

CBC'S 3-D STATEMENT



CBC'S

DETERMINATION

DOCTRINE

DISTINCTIVES



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PREAMBLE

Scripture speaks of “sound doctrine” (1 Timothy 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1) and “sound words.” That which is “sound” (hygiainō in the Greek), is that which has a proper balance of the whole; and when used of the doctrines of the Christian faith, it conveys the idea of a fixed body of truth kept in its Biblically balanced form, or in conventional terms, it means to have an accurate systematic theology. Moreover, this body of truth is sometimes referred to as “the faith” (e.g. Ephesians 4:13) and “the doctrine” (1 Timothy 4:16); and Scripture implores us to “hold fast” to it (1 Timothy 4:16; 2 Timothy 1:13), “continue” in it (1 Timothy 4:16), “stand fast” in it (1 Corinthians 16:13), be “established” in it (Colossians 2:7), “strive together” for it (Philippians 1:27), keep up the good “fight” for it (1 Timothy 6:12), and to “contend earnestly” for it (Jude 3). In order to be committed to it and defend it from attack, Scripture assumes that this fixed body of divine truth is sufficiently knowable and definable from the Scriptures.

The following statement represents a careful effort at summarizing the eleven major facets of “the faith.” And it has been published not only as one of the many ways we at Community Bible Church endeavour to fulfil the foregoing commands, but also with several other purposes in mind.

First, it has a *representative* purpose. This statement gives an accurate representation of what Community Bible Church both believes and teaches regarding each major Biblical doctrine and provides the basis and framework for all our ministry practice. We wish to present those interested in joining with us, the teachings they can expect to be instructed and nurtured in by the elders of this church, who take their responsibility seriously to spiritually care for and protect God’s flock (Acts 20:28-32) by “sound doctrine” (Titus 1:9) “as those who must give an account” (Hebrews 13:17). Moreover, while the elders here at Community Bible Church require that those who join this assembly be willing to come under the loving instruction and care of the elders, *they do not expect that all who join be in full agreement with all the doctrinal points of this statement.* They only expect that those who do have

disagreements will handle them in a loving, unified way that stimulates growth, rather than in an unkind, divisive way, just as Scripture requires (Ephesians 4:2-3, 12-13; Philippians 2:1-4; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Titus 3:10). It is best, for the sake of the unity of this assembly that the dialogue and voicing of disagreements take place privately with the elders, who are more than willing to be corrected, sharpened, and refined as a result of a more accurate interpretation or systemization of Scripture. This statement of doctrine and practice also represents our commitment to scriptural unity, which is always on the basis of truth, not by downplaying truth (Ephesians 2:14-22; 4:1-6). Since “the faith” is knowable and definable by employing the literal-grammatical-historical method of interpretation in dependence on the Holy Spirit, when one does so consistently, common conclusions will follow. This statement is representative of that. For, while Community Bible Church wholeheartedly affirms the following summary of doctrine, it has adopted its content from the same core summary affirmed by many other churches, including: The Shepherd’s Bible College (Havelock North/Hastings, NZ), Riverbend Bible Church (Havelock North, NZ), Grace Community Church (Sun Valley, CA, USA), Roosevelt Community Church (Lancaster, CA, USA), Grace Bible Church (Marysville, WA, USA), Grace Community Church, North Texas (McKinney, TX, USA), Grace Bible Church (Hutchinson, KS, USA), Rock Valley Bible Church (Rockford, IL, USA), and numerous others as well.

Secondly, it has an *instructive* purpose. In clarifying the doctrines and theological truths of “the faith” and the Scriptural bases for church practice into a readable summary, we hope this statement will serve as both a reference guide and a theological primer for further exploration.

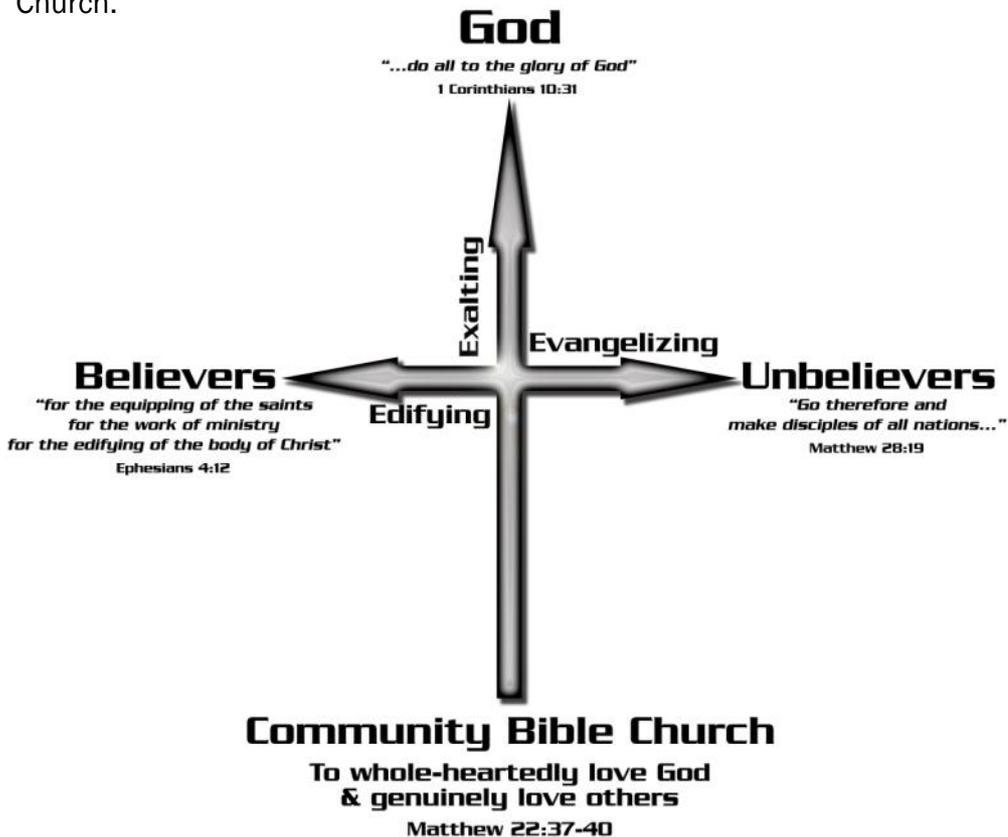
Thirdly, it has a *protective* purpose. Its accessibility and detail we hope will act as an anchor to protect us against theological drift and a safeguard to protect us from the subtle errors of false teachers, whom Scripture repeatedly warns us would “secretly bring in destructive heresies” (2 Peter 2:1) in an increasing manner during the church age (2 Timothy 3:13; cf. Acts 20:29-30; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; 4:3-4; 2 Peter 2:1-2; 3:3; 1 John 2:18; 4:1-3; 2 John 7; Jude 4-18).

Finally, we hope that its corollary *corrective* purpose would be received in the spirit it is given. In giving such a detailed and definitive summary of doctrine and practice in the face of contemporary theological neglect, misunderstandings, and aversions to definitive theological stances, we hope this statement may be used to the glory of God toward challenging the Church to live up to its divine and holy calling of being the “pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15). However, we publish this statement in a spirit, not of contention, but of humility and love, which we intend by God’s grace to maintain in any future dialogue arising out of what is written. We claim no infallibility for the witness this statement bears and acknowledge that any doctrinal statement is but a human, and therefore possibly fallible, attempt at summarizing and systematizing the abounding riches of God’s infallible divine revelation. Therefore we shall be grateful for any help that enables us to strengthen its accuracy. We encourage each reader to search the Scriptures to see if these things are true (Acts 17:11) and we invite response to this statement from any who see reason to improve the accuracy of it on the sole basis of a more accurate interpretation or explanation of the doctrines of the Scriptures, which alone is the ultimate and sufficient authoritative basis for any amendment to take place. Also, given the summary fashion of this statement, some doctrines may require further explanation or elaboration. Any expanded doctrinal points will be reserved for additional position publications produced by the elders.

So now we “commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified” (Acts 20:32). Amen.

OUR DETERMINATION

The Biblical three-fold mission of the church is to wholeheartedly love God and genuinely love others (Matthew 22:36-40) by exalting God (1 Corinthians 10:31; Romans 11:36), edifying believers (Ephesians 4:11-12), and evangelizing unbelievers (Matthew 28:18-20) as God has prescribed in His Word. The church then must direct all its efforts and resources toward fulfilling this God-given three-fold mission according to the biblical precepts, principles, and parameters as balanced by the whole counsel of God without subtractions, supplementations (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:19; Colossians 2:8), or distortions (2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Peter 3:16). Fulfilling God's three-fold mission for the church is our determination here at Community Bible Church.



