is morally capable of understanding his or her actions is able to commit personal sins. Sins are not the same as mistakes, failures or other involuntary shortcomings, which are results of our fallen condition as humans. Attitudes and responses that are contrary to the Spirit of Christ are called sins of the spirit. Personal sin is essentially the breaking of the law of love and unbelief in Jesus Christ.

Original sin: Genesis 3; 6:5; Job 15:14; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9-10; Mark 7:21-23; Romans 1:18-25; 5:12-14; 7:1-8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Galatians 5:16-25; 1 John 1:7-8

Personal sin: Matthew 22:36-40 (with 1 John 3:4); John 8:34-36; 16:8-9; Romans 3:23; 6:15-23; 8:18-24; 14:23; 1 John 1:9-2:4; 3:7-10

VI. The Atonement

We believe that Jesus Christ suffered, shed his blood and died on the cross to make a full and complete payment for all of our sin. This is called the atonement, and it is the only basis of our salvation. Jesus died for all people. He provides salvation to little children and those who are incapable of making decisions for themselves. All others must repent and believe in order to be saved.

Isaiah 53:5-6, 11; Mark 10:45; Luke 24:46-48; John 1:29; 3:14-17; Acts 4:10-12; Romans 3:21-26; 4:17-25; 5:6-21; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Galatians 1:3-4; 3:13-14; Colossians 1:19-23; 1 Timothy 2:3-6; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:9; 9:11-14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:18-21; 2:19-25; 1 John 2:1-2

VII. Preventive Grace

We believe that everyone is created in the image of God. One part of what this means is that human beings have the ability to choose between right and wrong. This is called moral responsibility. Because of the sin of Adam and Eve, all people are born with a sinful nature, and they cannot, on their own, turn to God or do good works to save themselves. Yet, we believe that the grace of God, through Jesus Christ, is free and given to all people. This grace makes it possible for anyone to choose to turn from sin to righteousness, to believe on Jesus for pardon and cleansing from sin, and to live in a way that is pleasing to God and acceptable to him.

We believe that it is possible for those who are saved and sanctified to return to sin and reject the faith. Unless they repent of their sins, they will be hopelessly and eternally lost.

Image of God and moral responsibility: Genesis 1:26-27; 2:16-17; Deuteronomy 28:1-2; 30:19; Joshua 24:15; Psalm 8:3-5; Isaiah 1:8-10; Jeremiah 31:29-30; Ezekiel 18:1-4; Micah 6:8; Romans 1:19-20; 2:1-16; 14:7-12; Galatians 6:7-8

Natural inability: Job 14:4; 15:14; Psalms 14:1-4; 51:5; John 3:6a; Romans 3:10-12; 5:12-14, 20a; 7:14-25

Free grace and works of faith: Ezekiel 18:25-26; John 1:12-13; 3:6b; Acts 5:31; Romans 5:6-8, 18; 6:15-16, 23; 10:6-8; 11:22; 1 Corinthians 2:9-14; 10:1-12; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Galatians 5:6; Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:21-23; 2 Timothy 4:10a; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 3:12-15; 6:4-6; 10:26-31; James 2:18-22; 2 Peter 1:10-11; 2:20-22

VIII. Repentance

We believe that repentance is required for salvation. Repentance is a sincere and thorough change of the mind about sin. It involves a sense of personal guilt and voluntarily turning away from sin. It is required because we all, through our actions and our intentions, are sinners. The Holy Spirit graciously helps everyone who wants to repent and to receive God's mercy so that he or she will receive pardon and spiritual life.

2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalms 32:5-6; 51:1-17; Isaiah 55:6-7; Jeremiah 3:12-14; Ezekiel 18:30-32; 33:14-16; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 3:1-14; 13:1-5; 18:9-14; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 17:30-31; 26:16-18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:8-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 2 Peter 3:9

IX. Justification, Regeneration, and Adoption

Justification. We believe that all who believe in Jesus Christ and accept him as Lord and Saviour are justified. This means that God freely pardons their guilt and releases them from the penalty of their sins. He accepts them as righteous.

Regeneration. We believe that God freely regenerates all those who repent and accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour. He provides them with a new spiritual life and a new moral nature. This is called the new birth. This new life is one of faith, love, and obedience to God.

