

# Constitution and By-Laws

of



**Worshipping**  
Together



**Connecting**  
In Groups



**Serving**  
Others



**Faith**  
@ Home

Guiding everyday people to experience real satisfaction in Jesus Christ

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## CHURCH COVENANT

We who have been led by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, have professed such faith and have been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; sincerely, joyfully and as one body in Christ agree and covenant with each other as follows:

To love one another and prefer others over ourselves; to strive for the advancement of this church body in the knowledge of God, in holiness, in encouragement and in the comforting of one another; to contribute cheerfully and to regularly support the ministries of this church body, including worship, ordinances, discipline, relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel.

We promise to maintain family and personal devotions; to instruct our children in the Bible; to zealously seek the salvation of the lost, especially among family, friends and acquaintances; to live worthy of our calling by being Christ-like in our conduct and lifestyles, and to be people of integrity and honesty, avoiding all gossip, name calling and excessive anger; and, to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating beverages, taking every measure to avoid all appearance of evil.

We further promise to love and to pray for one another; to help one another in sickness or distress; to be compassionate and kind to one another; to be slow to take offense; to be always ready to forgive and to reconcile; and, to pursue peace and unity among this body of believers.

We also pledge that, if we should move from this community, we will promptly unite with another church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant, in accordance with the principles of God's Word.

## PREAMBLE

With a firm conviction that we are saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and believing that we can serve Him and advance His kingdom on earth by proceeding in a Christ-like manner, we the members of Valley View Church, Louisville, Kentucky, in association with the Southern Baptist Convention, do establish and adopt the following bylaws. These bylaws are based upon biblical principles and are adopted to provide general guidance on church governance and operations. The ultimate authority for Valley View Church, however, shall always be the Bible.

**BY-LAWS**  
of  
**VALLEY VIEW CHURCH**  
8911 Third Street Road  
Louisville, Kentucky 40272

**ARTICLE I Membership**

**A. General**

Membership in this church shall consist of all persons who have confessed Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord and who have met the qualifications for membership and are listed on the membership roll. The membership of Valley View Church also shall include those individuals who are listed on the church's membership roll on the date these bylaws are adopted.

**B. Qualifications**

1. Recent Convert: profession of faith, baptism by immersion, completion of the New Christian class, and completion of the New Member class.
2. Previous Convert: Testimony of previous conversion and baptism by immersion (or, baptism by immersion at Valley View Church), agreement to abide by the church covenant, and completion of the New Member class.
3. Transfer: Letter from another Bible-believing Baptist church, attesting to membership in good-standing, and completion of New Member class.
4. Restoration: Any person whose membership has been terminated may be restored to church membership, upon acceptance by the Elder Council.

**C. Acceptance:** The Elder Council, or their designees, will interview all persons making application for church membership. Once accepted, the name of the new member shall be added to the Valley View Church roll and publicized to the membership of Valley View Church. If no clear evidence of salvation is found, the applicant cannot be accepted into the membership. Valley View Church will diligently offer Christian love, prayer, and Scripture, and make every attempt to lead the individual to Christ and then church membership. (John 3:16; Rom. 1:16-17; 10:9-10; Eph. 2:8-9; James 2:14-26).

**D. Duties and Responsibilities**

1. Personal Holiness: To bring to Valley View Church a submitted and Spirit-filled life. Our relationship with the Lord is the source of everything we have to offer one another. It is impossible to help others improve their relationship with God or others, unless God is working in us. (John 15:5)

2. **Christian Relationships:** To pursue godly relationships within Valley View Church. The Bible teaches that the Church is the Body of Christ in the world. We are members of that Body and it is imperative that each part of the Body pursue healthy relationships, respecting and caring for the other parts of the Body. (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12; 2 Cor. 1:12)
3. **The Investment of Life:** To seek to serve rather than to be served. We live in a society that encourages self-centeredness. As the people of God, we are called to give our time, talents, spiritual gifts and financial resources in service to others. (Mark 10:35-45; John 13:12-15; 1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12:3-21; 2 Cor. 4:5)

#### E. Voting Rights

Members who are supporting the church through regular attendance of worship services, sharing in its organized work, giving financial support to the total program and have reached their eighteenth birthday are considered to be voting members. Members must be present to vote.