OUR DOCTRINE

THE SCRIPTURES (BIBLIOLOGY)

We believe and teach that the sixty-six books of the Bible are sacred Scripture, the written, objective, propositional revelation of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13) which are the product of the dual authorship of the Holy Spirit and selected men (2 Peter 1:20-21) and as a result are inspired by God in all their parts, fully and equally (2 Timothy 3:16).

Being thus divinely inspired, the Scriptures are the Word of God (John 10:35) and are therefore inerrant in the original writings even to the smallest letter (Matthew 5:18).

The Scriptures were designed for the practical instruction of believers, and being the final and complete direct revelation from God for this age, constitute the only authoritative and infallible rule of life and practice for every Christian (2 Timothy 3:14-17; 1 Corinthians 4:6).

We believe and teach the literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture and that, although every passage may have several applications, there is only one true interpretation. This understanding affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17).

THE GODHEAD (THEOLOGY PROPER)

We believe and teach that there is only one true and living God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7) who exists in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, all three being co-equal, co-eternal and consubstantial (of the same substance) (Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:1, 14; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4-6).

GOD THE FATHER (PATEROLOGY)

We believe and teach that God the Father is the centre of all things (Romans 11:36; Ephesians 1:11), the creator of all things (Genesis 1:31; Ephesians 3:9), the controller of all things in creation, providence, history

and salvation (Psalm 103:19; Psalm 145:8-19; 1 Chronicles 29:11; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 1:11).

We believe and teach that as creator, God is Father over all persons (Ephesians 3:15, 4:6) but is the redemptive Father only over those who believe in Christ (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18) and that He becomes such by His gracious act of adopting believers in Christ into His family (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5). In His role as the redemptive Father, He lovingly provides for His children (Matthew 6:8, 25-33; Philippians 4:19) and faithfully disciplines His children (Hebrews 12:5-11).

In His sovereignty as the creative Father, He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chronicles 29:11). In His sovereignty, He is neither author nor approver of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38-47), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17).

GOD THE SON (CHRISTOLOGY)

We believe and teach that God the Son is co-equal with God (John 10:30, 14:9), co-eternal with God (John 8:58), and consubstantial with God, and as such is the pre-existent Son (Isaiah 9:6).

We believe and teach that the pre-existent Son became man (John 1:1-2, 14, 6:33, 41) and that He was Jesus of Nazareth (Luke 24:19; Matthew 1:21, 25; 21:11; Mark 1:9) who, though human, was without a sinful nature (Hebrews 4:15) and thus stood apart from sinners (Hebrews 7:26). In becoming fully man (Luke 2:40; Philippians 2:8) by the virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23-25; Luke 1:26-35), the Son did not cease to be God (John 14:9-10; Colossians 2:9) but possessed all the perfection and attributes of God, and His earth-life sometimes functioned within the sphere of that which was human and sometimes within the sphere of that which was divine. Taking the form of a servant, He voluntarily surrendered His right to be immediately and constantly worshipped as God (Philippians 2:5-11) veiling His splendour with assumed humanity (Hebrews 10:20).

We believe and teach His purpose in coming into the world was to reveal the Father (John 1:18; 14:9-11), which task was accomplished in His earthly life and teachings (John 17:4-8), redeem mankind (Psalm 2:7-9; Hebrews 7:25-27, 9:26; John 3:16-18; 1 Peter 1:18-19), which task was completed fully and finally in His substitutionary propitiatory redemptive death (John 1:29, 10:15, 1 John 2:2; Romans 3:24-25, 5:8, 2 Corinthians 5:14; 1 Peter 2:24, 3:18). That His death was acceptable to the Father is evidenced in the resurrection of Jesus (Hebrews 1:3; Romans 1:4, 4:25; Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31), which was literal and physical. He is therefore, the only Saviour of the lost (John 14:6; Hebrews 10:5-14; Acts 4:12).

He also came to reign over the earth in judgment and blessing (John 5:22-23; Matthew 25:31-46; Isaiah 9:6; Revelation 20). Until that appointed hour (Acts 1:7, 9), He is the Christian's ascended Lord (Acts 1:9; Luke 24:51) to be worshipped (Philippians 2:9-11) at the right hand of the Father, Advocate (1 John 2:1) and Intercessor (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25, 9:24), and Head of His body, the Church (Ephesians 1:22, 5:23; Colossians 1:18).

We believe and teach that in fulfilment of prophecy, Christ came first to Israel, the chosen nation (Exodus 19:5), as her Messianic King, and that being rejected by the nation He gave His life as a ransom for all in keeping with the eternal plan of God (Matthew 10:5-6, 12:18-20, 21:31, 43, 26:24-32; Acts 13:46-48; John 1:11; Acts 22:17-24; 1 Timothy 2:6). He is also the one through whom God will judge all mankind (John 5:22-23; Acts 10:42).

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT (PNEUMATOLOGY)

We believe and teach that the Holy Spirit is of one essence and substance with the Father and the Son in their Deity (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4, 28:25-26; 2 Corinthians 13:14) possessing all the perfection and attributes of God (Psalm 139:7; Isaiah 40:13-14; Romans 15:13). Moreover, having the capacities of intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13), will (1 Corinthians 12:11), and emotion (Ephesians 4:30) He possesses the attributes of personhood (John 14:17, 15:26, 16:7-8).

His work is evident in the creation (Genesis 1:2), the incarnation (Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:35), the production of Scripture (2 Peter 1:20-21) and in the personal regeneration of every believer in Christ (John 3:5-7).

Though the Holy Spirit has been omnipresent from all eternity, He came in a special sense and with unique purpose on the Day of Pentecost as promised by the Father (Acts 1:4) and by the Son (John 14:16-17, 15:26).

We further believe and teach that in this age certain well-defined ministries of the Spirit are in clear operation toward both believer and unbeliever, and that it is the obligation of every Christian to understand, submit to, and enjoy the ministry of the Spirit.

In relation to believers, the Holy Spirit came to initiate the Body of Christ - the Church - this being a divine mystery until the Day of Pentecost (Ephesians 3:4-5, 9, 11) awaiting the coming of the Spirit (John 7:39), so that Jew and Gentile could both be made equal in the Church (1 Corinthians 12:13; Colossians 1:18, 24-27), and to indwell the Church (Ephesians 2:22; 1 Corinthians 3:16) and the individual Christian (1 Corinthians 6:19). This individual indwelling is necessary to salvation (Romans 8:9) and provides eternal security (Ephesians 1:13), thus signifying a permanent residence within the believer (John 14:15-17).

He came to produce Christ-like character in believers (Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18) through His control (Ephesians 5:18), instruct Apostles in the complete truth (John 16:12-15; 14:25-26; 15:26; 1 John 2:20, 27; 1 Peter 1:12) which was written and now stands in the Bible as the full and final revelation of the Spirit for this age (Hebrews 2:1-4; 2 Timothy 3:14-17), and also came to impart gifts and graces to the believer for the work of the ministry (1 Corinthians 12:11) according to His sovereign will (1 Corinthians 12:11).

We further believe and teach that since the Church has all of God's revealed truth in the Scriptures (John 16:12-15; Jude 3; Revelation 22:18-19) that no further truth is either necessary or available, and thus that the gifts related to revelation, and signs accrediting that apostolic revelation, are no longer necessary and have ceased (1 Corinthians 13:8

-10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:1-4). The gifts in operation today are the non-revelatory gifts for the edification and equipping of the body (Romans 12:6-8).

In relation to unbelievers, the Holy Spirit came to bring conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7-9).

MANKIND & SIN (ANTHROPOLOGY & HAMARTIOLOGY)

We believe and teach that man was created directly and immediately by God in His own image and likeness which pertains to man's personal and moral dimensions (Genesis 1:26, 2:7, 2:15-25; James 3:9).

We believe and teach that man was created good in that he was perfect in his innocence, but that he had both the capacity and responsibility to progress through obedience to perfect holiness. Instead, man rebelled against God who in judgment subjected man to death—spiritual, physical and eternal (Genesis 3:1-19; Ephesians 2:1-4; Revelation 20:11-15).

We further believe and teach that in the rebellious act of Adam all of mankind became inherently and totally corrupt (Genesis 6:5; Romans 1:18-32, 3:10-19; Psalm 14:1-3, 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9) and being without any recuperative powers within themselves to effect their own recovery (Romans 5:6) mankind became completely and hopelessly lost in relation to God (Luke 15:1-32; Ephesians 2:1-9). This state of inherent corruption and being lost in relation to God was directly passed to all of Adam's posterity (Romans 5:12-21) the only exception being the Man Christ Jesus (Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 1:19).