Adoption. We believe that God, who freely justifies and regenerates new believers, adopts them into the family of God.

These three things (justification, regeneration, and adoption) all take place at the same time. They are dependent upon our repentance and faith in Christ. The Holy Spirit witnesses to us that God has accomplished this.

Luke 18:14; John 1:12-13; 3:3-8; 5:24; Acts 13:39; Romans 1:17; 3:21-26, 28; 4:5-9, 17-25; 5:1, 16-19; 6:4; 7:6; 8:1, 15-17; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 2:16-21; 3:1-14, 26; 4:4-7; Ephesians 1:6-7; 2:1, 4-5; Philippians 3:3-9; Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 1:9; 3:1-2, 9; 4:7; 5:1, 9-13, 18

X. Christian Holiness and Entire Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is the work of God which transforms believers into the likeness of Jesus. This grace of God is accomplished by the Holy Spirit over time. It starts with regeneration (which happens at the same time as justification). This is called initial sanctification. It continues through entire sanctification and the on-going work of the Holy Spirit as he perfects believers. It ends in glorification, at which time we are fully conformed to the image of the Son.

We believe that after regeneration there is a subsequent work of God by which believers are freed from original sin. They are brought into a state of entire devotion to God and holy obedience that is perfected love. This is called entire sanctification.

Entire sanctification is accomplished by the baptism with the Holy Spirit, which is also called the infilling of the Holy Spirit. It comprises two experiences: the cleansing of the heart from sin and the abiding, indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, which empowers the believer to serve God and live a godly life.

Entire sanctification is possible because of the death of Jesus. It happens instantaneously by grace through faith. It is preceded by the total commitment of a believer to God, which is called entire consecration. The Holy Spirit witnesses to our spirits that he has cleansed and filled our hearts.

This experience is known by many different terms representing its different phases, such as Christian perfection, perfect love, heart purity, the baptism with the Holy Spirit, the infilling of the Holy Spirit, the fullness of the blessing, and Christian holiness.

We believe there is clear distinction between a pure heart and a mature character. A pure heart happens in an instant, the result of entire sanctification. A mature character happens through the process of spiritual growth over time.

We believe that the person who is entirely sanctified has a godly desire to grow in grace as a Christlike disciple. This growth is not automatic, but must be carefully nurtured through spiritual disciplines, in order to develop a Christlike character and personality. Those who do not consciously work at spiritual growth will damage their witness and God’s grace in their lives may be frustrated and eventually lost.

By participating in the means of grace—especially fellowship, spiritual disciplines, and the sacraments of the Church—believers grow in grace and in wholehearted love to God and neighbour.

Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Malachi 3:2-3; Matthew 3:11-12; Luke 3:16-17; John 7:37-39; 14:15-23; 17:6-20; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; 15:8-9; Romans 6:11-13, 19; 8:1-4, 8-14; 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Galatians 2:20; 5:16-25; Ephesians 3:14-21; 5:17-18, 25-27; Philippians 3:10-15; Colossians 3:1-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; Hebrews 4:9-11; 10:10-17; 12:1-2; 13:12; 1 John 1:7, 9

“Christian perfection,” “perfect love”: Deuteronomy 30:6; Matthew 5:43-48; 22:37-40; Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 13; Philippians 3:10-15; Hebrews 6:1; 1 John 4:17-18

“Heart purity”: Matthew 5:8; Acts 15:8-9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:3

“Baptism with the Holy Spirit”: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Malachi 3:2-3; Matthew 3:11-12; Luke 3:16-17; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; 15:8-9

“Fullness of the blessing”: Romans 15:29

“Christian holiness”: Matthew 5:1-7:29; John 15:1-11; Romans 12:1-15:3; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:17-5:20; Philippians 1:9-11; 3:12-15; Colossians 2:20-3:17; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 4:7-8; 5:23; 2 Timothy 2:19-22; Hebrews 10:19-25; 12:14; 13:20-21; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 2 Peter 1:1-11; 3:18; Jude 20-21

XI. The Church

We believe in the Church, which is the community that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord. It is the covenantal people of God who are made new in Christ. It is the Body of Christ called together by the Holy Spirit through the Word.