This statement should be made at each business meeting: "Members who have reached their eighteenth birthday and are faithfully supporting this church in the areas of attendance, giving and serving are considered to be voting members and may act and vote on matters during this meeting."

#### F. Restoration / Discipline of Members

The purpose of church discipline is to effect a return to a biblical standard of conduct and doctrine in a member who errs (Galatians 6:1), to maintain purity in the local church (I Corinthians 5:6), and to deter sin (I Timothy 5:20). It is the purpose and practice of this church to take every reasonable measure to minister to any troubled member in a biblical manner as follows:

According to Matthew 18:15-17:

1. It shall be the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of an erring member's heresy or misconduct to warn and to correct such erring member in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.
2. If the erring member does not heed this warning, the warning member shall again go to the erring member, accompanied by one or two church leaders, to warn and correct the erring member, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.
3. If the erring member still refuses to heed the warning, the matter shall be brought to the Restoration Team. If the erring member refuses to heed the warning of the spiritual leaders, he or she may be dismissed from the church and removed from the church roll by the Elder Council.

The church will continue to minister to an individual whose membership has been terminated or has voluntarily withdrawn because of discipline. The church will remain concerned about his or her physical, emotional and spiritual well being (II Corinthians 2:7-8).

The discipline process is meant to bring the erring member to repentance and restoration. If after dismissal, the warning is heeded and there is a genuine attitude of repentance, a request for reinstatement may be made. He or she may be restored to membership by the Elder Council.

#### Purposes of Church Discipline:

1. To glorify God by obedience to His instructions.  
"go and reprove" (Matthew 18:15; 2 Corinthians 2:9)
2. To restore repentant believers.  
"if a man is caught in any trespass.. .restore" (Galatians 6:1)
3. To sanctify the Lord's Supper.  
"to partake in an unworthy manner.. .guilty of body" (1 Corinthians 6:1-8)
4. To vindicate the integrity and honor of Christ and the church.  
"do you not know that the saints will judge the world" (1 Corinthians 6:1-8)
5. To purify the spirit and message of the church.  
"a little leaven leavens the whole lump" (1 Corinthians 5:6)
6. To intensify self-examination in the church.  
"what vindication.. .what fear... what avenging of wrong" (2 Corinthians 7:11)
7. To deny Satan any advantage in the church.  
"in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan" (2 Corinthians 2:11)
8. To prove that the leaders love and care.  
"I do not speak to condemn.. .you are in our hearts" (2 Corinthians 7:1-13)
9. To confirm individual responsibility for one another.  
"encourage one another.. .lest anyone be hardened" (Hebrews 3:13)
10. To deter others from sin.  
"deliver to Satan for the destruction of flesh" (1 Corinthians 5:5)
11. To cut social ties with unrepentant Christians.  
"not to associate with any so-called brother" (1 Corinthians 5:11)
12. To protect the church from errant teaching.  
"deceivers...who must be silenced" (Titus 1:10-14)
13. To prompt a brother to repentance.  
"do not associate with him in order that he may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother." (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15)

#### G. Termination

Membership shall be terminated upon:

1. Death of the member.
2. The transfer of membership to another church or evidence of joining another church.
3. The personal request of the member.

4. A member's refusal to correct a lifestyle and conduct that is not in accordance with the church covenant and membership responsibilities, as finally determined by the Elder Council

#### H. Purging the Roll:

Members shall be purged from the membership roll when they have stopped attending and the church is unable to establish contact with them for at least two years.

Membership may be maintained by those who are in the Armed Services, away at school, away on temporary duty assignment, are sick and cannot actively participate, or by those with another acceptable reason recognized by the church. The Elder Council shall make this determination when required.

#### I. Marriage and Sexuality

We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning; that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's gender, or disagreement with one's biological gender, is sinful and offensive to God. We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Valley View Church will recognize only marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the Pastors, ministers and staff of Valley View Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one such man and one such woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Valley View Church shall host only weddings between one such man and one such woman.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect,

and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church.