Universal death is the proof of universal sin (Romans 5:12-14) since death comes by sin (Romans 5:12, 6:23). Left to himself man is irrecoverably sinful (Romans 3:23, 6:23) and stands in need of Christ the Saviour. All men are thus sinners by nature, choice, practice, and by divine declaration.

SALVATION (SOTERIOLOGY)

We believe and teach that salvation is wholly and solely of God's grace (Ephesians 2:8-9) on the basis of the redemption effected through the

shedding of Christ's blood (i.e. Christ's sacrificial death as a substitute for sinners that satisfied God's justice upon sin: Leviticus 17:11; Matthew 26:28; Romans 3:24-26; 5:6-8; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 2:1-2). This redemption is made a reality in the life of the believer through the Holy Spirit imparting eternal life and bringing a new nature (John 3:1-18; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:5-7).

Election

We believe and teach that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:1-2). This election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Saviour and Lord (John 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:22-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10; Revelation 22:17). Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines. All whom the Father calls to Himself will come to faith and all who come in faith the Father will receive (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; Romans 8:29-30). We believe and teach that the unmerited favour that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part nor to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will, but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy (Romans 9:11-16; Ephesians 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:1-2). Thus foreknowledge originates in advanced planning, not advanced knowledge (Acts 2:23; Romans 8:29). We believe and teach that election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign but He exercises His sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace and love (Romans 9:11-16). This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 1:9).

Justification

We believe and teach that justification before God is an act of God (Romans 8:33) by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38, 3:19,11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6-7) and confess Him as sovereign Lord (Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11). This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man (Romans 3:20, 4:6) and involves the placement of our sins on Christ (Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (1 Corinthians 1:2, 30, 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:21). This means that at the moment of faith we pass out of spiritual death into spiritual life (John 5:24) and are accepted by the Father as Christ Himself is accepted, being loved as Christ Himself is loved (John 17:23). This also means that at the moment of justification the believer receives every spiritual blessing as a possession (Ephesians 1:3; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23) and is complete in Christ (Colossians 2:10), and that while the believer may progress in both the discovery and enjoyment of these blessings already in his possession, a second work of grace or a second blessing is both irrelevant and unnecessary.

Regeneration

We believe and teach that regeneration issues in the inseparable and simultaneous responses of repentance toward God and faith in the divinely provided Saviour (Acts 11:18, 20:21), there being absolutely no other condition whatsoever for salvation (Acts 13:38-39; Romans 3:20, 4:6-7; Titus 3:5), and that regeneration also issues in a new submission to the Spirit-given Word of God (Ephesians 5:17-21; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4-10). Good works, righteous attitudes and conduct, will be the proper evidence and fruit of regeneration (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 2:13; James 2:14-18; 2 Peter 1:4-10; 1 John 1:6, 2:3-5).

Sanctification

We believe and teach that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is

consequently identified as a saint. This positional sanctification is instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. Positional sanctification has to do with the believer's standing not his present walk or condition (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2). We further believe and teach that there is also, by the work of the Holy Spirit, a progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the standing the believer positionally enjoys through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:17, 19; Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 5:23). In this respect we believe and teach that this will entail continual and unending conflict in the believer's life—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh. However, adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 10:13; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:5-17). The struggle, nevertheless, stays with the believer all through this earthly life until the believer leaves this life either through death or translation, because the believer has within, both the old nature of the flesh and the new nature of the Spirit. All claims of the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. Eradication of sin is not possible, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

Security

We believe and teach that once saved, the believer is kept by God's power and grace (1 Peter 1:3-5; John 17:11; 1 Corinthians 1:8-9) and that such a security is guaranteed by virtue of the intrinsic nature of eternal life (John 10:27-30), the intercessory ministry and advocacy of Christ for the believer (Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2; Luke 22:32), and the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit in the believer (John 14:16-17; Romans 8:1-11; Ephesians 4:30). Thus the believer is secure in Christ

forever, there being no condemnation (Romans 8:1) and no separation (Romans 8:39). Since God saves the believer apart from human merit (Titus 3:5; Ephesians 2:8-9), He will not reject those He has chosen (Ephesians 1:4) because of demerit in themselves, but He will present them faultless before the presence of His glory (Jude 24) conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29). He who is faithful in the calling will not fail in the consummation (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:5).

Assurance

We believe and teach that it is the privilege of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ, to experience the assurance of eternal salvation from the very moment of their faith in Christ as Saviour, and that this assurance is based on the personal witness of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:16), and the Word of God (1 John 5:11-13; John 5:24), which clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality (Romans 6:15-22; Galatians 5:13).

Separation

We believe and teach that separation from sin is clearly called for throughout the Old and New Testaments, and that the Scriptures clearly indicate that in the last days apostasy and worldliness shall increase (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5). We believe and teach that out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us, and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our adoring love to God and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Saviour. We also believe and teach that separation from all religious apostasy, and worldly and sinful practices is commanded of us by God (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11). We believe and teach that believers should be separated unto our Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 12:1-2) and affirm that the Christian life is one of obedient righteousness demonstrated by a Beatitude attitude (Matthew 5:2-12) and a continual pursuit of holiness (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:1-10).

THE CHURCH (ECCLESIOLOGY)

We believe and teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ, regardless of their membership or non-membership of any denomination, are at that moment of faith, immediately immersed (“baptized”) into the one spiritual Church by means of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 2:11-3:6). The spiritual Church is related to Christ both as His Body (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:22-23) and as His Bride (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8), and He is Head of both (Ephesians 1:22, 4:15; Colossians 1:18).

We believe and teach that the invisible church began on the Day of Pentecost (Matthew 16:16-18; Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and that this body is different to Israel (Romans 9-11; Galatians 6:16), and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His bride at the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). This being the case, we further believe and teach that there must be a fundamental unity between all Christians, which rises above denominational distinctives (John 17:20-23) since each believer is one with every other member of this great body (Romans 12:5) and is responsible to keep the unity the Spirit has made (1 Corinthians 12:12-13) in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3-6; Colossians 3:14-15).

We believe and teach that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18) and that the church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the local church are elders and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualification (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5). These leaders lead as servants of Christ (1 Timothy 5:17-22) and have His authority in directing the church within the bounds of scriptural absolutes. The congregation is to imitate their leaders' faith and submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

We believe and teach the importance and practice of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2), mutual accountability of all

believers to each other as well as the need for discipline of sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture (Matthew 18:15-22; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16).

We believe and teach the autonomy of the local Church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organisations (Revelation 1-3; Titus 1:5; Acts 20:28).

We believe and teach that the Church exists to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21) by facilitating the maturing of the body through the teaching of the Word of God (Ephesians 4:13-16; 2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 2 Timothy 3:16-17), through the keeping of the ordinances (Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:38-42), through fellowship (Acts 2:42, 44-47; 1 John 1:3) and by a commitment to evangelism throughout the entire world (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).

Ordinances

We believe and teach that there are two ordinances for the Church: Baptism (Matthew 28:19) and the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

We believe and teach water baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) as a symbol of the Spirit baptism at conversion (Romans 6:1-11). Baptism is expected of all true believers (Matthew 28:19) and is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:1-11). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42).

We believe and teach that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of the Lord's death until His return (1 Corinthians 11:23-26), and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:27-32).

We also believe and teach that while the elements of the Supper are only representative of the body and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper is

nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ who is present in a unique way, fellowshiping with His people (1 Corinthians 10:16).

Spiritual Gifts

We believe and teach that there were two kinds of gifts given to the early church: miraculous gifts given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the Apostles' and their message (Hebrews 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12); and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for the edification of one another (Romans 12:6-8).

With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message (Acts 17:10,11; 1 Corinthians 4:6; Revelation 22:18-19), and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature such as divine revelation, healing, and tongues (i.e. real languages) are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message. Miraculous gifts can be counterfeited by Satan so as to deceive even believers (Mark 13:22; Revelation 13:13-14). The gifts in operation from the completion of revelation (i.e. New Testament canon) forward are those non-revelatory, non-sign, ministering gifts given for edification (1 Corinthians 13:8-13; Romans 12:6-8).

We believe and teach that no one possesses the gift of healing today but that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted (Luke 18:1-6; John 5:7-9; 2 Corinthians 12:6-10; James 5:14-16; 1 John 5:14-15).

ANGELS (ANGELOLOGY)

Holy Angels

We believe and teach that angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshipped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-7, 14, 2:6-7; Revelation 5:11-14, 19:10, 22:9).

Fallen Angels

We believe and teach that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator, taking angels with him (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1-14), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Genesis 3:1-15). We believe and teach that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 12:9-10), the prince of this world who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire along with his angels and followers (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

LAST THINGS (ESCHATOLOGY)

Death

We believe and teach that death is not annihilation, but the separation of man in his material and immaterial components (Genesis 2:7, 3:19; James 2:26).