God calls the Church to express its life in many ways including united worship, fellowship, preaching the Word of God, participating in the sacraments, ministry in the name of Jesus, obeying Christ, holy living, and encouraging one another.

The mission of the Church is to share the work of Christ as he redeems and reconciles the world in the power of the Spirit. The Church fulfils its mission by making disciples through evangelism, education, compassionate acts, working for justice, and bearing witness to the kingdom of God.

The Church exists both as local congregations and as a universal community. It expresses its life and worship in different ways in different cultures. The Church recognizes that God calls

some people to special ministries and places them in positions to fulfil them. The Church lives under God's rule as it waits for the joyous coming of our Lord Jesus.

Exodus 19:3; Jeremiah 31:33; Matthew 8:11; 10:7; 16:13-19, 24; 18:15-20; 28:19-20; John 17:14-26; 20:21-23; Acts 1:7-8; 2:32-47; 6:1-2; 13:1; 14:23; Romans 2:28-29; 4:16; 10:9-15; 11:13-32; 12:1-8; 15:1-3; 1 Corinthians 3:5-9; 7:17; 11:1, 17-33; 12:3, 12-31; 14:26-40; 2 Corinthians 5:11-6:1; Galatians 5:6, 13-14; 6:1-5, 15; Ephesians 4:1-17; 5:25-27; Philippians 2:1-16; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12; 1 Timothy 4:13; Hebrews 10:19-25; 1 Peter 1:1-2, 13; 2:4-12, 21; 4:1-2, 10-11; 1 John 4:17; Jude 24; Revelation 5:9-10

XII. Baptism

We believe that Christian baptism is a sacrament commanded by Jesus Christ. It signifies that a person has accepted the benefits of the atonement of Jesus Christ by declaring publically his or her faith in him as Saviour. It demonstrates the desire of that person to follow Jesus in obedience and righteousness.

Baptism is a symbol of the new covenant; therefore, young children may be baptized at the request of their parents or guardians if they will promise to raise them as Christians.

The person being baptized may choose sprinkling, pouring, or immersion.

Matthew 3:1-7; 28:16-20; Acts 2:37-41; 8:35-39; 10:44-48; 16:29-34; 19:1-6; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-28; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:18-22

XIII. The Lord's Supper

We believe that the communion supper is fundamentally a New Testament sacrament that was instituted by Jesus Christ. It is a memorial to his sacrificial death through which believers have life, salvation, and the promise of all spiritual blessings in Christ. It is for anyone who is prepared and who understands its significance. By participating in this sacrament, believers testify to the Lord's death until he comes again.

Exodus 12:1-14; Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20; John 6:28-58; 1 Corinthians 10:14-21; 11:23-32

XIV. Divine Healing

We believe in the biblical doctrine of divine healing. We encourage our people to pray in faith for the healing of the sick. We also believe that God heals through the means of medical science.

2 Kings 5:1-19; Psalm 103:1-5; Matthew 4:23-24; 9:18-35; John 4:46-54; Acts 5:12-16; 9:32-42; 14:8-15; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; James 5:13-16

XV. The Second Coming of Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will come to earth again. Those believers who died will be resurrected, and all who are abiding in Jesus will be carried away with them to meet the Lord in the air. From then on, they will always be with the Lord.

Matthew 25:31-46; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 9:26-28; 2 Peter 3:3-15; Revelation 1:7-8; 22:7-20

XVI. Resurrection, Judgment, and Destiny

We believe in the resurrection of the dead. That is to say, the bodies of both the just and the unjust shall be raised to life and united with their spirits—“those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned.”

We believe in a future judgement in which every person shall appear before God to be judged according to his or her deeds in this life.

We believe that those who are saved by believing in Jesus and who obediently follow him are assured of a glorious and everlasting life. Those who refuse to repent will suffer eternally in hell.

Genesis 18:25; 1 Samuel 2:10; Psalm 50:6; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2-3; Matthew 25:31-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-31; 20:27-38; John 3:16-18; 5:25-29; 11:21-27; Acts 17:30-31; Romans 2:1-16; 14:7-12; 1 Corinthians 15:12-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; Revelation 20:11-15; 22:1-15