## ARTICLE II            Government / Structure

### A. Members

All corporate powers which may be exercised by a corporation under Kentucky law shall be vested in the Elder Council, provided that the following enumerated powers are reserved for the members of the church:

1. Affirmation of Elders and Deacons
2. Confirmation and dismissal of Senior and Associate/Teaching Pastors.
3. Amendment of the Articles of Incorporation.
4. Merger with any other church.
5. Dissolution of the corporation.
6. Ratification of the annual business report.
7. Ratification of the annual budget.

Except as above, the Elder Council may act on behalf of the church.

### B. Elders

For purposes of Kentucky corporate law, the Elder Council shall exercise the powers of a Board of Directors.

### C. Deacons

Deacons are the servant-ministers of the church. Their purpose is to relieve the elders and staff of the multitude of practical duties of caring for the flock.

## ARTICLE III            Elders

### Purpose of the Council (1 Peter 5:1-3) (Amplified)

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

## A. General Scope

Valley View Church aspires to be a New Testament church committed to the teachings of the Bible. No other authority or tradition is to guide the means, faith or structure of the Lord Jesus Christ's Church. The administrative and pastoral structure for a New Testament church is to utilize a plurality of leadership. Valley View Church will follow this scriptural example. To achieve this New Testament model, Valley View Church requires qualified men to serve as an Elder Council. These men must meet specific moral and spiritual qualifications before they serve (1 Tim. 3:1-7). They must be publicly installed into office (1 Tim. 5:22; Acts 14:23). They must be motivated and empowered by the Holy Spirit to do their work (Acts 20:28). After review, examination and appointment, as noted in Section D below, men affirmed by Valley View Church to serve as elders shall constitute the "Elder Council." To effectively perform their duties, the Elder Council needs the prayers, support (1 Tim. 5:17-18) and assent of members of the church (Heb. 13:17). Valley View members are called upon to honor their Elder Council and to protect them against false accusations (1 Tim. 5:19). Finally, if an elder falls into sin, and continues in sin, he must be publicly by the Elder Council. (1 Tim. 5:20).

## B. Responsibilities

1. Shepherd the flock by providing for the spiritual well-being of the members through teaching, preaching, bible studies and all spiritual disciplines.
2. Oversee the integrity of the doctrinal position of the church.
3. In cooperation with the Senior Pastor, set the vision and strategy for the church.
4. Promote the unity of the church.
5. Support the Senior Pastor and staff as they administer the daily operations of the church.
6. Recommend to the members the hiring and firing of Senior Pastors, Associate/Teaching Pastors and provide continuity of future leadership.
7. All staff, other than Senior Pastor and Associate/Teaching Pastors, will be hired and dismissed by, or under the supervision of, the Elder Council.
8. Select new elders.
9. Propose an annual budget.
10. Approve all policy and operational proposals from the support teams and staff.
11. Approve all proposals to be submitted to the membership.
12. Appoint officers of the church as required by these by-laws, as may be deemed necessary or as may be required by law.
13. Make changes to the by-laws of the church; however, member approval is required to change any of the enumerated powers set forth under Article II. A.
14. To enhance the ministry opportunities of the congregation.

## C. Qualifications

Each elder must have a "calling" from God to this office. The qualifications of an elder are described in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He must be:

1. Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6-7);

2. Husband of one wife; a one-woman man (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6);
3. Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Tim. 3:2);
4. Sober-minded, prudent (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8);
5. Of good behavior; orderly, respectable (1 Tim. 3:2);
6. Given to hospitality (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8);
7. Apt to teach; able to teach; he can exhort believers and refute false teaching (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9);
8. Not given to much wine (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7);
9. Not violent; not pugnacious (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7);
10. Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Tim. 3:3);
11. Not a brawler; uncontentious; not soon angry or quick-tempered (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7);
12. Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7)
13. Manages his own house well. His children are faithful, not accused of rebellion to God (1 Tim. 3:4; Titus 1:7);
14. Not a novice; not a new convert (1 Tim. 3:6);
15. Has a good report or reputation with people outside the church (1 Tim. 3:7);
16. Not self-willed (Titus 1:7);
17. Lover of what is good (Titus 1:8);
18. Just, fair (Titus 1:8);
19. Holy, devout (Titus 1:8)
20. Self-controlled (Titus 1:8).