For the believer, there is the immediate and conscious presence of Christ (Luke 16:19-26, 23:42-43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8), which state exists until the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17) which initiates the first resurrection (Revelation 20:4-6), when there will be the reconstitution of the believer in the joining of the immaterial identity with the material resurrection body (Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54; John 6:39; Romans 8:10-11, 19-23; 2 Corinthians 4:14).

For the unbeliever, there is the immediate and conscious awareness of condemnation until the second resurrection (Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:13-15) when the unbeliever will be reconstituted (John 5:28-29) to appear at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:5-15), to suffer conscious torment day and night forever in the Lake of Fire (Matthew 25:41-46), cut off from the life of God forever (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

The Rapture

We believe and teach that Christ's imminent coming to the air to remove His Church and receive her into heaven (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14) will precede the tribulation period (1 Thessalonians 1:10; Revelation 3:10), and that at this coming the living Christians will be changed (Philippians 3:21) and that the already departed believers will return with Christ to the air to receive their resurrection bodies (1 Thessalonians 4:14) and between this event and His glorious return with His saints, to reward believers according to their works (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

The Tribulation

We believe and teach that following the removal of the church from the earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:27, 12:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; Revelation 16), and that these judgments (known as the time of Jacob's trouble or the great tribulation) will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth (Matthew 24:27-31, 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12). We believe and teach that the history of the nations of the earth are inextricably bound up with God's providential and particular dealings with the elect nation - Israel - both in blessing (Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 2:1-4, 11:9; Micah 5:4-15) and in judgment (Genesis 12:3; Deuteronomy 30:7; Matthew 24:4-14). We further believe and teach that these days will end in the personal return of Christ to earth (Matthew 24:27-31, 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12), when the Old Testament saints and the tribulation martyrs will be raised and all the living judged (Daniel 12:2-3; Revelation 20:4-6).

The Second Coming of Christ and the Millennial Reign

We believe and teach that the second coming of Christ properly relates to the physical personal return of Christ to earth (Acts 1:9-11; Matthew 25:31), in order to overthrow the Antichrist and the False Prophet (Daniel 7:17-27), bind Satan in the abyss (Revelation 20:1-3) and to establish the millennial age (Revelation 20:2-7) as Israel's Davidic King (Luke 1:31-33; Acts 2:29-30; 2 Samuel 7:8-16) ruling over a redeemed (Jeremiah

31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-32) and restored (Deuteronomy 28:1-30:20; Romans 11:25-29) Israel, in fulfilment of Israel's covenants (Genesis 12:1-3, 15:1-21; Deuteronomy 28:1-30:20; 2 Samuel 7:8-16; Jeremiah 31:31-34) and the predictions of the prophets (Isaiah 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:1-17). As with the judgments of the tribulation, so with the blessings of the Kingdom; all is mediated through the Jews (John 4:22) with whom the providential dealings of history are providentially bound. With Israel's acceptance of her King there begins the thousand-year kingdom on earth (Acts 1:6, 3:19-22; Isaiah 11:1-16, 65:17-25; Ezekiel 36:33-38; Revelation 20:1-7). The resurrected saints will share in this rule (Ezekiel 37:21-28; Daniel 7:17-22; Matthew 19:28; 1 Corinthians 6:1-3; Romans 8:17-22; 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 5:10, 19:11-16). We further believe and teach that this time of our Lord's reign will be characterised by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life (Isaiah 11, 65:17-25; Ezekiel 36:33-38), and will be brought to an end with the release and final judgment of Satan (Revelation 20:7).

The Judgment of the Lost

We believe and teach that following the release of Satan after the thousand-year reign of Christ (Revelation 20:7), Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and Jerusalem. They will be defeated (Revelation 20:9), Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10), and Christ, as judge of all men (John 5:22), will resurrect and judge the great and the small at the Great White Throne Judgment. This resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection, whereupon receiving their judgment they will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15).

Eternity

We believe and teach that after the closing of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:11-15), the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved (2 Peter 3:10) and replaced with a new earth wherein

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only righteousness dwells (Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 20:15; 21-22). Following this, the heavenly city will come down out of heaven (Revelation 21:2) and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy fellowship with God and one another forever (John 17:3; Revelation 21-22). Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28) that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (1 Corinthians 15:28).



OUR DISTINCTIVES

What follows is the summary and key points of each of our fourteen distinctives. A fuller treatment of each distinctive is available as separate pamphlets under the appropriate heading.

A BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

The Precedence of the Sole Authority & Sufficiency of Scripture—We believe a wholehearted commitment to the sole authority and sufficiency of Scripture is essential if a church is to faithfully fulfil its God-given three-fold mission.

Key points:

- God is to be worshipped and served on His terms and in the way He has revealed in Scripture.
 - ◆ John 4:22, 24 *“You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews ...God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth”*
- Scripture is not to be added to, subtracted from, or distorted.
 - ◆ Deuteronomy 4:2 *“You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.”*
 - ◆ 2 Timothy 2:15 *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*
- Scripture, as the final and completed revelation of God, alone possesses God’s supreme authority.
 - ◆ Jude 3 *“...the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints”*
 - ◆ 1 Corinthians 13:9-10 *“For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; But when that which is perfect [to teleion =complete, i.e. completion of revelation for the church age, closing of the canon of Scripture] has come, then that which is in part will be done away.”*
 - ◆ 2 Timothy 3:16 *“All Scripture is given by inspiration [i.e. breathed out by God] of God...”*

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- ◆ 2 Peter 1:20-21 *“no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation [i.e. Scripture was not sourced or invented by the prophet], for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved [i.e. carried along] by the Holy Spirit.”*
- Scripture alone is sufficient to lead the lost to salvation.
 - ◆ 2 Timothy 3:15 *“...the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation...”*
 - ◆ Romans 1:16 *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation...”*
- Scripture alone is sufficient to equip the saints for sanctification.
 - ◆ 2 Timothy 3:16-17 *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*
 - ◆ 2 Peter 1:3 *“as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him...”*
- Therefore, no other information, however helpful or spiritual it may profess to be, is binding or necessary in any degree for the church’s faith or practice.

The Proper Hermeneutics & Application of Scripture—We believe the faithful exercise of the biblical principles for interpreting and applying the Bible is essential if a church is to faithfully discover its God-given three-fold mission. The God-intended single, literal meaning of each passage of the Bible is to be discovered according to its context, original grammar, and original historical background, and is further confirmed by testing Scripture with Scripture. The applications of a passage must be defined, confined, and controlled by the God-intended single, literal meaning of that passage.

Key points:

- God has commanded that we rightly interpret the Scriptures.
 - ◆ 2 Timothy 2:15 *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*

- Christ exemplified proper Scripture interpretation.
 - ◆ Luke 24:27 *“And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded [“hermeneutics” derived from this term] to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”*
- Scripture is to be interpreted literally according to its natural, normal plain sense, not in a woodenly literal or allegorical way.
 - ◆ Luke 22:37 *“For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: ‘And He was numbered with the transgressors.’ For the things concerning Me have an end.”*
 - ◆ 1 Timothy 1:4 *“nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.”*
- Scripture is to be interpreted in context.
 - ◆ Matthew 5:27-28 *“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”*
- Scripture is to be interpreted grammatically according to the meaning of the words and their relationship to one another in the original language.
 - ◆ Matthew 5:18 *“For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”*
- Scripture is to be interpreted historically according to its original historical setting and the stage of progressive revelation.
 - ◆ Mark 12:26 *“...have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage...”*
- Scripture is to be interpreted by testing Scripture with Scripture, knowing that God will never contradict Himself.
 - ◆ Matthew 4:5-7 *“Then the devil took Him up into the holy city... and said to Him, ‘If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’ and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’ ” Jesus said to him, “It is written again [i.e. on the other hand], ‘You shall not tempt the LORD your God.’ ”*

- Scripture is to be interpreted singularly with each passage of Scripture having only one meaning.
 - ◆ Matthew 12:3, 7 *“But he said to them, ‘Have you not read... But if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless.”*
- Scripture is to be accurately applied.
 - ◆ 1 Timothy 1:8 *“But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully.”*

The Prescriptive Principle—We believe that what a church does and how it does it is to be dictated and measured solely by what is actually prescribed in Scripture. Every ministry of the church is to be formulated and regulated by Scriptural prescriptions and parameters set forth in binding precepts and principles, rather than simply by what is not expressly prohibited.

Key points:

- The prescriptive principle aims at both formulating and regulating ministries to best fulfil and not violate God’s prescriptions for the church.
 - ◆ Matthew 5:19 *“Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”*
- Since no other information, besides the Scriptures, is binding or necessary in any degree for the church’s faith or practice, then nothing else should dictate what ministries the church should employ and how those ministries are to be carried out and measured. Scripture doesn’t give an exhaustive list of what is prohibited but does give sufficient prescriptions of what the church is to do and sufficient parameters of how the church is to do them. Therefore, an approach that allows whatever is not expressly forbidden in Scripture is both inadequate and unsafe. God’s prescriptions not only dictate what is to be done but combine to form boundaries of how it is to be done as well. Within those boundaries there is freedom of preference and

creativity as long as they don't begin to violate any of God's prescriptions.

A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

The Sovereignty of God—We believe God is absolutely in control of all things including inanimate creation, evil, and in the election to salvation of all the redeemed. Although loathed by human pride and beyond human comprehension, Scripture unequivocally asserts that God is absolutely in control of all things, while moral agents remain responsible and accountable for the willing choices they make.

Key points:

- God is absolutely in control of all things.
 - ◆ Ephesians 1:11 *"...Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will"*
- God does as He pleases—God has supreme authority and is free to do whatever He pleases with His creation for His own glory and in accord with His other moral perfections.
 - ◆ Psalm 103:19 *"His kingdom rules over all"*
 - ◆ Psalm 135:6 *"whatever the LORD pleases He does, in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deep places"*
- God has planned all things—God has a single, all-inclusive, and certain plan that He made in eternity past and is executing in time.
 - ◆ Isaiah 46:10 *"Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'"*
 - ◆ Isaiah 14:24, 27 *"The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying, 'Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, And as I have purposed, so it shall stand...For the LORD of hosts has purposed, And who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, And who will turn it back?'"*
- God preserves all things—God preserves the existence and properties of His entire creation.

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- ◆ Nehemiah 9:6 *“You alone are the LORD; You have made heaven, The heaven of heavens, with all their host, The earth and everything on it, The seas and all that is in them, And You preserve them all...”*
- ◆ Colossians 1:17 *“...in Him all things consist [i.e. are being held together]”*
- ➔ God providentially directs all things—In the execution of God’s eternal plan in time, God cooperates with created things in every action, regulating their distinctive properties in order to direct them to act as they do in fulfillment of His eternal plan, and in such a way, that God remains holy and in control, while moral agents remain responsible and accountable for the willing choices they make. How exactly these truths operate undiminished remains inscrutable to our finite minds.
 - ◆ Proverbs 21:1 *“The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.”*
 - ◆ Matthew 10:29 *“Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will.”*
 - ◆ Isaiah 45:7 *“I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity [i.e. evil]; I, the LORD, do all these things.”*
 - ◆ James 1:13-14, 16-17 *“Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed... Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”*
 - ◆ Isaiah 55:8-9 *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.”*
- ➔ God has elected and predestined all who will be saved by Him through faith; and yet, mankind is still responsible to believe.
 - ◆ Ephesians 1:4-5, 11 *“...He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world...having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself... being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will”*
 - ◆ Romans 8:28-30 *“...are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined...Moreover whom He predestined, these He*

also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."

- ◆ John 6:37, 44, 65 *"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out...No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him" ...No one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father"*
- ◆ Romans 9:11, 15-16, 19-21 *"(for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls)... For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion. So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy... You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?"*

The Spiritual Gifts—We believe the gifts in operation today are those non-revelatory, non-sign gifts given for the edification of the church. The miraculous-revelatory gifts have fulfilled their purpose and therefore ceased for the church age, but the ministering gifts continue.

Key points:

- The miraculous-revelatory gifts were given for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the Apostles' and their divinely given message.
 - ◆ Hebrews 2:3-4 *"...so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will"*
 - ◆ 2 Corinthians 12:12 *"Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds."*

- The recipients of direct divine revelation for the church age were foundational and their message was given once and for all and is all that is needed for the church age.
 - ◆ Ephesians 2:20 *“having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets...”*
 - ◆ Jude 3 *“.. the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”*
 - ◆ 2 Timothy 3:15-17 *“...the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*
- With the arrival of the completion of revelation for the church age, the partial revelatory gifts were brought to an end and the confirming gifts of a miraculous nature fulfilled their purpose and were no longer necessary to validate the already confirmed word and have therefore ceased.
 - ◆ 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 *“But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect [to teleion =complete, i.e. completion of revelation for the church age, closing of the canon of Scripture] has come, then that which is in part will be done away.”*
- The gifts in operation from the completion of the New Testament canon onward in the church age are those non-revelatory, non-sign, ministering gifts given for edification of the church.
 - ◆ Romans 12:6-8 *“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them... ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”*
- Nevertheless, while no one possesses the gift of healing today, God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted.

- ◆ 1 John 5:14-15 *“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”*
- ◆ James 5:15 *“And the prayer of faith will save the sick [kamnō = weary in soul, cf. Hebrews 12:3], and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.”*

The Saints' Glorious Hope—We believe in a literal, dispensational, pretribulation, premillennial eschatology. When prophecy, like the rest of Scripture, is interpreted literally it will yield a recognized distinction in God's covenants with mankind, a pretribulation timing of the rapture of the church, and a premillennial view of Christ's rule and reign on the earth in the future.

Key points:

- Literally—All the prophecies regarding Christ's first coming were fulfilled literally, therefore there is no basis to take the prophecies of His second coming as allegorical.
 - ◆ Luke 22:37 *“For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.' For the things concerning Me have an end.”*
 - ◆ Matthew 24:15, 29-30 *“when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand)... Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”*
- Dispensational—Given a literal interpretation of Scripture, the church is not Israel and, therefore, Israel must still have a future as a nation in the plan of God in which the Lord will fulfil the covenant promises made to her in the Old Testament.

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- ◆ Romans 11:25-29 *“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins. 28 Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.”*
- ◆ Genesis 12:1-3, 7 [Abrahamic Covenant] *“Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed... To your descendants I will give this land...” (cf. 15:7-21; 17:1-21)*
- ◆ Deuteronomy 30:4-6 [Mosaic Covenant] *“If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.”*
- ◆ 2 Samuel 7:16 [Davidic Covenant] *“And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.”*
- ◆ Ezekiel 36:24-33 [New Covenant] *“For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations.*

Not for your sake do I do this," says the Lord GOD, "let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!" Thus says the Lord GOD: "On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt."

- ◆ Jeremiah 31:31-34 [New Covenant] *"Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah --not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."*
- Pretribulational—No other view can explain why the church is not mentioned in Revelation 4-18, why the epistles do not contain preparatory warnings of an impending Tribulation for church-age believers; and no other view best fits the following texts:
 - ◆ Matthew 25:31-32 *"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats."*—A posttribulational rapture would make this separation redundant.
 - ◆ Jeremiah 23:3 *"But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase."* (cf. Isaiah 65:20; Revelation 20:7-10)—A posttribulational rapture would leave no non-glorified individuals to enter the Millennial Kingdom to populate and propagate the kingdom.
 - ◆ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *"But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the*

trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.—A posttribulational rapture would make the believers happy (not grieved) that their loved ones would not have to endure the horrors of the Tribulation. Also, this text cannot be describing the second coming of Christ when unbelievers will be removed from the earth and believers will be gathered through the agency of angels (Matthew 24:31, 37-41), because here it speaks of believers removed from the earth through the direct agency of Christ.

- ◆ John 14:1-3 *“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”*—A posttribulational rapture makes this rapture promise an impossibility since the saints would meet Christ in the air and immediately descend to earth.
- ◆ Revelation 3:10 *“Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from [tērēō ēk =a continued state outside] the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”*—If it is argued that the protection during the Tribulation is limited to protection from God’s wrath only and not Satan’s, then Revelation 3:10 makes our Lord’s request in John 17:15 of no value. Second, if it is argued that Revelation 3:10 means total immunity, then the promise becomes worthless in light of the Tribulation martyrs mentioned in Revelation 6:9–11 and 7:14.
- ☉ Premillennial—Given a literal interpretation of Scripture, God’s promises to Israel regarding the land have yet to be fulfilled and John’s chronology (Revelation 19:11-20:10) requires that Christ return before His earthly millennial reign.
 - ◆ Jeremiah 16:14-15 *“Therefore behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “that it shall no more be said, ‘The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ but, ‘The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.’ For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers.”*
 - ◆ Ezekiel 20:42-43 *“I will accept you as a sweet aroma when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been*

scattered; and I will be hallowed in you before the Gentiles. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for which I raised My hand in an oath to give to your fathers.”

- ◆ Revelation 19:11-; 20:1-7 “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war...Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison...”