#### D. Selection of Elders

##### 1. Initial Elders

To be selected by Senior Pastor and Bylaws Team and affirmed by the church.

##### 2. Future Elders

Future Elders will be selected by the Elder Council with the affirmation of the church.

#### E. Term and Number of Elders

The Elder Council will consist of a minimum of seven (7) men selected from the church plus the Senior Pastor. The Associate/Teaching Pastor shall be a non-voting member. The term of the lay elders shall be for 3 years, without limitation as to reappointment. The Elder Council, to try to ensure that the entire Council will not be replaced at one time, shall determine which terms will initially be less than three years.

#### F. Discipline and Removal of Elders

Any elder may be removed from office if he becomes incapacitated, spiritually unqualified or his inability to serve is established in the minds of the remainder of the Elder Council. Valley View Church has the right to rebuke an elder due to a continuing sin in his life, based upon the procedure established in 1 Tim. 5:19-20. He may be removed by a majority vote of the Elder Council.

#### G. Vacancy

A vacancy on the Elder Council may be filled by the Elder Council for the unexpired portion of the term until the next annual business meeting when a new elder will be affirmed for the remainder of the term.

#### H. Meetings

Meetings will be scheduled monthly, more frequently as needed. Minutes of each meeting will be recorded and maintained by the council secretary.

I. Elders will form or dissolve teams of volunteers as necessary.

### ARTICLE IV Deacons / Shepherds

1. Selection and Ordination – Nominations for deacon will be received from the church body and the pastor as vacancies occur or there is a need for more deacons. Nominees shall be screened by a deacon team, appointed by the deacon chairman, to assure that the nominees meet the Scriptural standards set forth in Acts 6 and I Timothy 3. Nominees approved by the Deacon Body will be presented for approval by the Elder Council before being presented to the congregation for affirmation at the annual business meeting. Those approved shall be ordained as deacons.
2. Number – The number of deacons is to be determined by the Deacon Body with approval of the Elder Council.
3. Term of Office – This ministry is a permanent ministry based upon a call from God. A deacon may resign or may go to an inactive status for a season. He may be removed from office, due to a biblical disqualification, by the Deacon Body or by the Elder Council.
4. Duties - In accordance with the definition of the word “deacon” and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be the servants to the church. Their roles are as follows:
  - Bible Guidance - offering Godly advice to the pastor and staff.
  - Caretakers - serving the physical and spiritual needs of the people.
  - Conflict managers - protecting the unity and harmony of the church body.
5. The deacons shall meet as often as necessary to fulfill their responsibilities.

### ARTICLE V Church Officers

The Elder Council will select and appoint church officers, as they deem necessary.

## ARTICLE VI                      Organizations and Teams

### A. General

Valley View Church is committed to accomplishing its stated goals through the ministry of its members. To accomplish these goals, the Elder Council may organize and empower various committees or Teams. Each Team will focus on accomplishing goals established or approved for it by the Elder Council.

### B. Empowerment

Teams are organized and function under policies and procedures established by the Elder Council. Each Team will minister under the oversight and authority of the Elder Council or its designee.

### C. Ministry

Teams are formed to help Valley View Church to accomplish its goals within the guidelines of our Vision Statement: Missions, Evangelism, Discipleship. Teams are not policy-setting entities. They are the "hands and feet" of the body of Christ. Teams devise and carry out the actions necessary to accomplish Valley View Church ministries.

### D. Dissolution

Teams may be dissolved by the Elder Council.

## ARTICLE VII                      Ordinances

### A. Baptism

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith shall be received for baptism.

1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
2. Baptism shall be administered by the pastor, ministerial staff or whomever they shall authorize.
3. A person professing Christ and failing to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the Elders, staff, and/or Deacons.

### B. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is an act of obedience to Christ whereby baptized believers, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and His second coming.

1. The Lord's Supper shall be observed monthly or as designated by the Elder Council.
2. The Elders and Deacons, or other designated individuals, shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.

#### ARTICLE VIII Church Meetings, Records, Reports

A quorum consists of those present who are voting members at a meeting scheduled or properly called according to these Bylaws.