A BIBLICAL EQUIPPING MINISTRY

***B**iblical Leadership—We believe and practice biblical eldership and deaconship, which constitute God’s ordained leadership for the church. The Elders exercise oversight and shepherding care over the entire local assembly of believers, while the Deacons provide practical and physical care for the assembly as a complementary team, with, and in submission to, the Elders. Before any man may be appointed as an Elder or Deacon he must publicly and verifiably meet the biblical qualifications.*

Key points:

- ➔ The only pattern for church leadership given in the New Testament is eldership—a plurality of God-ordained, biblically qualified Elders.

3-D STATEMENT: OUR DETERMINATION, DISTINCTIVES, & DOCTRINE

- ◆ Titus 1:5 *“...appoint elders in every city as I commanded you”*
- ◆ Acts 14:23 *“So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.”*
- The words “elder” (presbuteros), “overseer” (episkopos), and “pastor” (poimēn) all refer to the same office and refer to the various features of the single office.
 - ◆ Acts 20:17, 28 *“...he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders [presbuteros] of the church... take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers [episkopos], to shepherd [poimainō] the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”*
 - ◆ 1 Peter 5:1-2 *“the elders [presbuteros] who are among you, I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd [poimainō] the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers [episkopēō], not under compulsion but willingly.”*
- A plurality of godly Elders provides combined counsel and wisdom, a balancing, a lightening of the work load, and accountability.
 - ◆ Acts 15:6-7 *“Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter...”*
 - ◆ Exodus 18:22 *“...So it will be easier for you, for they will bear the burden with you.”*
 - ◆ Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 *“Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion....And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”*
- As those called to shepherd God’s flock, Elders are to lead, feed, guard, and care for the congregation.
 - ◆ 1 Thessalonians 5:12 *“...those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you”*
 - ◆ Hebrews 13:7, 17 *“...those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you... Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account.”*
 - ◆ Acts 20:28-31, 35 *“Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my*

departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock...Therefore watch... you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

- ◆ James 5:14-15 *"Is anyone among you sick [astheneō = weak cf. 2 Corinthians 12:10]? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. "And the prayer of faith will save the sick [kamnō = weary in soul, cf. Hebrews 12:3], and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven."*
- ➔ The qualifications for becoming an Elder are that he must be a man who is spiritually: compelled, characterized, competent, and confirmed.
 - ◆ 1 Timothy 3:1-7 *"If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."*
 - ◆ Titus 1:6-9 *"if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict."*
- ➔ The Elders should oversee the appointing of other elders with the participation of the congregation.
 - ◆ 1 Peter 5:1-2 *"The elders who are among you I exhort...Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers..."*
 - ◆ 1 Timothy 4:14 *"...with the laying on of the hands of the eldership."*
 - ◆ 1 Timothy 5:22-25 *"Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure...Some men's sins are clearly evident,*

preceding them to judgment, but those of some men follow later. Likewise, the good works of some are clearly evident, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden."

➔ Elders must be honoured and heeded and those who lead exceptionally well or work hard at the Word and doctrine are worthy of double honour.

- ◆ 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 *"And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves."*
- ◆ Hebrews 13:17 *"Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you."*
- ◆ 1 Timothy 5:17 *"Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine."*

➔ Deacons are a body of officially recognized servants of the church that provide specific oversight of the physical needs of the church and the related administrative needs that require verified integrity, in connection with and submission to the oversight of the Elders so that the Elders can devote themselves to their primary duties of prayer and the ministry of the Word.

- ◆ Philippians 1:1 *"To all the saints in Christ Jesus...with the bishops [i.e. overseers/elders] and deacons"*
- ◆ 1 Timothy 3:10 *"But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless."*
- ◆ Acts 6:2-4 *"Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."*

➔ The qualifications for becoming a Deacon are: he must be a man with a personal life of integrity, a publicly verified life of integrity, a

partnering wife of integrity, and a properly ordered home-life of integrity.

- ◆ 1 Timothy 3:8-12 *“Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.”*
 - ◆ Acts 6:3 *“...men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom...”*
- ➞ Deacons who fulfil their position in a commendable way acquire for themselves a good standing in the church and great boldness in faith
- ◆ 1 Timothy 3:13 *“For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”*

Biblical Expository Preaching—We believe and practice in the context of the assembly, preaching by gifted and qualified pastors and teachers where the point of the sermon is the originally intended point of the Scriptural text. God has ordained definitive messengers to proclaim a definitive message by definitive means.

Key points:

- ➞ In the context of the corporate gathering of God’s people, God has ordained definitive messengers to proclaim a definitive message by definitive means.
 - ◆ 2 Timothy 4:1-4 *“I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.”*
- ➞ The definitive messengers are gifted and qualified pastors and teachers

3-D STATEMENT: OUR DETERMINATION, DISTINCTIVES, & DOCTRINE

- ◆ 2 Timothy 4:1-2 *“I charge you [Timothy, i.e. church leaders]...Preach the word!...”*
 - ◆ Ephesians 4:11-12 *“And He Himself gave...some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry...”*
 - ◆ Hebrews 13:7 *“...those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you...”*
 - ◆ James 3:1 *“My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.”*
- The definitive message is the accurate meaning and application of Scripture.
- ◆ 2 Timothy 2:15; 4:2-3 *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth....Preach the word [i.e. the Scripture 3:16]! Be ready in season and out of season...For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine...”*
 - ◆ Isaiah 55:11 *“So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”*
- The definitive means is proclamation that urges acceptance and obedience.
- ◆ 2 Timothy 4:2 *“Preach the word!...Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.”*
 - ◆ Titus 2:15 *“Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.”*

*B*iblical Counselling—We believe and practice counselling one another on the basis of the sole authority, sufficiency, and sound theology of the Scriptures alone.

Key points:

- For Christians, the Scriptures are the only divinely approved and necessary source for truth in counselling one another.
- ◆ 2 Timothy 3:15-17 *“...the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for*

instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

- For Christians, no other spiritual resource outside of Christ is needed to counsel one another and be enabled to fulfil God’s will in any given circumstance.
 - ◆ Colossians 2:10 *“and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”*
 - ◆ Ephesians 1:3 *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ”*
 - ◆ 2 Peter 1:3 *“as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him...”*
- Secular theories and practices are not manifestations of God’s general revelation or common grace and so should not be integrated into the presuppositions, principles, or methodologies of the Christian’s counselling.
 - ◆ Romans 1:18-21 *“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”*
 - ◆ Colossians 2:8 *“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.”*
- Therefore, true Christian counselling must demonstrate that Scriptural truth, ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit, is sufficient to enable Christians to fulfil God’s will for their lives in whatever circumstance.

Biblical Music Ministry—We believe in and strive to practice a music ministry that is consistently biblical. A consistently

biblical music ministry, must be biblical in its motive, means, and manner.

Key points:

- A biblical music ministry is biblical in motive seeking to be God-centered and others-edifying by focusing the congregation's view on God and raising their view of God and His deeds.
 - ◆ Ephesians 5:19 *"speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord"*
 - ◆ Colossians 3:16 *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."*
 - ◆ Psalm 68:4, 26 *"Sing [šir] to God, sing praises [zāmar] to His name; Extol [sālal] Him who rides on the clouds, By His name YAH... Bless [bāarak] God in the congregations..."*
 - ◆ Psalm 105:1-2, 45 *"Oh, give thanks [yādā] to the LORD! Call upon His name... Sing [šir] to Him, sing psalms [zāmar] to Him; Talk of [šīah=meditate, ponder] all His wondrous works!...Praise [hālal] the LORD"*
- A biblical music ministry is biblical in means, utilizing the only explicitly New Testament stated means of singing sound doctrine with skilful musical accompaniment.
 - ◆ Ephesians 5:19 *"speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody [i.e. sing with musical accompaniment] in your heart to the Lord"*
 - ◆ Colossians 3:16-17 *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him"*
 - ◆ John 4:24 *"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*
 - ◆ Psalm 33:2-3 *"Praise [yādā] the LORD with the harp; Make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings. Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy."*

- ◆ Psalm 150:3-5 “Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp! Praise Him with the timbrel... Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals!”
- ☞ A biblical music ministry is biblical in manner, striving to lead the congregation with ‘all-ness’ (whole-life), otherness (considerate of the congregation’s capacity, conscience, & corporate preferences), and orderliness (proper order with a view to maximizing the congregation’s edification).
 - ◆ Ephesians 5:19 *“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody [i.e. sing with musical accompaniment] in your heart to the Lord”*
 - ◆ Colossians 3:16-17 *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him”*
 - ◆ Romans 12:1 *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”*
 - ◆ Matthew 22:37 *“Jesus said to him, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”*
 - ◆ Psalm 96:1, 9 *“Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! Sing to the LORD, all the earth... Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness! Tremble [hûl] before Him, all the earth.”*
 - ◆ Psalm 32:11 *“Be glad [šāma =be glad with whole disposition] in the LORD and rejoice [gil = vigorous expressions of joy], you righteous; And shout for joy, all you upright in heart!”*
 - ◆ Philippians 2:3-4 *“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”*
 - ◆ Romans 14:3 *“Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way.”*

- ◆ 1 Corinthians 14:26, 33, 40 *“...Let all things be done for edification... For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints... Let all things be done decently and in order.”*

Biblical Church Discipline—We believe and practice the biblical prerequisites and process of corrective church discipline that seeks to lovingly restore professing believers who are in sin and protect the purity and witness of the church to the glory of God.

Key points:

- ➔ Biblical church discipline is both preventative and corrective.
 - ◆ Matthew 28:19-20 *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...”*
 - ◆ Matthew 18:15-17 *“Moreover if your brother sins...go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.”*
- ➔ The purpose of corrective church discipline is to lovingly restore professing believers who are in sin and protect the purity and witness of the church to the glory of God.
 - ◆ Galatians 6:1-2 *“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one... Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”*
 - ◆ 1 Timothy 5:20 *“Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.”*
 - ◆ 1 Corinthians 5:6 *“...Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?”*
 - ◆ Titus 2:5, 8, 10 *“that the word of God may not be blasphemed... that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you... that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.”*

➤ The prerequisites of corrective church discipline are to be certain an actual sin has been committed by a professing believer, be spiritual, be selflessly gentle, and be self-examining one's own heart and actions.

- ◆ Luke 17:3 "...If your brother sins...rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him"
- ◆ Galatians 6:1-4 "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another."

➤ The four-step process of corrective church discipline that progresses due to a lack of repentance is: Step #1 private reproof; Step #2 witness reproof; Step #3 church reproof and refusal of fellowship; and Step #4 church exclusion.

- ◆ Matthew 18:15-20 *"Moreover if your brother sins...go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."*
- ◆ 1 Thessalonians 3:6,13-14 *"But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us... And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."*
- ◆ 1 Corinthians 5:2, 4-5, 6-7, 9-13 *"...and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you... In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the*

destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus... Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump... I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner – not even to eat with such a person. For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."

- No protests against corrective church discipline can validly nullify the clear repeated commands of Scripture to exercise it, and Scripture will not contradict Scripture.
- ◆ 2 John 6 *"This is love, that we walk according to His commandments..."*

Biblical Church Commitment—*We believe in and practice a regular, active, mutually recognized commitment to the local church under God's leaders. God has ordained that believers clearly commit themselves to an identifiable, local body of believers, in recognized submission to the loving care and instruction of biblically qualified elders for the purpose of being equipped for the work of ministry for mutual edification unto corporate doctrinal and moral Christlikeness.*

Key points:

- A regular, active, mutually recognized commitment to the local church is necessary due to God's prohibition against neglecting to gather with God's people in the context of a local assembly with biblically qualified leaders.
- ◆ Hebrews 10:25 *"not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."*

- ◆ Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24 *“...those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you... those who rule over you... for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account... those who rule over you”*
- ➔ A regular, active, mutually recognized commitment to the local church is necessary due to God’s prescriptions for God’s people to be under the loving care and instruction of biblically qualified pastors.
- ◆ Hebrews 13:17 *“Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.”*
 - ◆ 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 *“And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves.”*
 - ◆ James 5:14 *“Is anyone among you sick [astheneō = weak cf. 2 Corinthians 12:10]? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”*
- ➔ A regular, active, mutually recognized commitment to the local church is necessary due to God’s purpose for the spiritual gifts for equipping the saints for the work of ministry unto corporate Christlikeness, which can only find their full and proper fulfillment in the context of the church gathered under gifted and qualified ministers of the Word.
- ◆ Ephesians 4:11-16 *“And He Himself gave... some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”*
- ➔ A regular, active, mutually recognized commitment to the local church is necessary due to God’s final steps in the process of corrective

church discipline, which require church refusal of fellowship and church exclusion, and could not be fulfilled otherwise.

- ◆ Matthew 18:17 *“And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.”*
- ◆ 1 Corinthians 5:2, 5, 7, 12-13 *“...that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you... deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh... Therefore purge out the old leaven...For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”*

➞ A regular, active, mutually recognized commitment to the local church is necessary due to God’s pattern of the early church.

- ◆ Acts 2:41-42 *“Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”*
- ◆ 1 Corinthians 11:18 *“...when [not if] you come together as a church...”*
- ◆ Acts 18:27 *“And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace”*
- ◆ 1 Thessalonians 4:12 *“that you [Christians] may walk properly toward those who are outside [i.e. unbelievers]”*

*B*iblical Male and Females Roles—We believe and practice the distinct God-ordained roles for males and females in the church.

Key points:

➞ The Scriptures consistently teach that there is equality between males and females as persons made in the image of God and all the significance and dignity that entails; and in Christ there is equality in sharing the blessings of salvation.

- ◆ Genesis 1:26-27 *"Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness... So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."*
 - ◆ Galatians 3:28 *"...there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."*
- ➞ The Scriptures consistently teach that there is a distinction between males and females in role, where the men are to exercise loving, caring, humble headship in the family and in the church, the governing and teaching roles over a man are restricted to men; and females are to have intelligent, joyful, and willing submission to their husbands in the family and are refused governing and teaching roles in the church over a man.
- ◆ Genesis 2:18 *"And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."*
 - ◆ Ephesians 5:21-25, 28-29, 33 *"submitting to one another in the fear of God. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her... So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."*
 - ◆ 1 Timothy 2:12-14 *"Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression."*
- ➞ These distinctions must be maintained because they are rooted in God's ordained created order and not the result of the Fall or sin and are not obliterated in Christ but repaired and restored.
- ◆ 1 Timothy 2:12-14 *"Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression."*

3-D STATEMENT: OUR DETERMINATION, DISTINCTIVES, & DOCTRINE

- ◆ Colossians 3:18-19 *“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.”*
- ➔ These distinctions are under the supreme authority of Christ, so that no earthly submission—domestic, religious, or civil—ever implies a mandate to follow a human authority into sin.
 - ◆ 1 Corinthians 11:3 *“But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”*
 - ◆ Acts 5:27 *“...We ought to obey God rather than men.”*

A BIBLICAL EVANGELISTIC MINISTRY

We believe the practice of the biblical principles for evangelism is sufficient for fulfilling the church’s divine evangelistic commission; and that the sole measure for evangelistic methods is how well they direct or assist the congregation toward uncompromisingly fulfilling those biblical principles.

Key points:

- ➔ Preach the gospel
 - ◆ Luke 24:46-47 *“Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the 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 to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”*
 - ◆ Romans 1:16 *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.”*
 - ◆ Romans 10:17 *“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”*
- ➔ Pray evangelistically
 - ◆ 1 Timothy 2:1-4 *“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

- ◆ Matthew 9:38 *“Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”*
- ◆ Romans 10:1 *“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.”*
- ◆ Colossians 4:2-3 *“Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ...”*
- ◆ Ephesians 6:18-19 *“praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel...”*
- ◆ 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2 *“Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.”*

➞ Preserve a blameless witness

- ◆ 1 Peter 2:11-12 *“Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.”*
- ◆ 1 Peter 3:16 *“having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.”*
- ◆ Philippians 2:15 *“that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world”*
- ◆ Titus 2:5, 8, 10 *“...that the word of God may not be blasphemed... that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you... that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.”*

➞ Practice good works

- ◆ Matthew 5:16 *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”*
- ◆ 1 Peter 2:11-12, 15 *“Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.”*

3-D STATEMENT: OUR DETERMINATION, DISTINCTIVES, & DOCTRINE

For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men”

- ◆ Titus 3:1-2, 8 *“Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men... This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.”*
- ◆ Romans 12:17-18 *“Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.”*

➤ Prudently pursue evangelistic opportunities

- ◆ Colossians 4:5 *“Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time [i.e. making the most of every opportunity]”*
- ◆ Matthew 10:16 *“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.”*

➤ Purposefully lay aside Christian liberties for the sake of the furtherance of the gospel by removing unnecessary hindrances

- ◆ 1 Corinthians 9:12, 19-23 *“...Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ... For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. Now this I do for the gospel's sake...”*

➤ Properly be prepared to defend the faith

- ◆ 1 Peter 3:15 *“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear”*



HOW TO MAKE CBC YOUR CHURCH

Unlike other formal appointments in the church that involve a visible symbolic act of confirmation (e.g. appointing leaders: 1 Timothy 5:22; Acts 13:3), Scripture gives no such symbol or ceremony for “joining” (Acts 9:26; cf. 5:13) a church, apparently it was sufficient to practice clear communication in both written and oral forms (Acts 18:27; Romans 16:1; Colossians 4:10; cf. 2 Corinthians 3:1-2). So, the elders of each local assembly must work out how they will practically live out God’s principles regarding a mutually recognized church commitment. The elders here at Community Bible Church have decided to keep it simple and informal (nothing ceremonial), and just try and use clear communication.