The annual business meeting of the church shall be held during the month of January.

Special meetings of the church membership may be called by the Elder Council, Senior Pastor or Chairman of Deacons.

Notice of regular and special meetings of the members shall be given by announcement from the pulpit during the regular weekend worship services for two (2) consecutive weekends preceding the meeting.

The Church shall maintain the following records and reports:

- i. Adequate and correct financial records.
- ii. Written minutes of the proceedings of its members.
- iii. A record of the members of the Church, including members' names and addresses.
- iv. Contribution statements.

All such records shall be kept at the Church's principal office.

The adequacy and accuracy of the books and records shall be the responsibility of the Elder Council. Every member shall have the right, at any reasonable time and upon reasonable notice, to inspect all books, records, documents of every kind except personnel and contribution records. The Elder Council will receive and oversee requests for records access.

#### ARTICLE IX Church Property

- A. The Elder council shall have the authority to receive, purchase, acquire, sell, mortgage, deed or otherwise transfer property of the church, with approval of the church membership. All contracts, notes, mortgages, assignments, leases, releases and other legal documents on behalf of the church shall be executed by the Elder Council or by representatives appointed by the Elder Council.
- B. This church shall have the power to receive property by gift or purchase, and to hold such real property or personal property as is deemed necessary for the business of

the church and shall have the power to dispose of such property. All such property shall be held in the name of Valley View Church.

- C. All of the church's property, whether real or personal, is never to be used in a manner inconsistent with Valley View Church's statement of faith, constitution, bylaws and religious convictions. In an effort to ensure the proper use of church property, a Church Facility Use Policy is set forth at Appendix B; however, said policy cannot be all-inclusive, therefore, the Senior Pastor or his designee shall be the final approving authority as to use of church property.
- D. In the event the church's work cannot continue, the Elder Council shall be authorized to transfer, negotiate or consolidate any or all property of Valley View Church, subject to any limitations relating to the church's tax exempt status, whether as a religious organization, as an IRC, Section 501(c)(3) organization, or other applicable law.

#### ARTICLE X            Indemnification

Valley View Church shall indemnify and hold harmless its elders and officers for all of their actions which are consistent with the purpose and vision of Valley View Church, except for gross negligence or intentional misconduct. The Elder Council may choose to extend this same indemnification to any individual acting within the scope of his or her duties and responsibilities for Valley View Church. The Elder Council is responsible for authorizing and directing the purchase of insurance coverage to reasonably protect the church from such potential liabilities.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

Simple Mission Statement: Our Future is Now.

Theme Verse:

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jer 29:11 NIV)

#### WHAT WE BELIEVE:

The Valley View Church membership holds the following statement of faith to be the basic foundation on which this church was founded. This statement of faith presents the truths which reflect the hearts of its members. Each member is to be committed to the study of God's Word and the daily practical application of its principles.

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Valley View Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Senior Pastor and the Elder Council is Valley View Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

#### I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us and is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

#### II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing, and His perfect knowledge extends to all things past, present and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

## A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:1ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

## B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet he did not sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

## C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

### III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan, man transgressed the command of God and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherited a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as man is capable of moral action, he becomes a transgressor and is under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3: 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; I Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

### IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

## V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

## VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are Elders and Deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the offices of Elders and Deacons are limited to men who meet the biblical qualifications.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

## VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is a prerequisite to church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

## VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:lff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

## IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. The Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

## X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:lff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ft.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

## XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests upon the spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness, undergirded by a Christian lifestyle and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

## XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is coordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the preeminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; *1:24ff.*; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

## XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions, and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

## XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

## XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16, 43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; I Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; I Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

## XVI. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government is ordained by God; therefore, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1, 13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

## XVII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her

husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. Being made in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, a wife has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

From the moment of conception, children are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

#### XVIII. Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life.

Exodus 20:1, 13; Exodus 21:22-25; Deuteronomy 24:16; Deuteronomy 30:19; Psalm 100:3; Psalm 127:3; Psalms 139; Isaiah 44:24; Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:41, 44; Luke 2:6-7; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Galatians 1:15; Ephesians 1:3-4.