Basically, all that is required to “join” CBC is what Scripture, by necessity, calls for, namely, to be a genuine believer and be willing to be regularly, actively gathering with us to be equipped for ministry for mutual edification under the loving care and instruction of the Elders.

Only genuine, born-again believers are made members of Christ’s universal church (1 Corinthians 12:13), which also includes them being “added” to Christ’s local church (Acts 2:41, 47; 5:13-14). However, since we can’t see the heart, all we can do is ask to hear the person’s testimony of their understanding of and faith in the gospel and the evidence of their regeneration, which in Scripture is always a transformed life of progressive obedience to the Scriptures. Along those lines, one of the first acts of obedience as a born-again believer is being water baptized. Although water baptism is not essential for salvation, it is an expected and necessary fruit of salvation (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38). A genuine believer who hasn’t been water baptized (as a believer), should, at least, be willing to be. Also, a person who is currently under church discipline by another church and has not repented and resolved the issues, has a profession of faith that is

seriously questionable. In such cases the Elders here will assist the attendee in resolving any such matters before the attendee is permitted to “join” this assembly.

In order for a person to make a fully informed decision on whether to be committed to this church, the Elders have written CBC’s 3-D statement and attached a 3-part teaching series on Biblical Church Commitment. This statement of our determination (i.e. mission statement), distinctives, and doctrine, reflects where we are at currently in our efforts to grow unto “the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God” (Ephesians 4:12). The Elders here do not require that those who join CBC agree with everything in the statement. The statement is given to help visitors make an informed decision. If there are areas of disagreement, then such disagreements must be held and handled in a loving, unified way that stimulates growth, rather than in an unkind, divisive way, just as Scripture requires (Ephesians 4:2-3, 12-13; Philippians 2:1-4; 1 Corinthians 1:10). Especially since Scripture commands church leaders to not give much tolerance to a “divisive” person but to “reject” him or her after two admonitions (Titus 3:10).

Therefore, in light of all of this and in the interests of clear communication, if you are interested in making CBC your church, the Elders request the following:

Please let an Elder know about your testimony of faith in the gospel. A simple way to do this would be to answer the following questions in writing or in person or both: a) How is a person saved from their sins and made right with God?; b) How did you come to faith in Christ through the gospel?; c) How do you know you are a genuine believer?; d) Have you been water baptized as a believer?. For your convenience, a “Testimony of Faith” form can be obtained from the info table or online at www.cbcr.org.nz.

Please also let an Elder know about the previous churches you have attended (if any) and the reasons for leaving.

Please read the entirety of this booklet’s contents (CBC’s 3-D statement) and listen to the attached sermon series on Biblical Church

Commitment. Please note specific points of uncertainty or disagreement and let an Elder know. If you would like elaboration on any of the distinctives, there are individual pamphlets that give further details. Also, if you would like information on the various ministries currently taking place at CBC and the opportunities for serving the Lord in them, please visit the info table or online (www.cbcr.org.nz) for the “Ministry Opportunities” sheet.

If a person is a genuine believer and is willing to be committed to this church and come under the loving care and instruction of the Elders, then he or she will be invited to join CBC and the church will be informed accordingly and he or she will be added to those recognized as ‘joined’ to CBC (i.e. the CBC Directory). If otherwise, the Elder(s) will work with and advise the person on his or her options.

We do hope you will seriously consider making CBC your church and joining us in edifying one another “till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12).



Biblical Church Commitment: Five Reasons You Need to Be Committed to a Church & What It Means to Be Committed to a Church

Various Scripture Texts

PART 1:

Reasons professing Christians are questioning their need to be committed to a Church:

Reasons you need to be committed to a Church:

Reason #1—God's _____ (Heb. 10:24-25)

- a) It's Context:
- b) It's Quality:
- c) It's Compulsion:
- d) It's Conclusion:

Reason #2—God's _____ to Be Under God's _____

- a) The Pastors' Responsibilities (1 Pet. 5:1-5)
 - i. _____ (1 Pet. 5:2-3, 5; cf. 1 Thess. 5:12; Heb. 13:7, 17, 24)
 - ii. _____ (Heb. 13:7; cf. 1 Thess. 5:12; Titus 1:9; 2:15; 1 Tim. 5:17; 3:2; 2 Tim. 4:2)
 - iii. _____ (Heb. 13:17; cf. Acts 20:28-31)
 - iv. _____ (1 Tim. 3:5; cf. Jms. 5:14; Acts 6:4)

b) The Congregation's Responsibilities

- i. To _____ their Pastors (1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Tim. 5:17)

- ii. To _____ their Pastors (Heb. 13:7, 17; 1 Pet. 5:5; cf. Acts 5:29)

PART 2:

The Biblical pictures of the church:

Reason #3—God's _____ for the Spiritual Gifts (Eph. 4:12)**a) To Be Equipped:**

(cf. v. 15; 2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Tim. 4:13; Neh. 8:8, 12; Lk. 4:43; Col. 1:28-29)

b) For Ministry:

- i. To _____ **God** (1 Pet. 2:5; Eph. 5:19; 1 Tim. 2:8; Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 10:16-17; Acts 4:37; 11:29-30)

- ii. To _____ **Unbelievers** (1 Pet. 2:9; Matt. 28:19-20; 1Cor.14:24; Jn. 13:35)

- iii. To _____ **Believers:**
Unified (Eph. 4:3; see also: Mk. 9:50; Rom. 12:16a; 15:5-7; 1 Cor. 12:25; Phil. 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:8a; 1 Thess. 5:13b; Jms. 2:1-9)

Loving (Eph. 4:2; 5:1-2; see also: Jn. 13:34-35; 15:12, 17; Rom. 13:8; 1 Thes.3:12; 4:9; 1 Pet. 1:22; 4:8; 1 Jn. 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11-12; 2 Jn. 5)

F_____ (Eph. 4:32c; see also: Col. 3:13b)

A_____ (Eph. 4:32a-b; see also: Col. 3:12a-c; 1 Pet. 3:8b, d; 1 Cor. 16:30; 2 Cor. 13:12; Rom. 12:15)

M_____ (Eph. 4:7, 16; see also: Gal. 5:13; Jn. 13:14; 1 Pet. 4:9-11; Rom. 12:3-13; 1 Cor. 12:1-30)

I_____ (Eph. 4:15; see also: 5:18-19; Col. 3:16; Rom. 15:14; Heb. 3:12-13; 10:24-25; 1 Thess. 4:18; 5:11; Gal. 6:1-6; Lk. 17:3; Col. 3:9; Titus 2)

L_____ (Eph. 4:2b-c; see also: Col. 3:12d-13a; Jms. 5:8-9; 1 Pet. 3:9)

Y_____ (Rom. 12:10, 16b; 14:13; 1 Cor. 11:21-22, 33-34; Gal. 5:26; Eph. 4:2a; 5:21; Phil. 2:3-5; Col. 3:12c; 1 Pet. 3:8d; 4:9; 5:5; Jms. 5:16)

c) For Mutual Edification unto Corporate Christlikeness (Eph. 4:16):

PART 3:

Church membership in church history:

Reason #4—God's _____ of Corrective Church Discipline
(Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5)

Reason #5—God's _____ of the Early Church
(Acts 2:41-47; 5:12-14; 18:27; 20:7)

- a) Saved meant _____ to a local church (Acts 2:41, 47)
- b) S _____ in meeting regularly to be equipped
(Acts 2:42)
- c) Same _____ (Acts 2:44; 5:12b)
- d) Same _____ (Acts 2:46; 4:32; 5:12b)
- e) S _____ (Acts 2:46-47; 4:32, 34-35; Heb. 13:16; cf. 2 Cor. 8)
- f) Saved meant being _____ to a local church (Acts 5:12-14; 9:19, 26)
- g) Showing _____ in letting people in (Acts 9:26; 18:27; cf. Col. 4:10; 1 Cor. 16:10-11; Rom. 16:1)
- h) Stated _____ practice (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:18, 20; 5:4; 14:26)
- i) Supporting arguments: (cf. 1 Tim. 5:3-16; Eph. 5:25)

cbc

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH RODNEY

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