



Bylaws of  
Cornerstone Fellowship  
of Peru, Inc.

As Duly Adopted

This 21st day of November 2021

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## **Preamble**

We declare and establish these by-laws to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the church body in an orderly manner and to secure its longevity.

## **Article I - Name**

This body shall be known as Cornerstone Fellowship of Peru, Inc. It may be referred to as “Cornerstone” or simply “church” throughout this document.

## **Article II – Purpose**

Cornerstone is organized and shall be operated exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes as we seek to glorify the Lord our God (Isaiah 43:7; Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 10:31) by making disciples of all nations through baptism in His name and the teaching of His Word (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38-39; Acts 4:12; 2 Timothy 4:1-5). This involves equipping the saints for the work of ministry and building up the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-16).

## **Article III – Association**

This church has Christ as its Head, and it shall not be subject to any other entity outside itself. It may associate in fellowship with those of like faith or practice and may declare itself in agreement with others in a common cause. Under no circumstances shall such association or agreement ever be construed as bringing this church under the authority of any person, group, or body outside of itself.

While Cornerstone is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body, it voluntarily cooperates with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and subsidiary organizations, provided such cooperation does not conflict with the church’s own best interests in exalting Christ and adhering to the Scriptures.

## **Article IV – Doctrinal Statement**

Based on Cornerstone’s voluntary cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), we seek to adhere to the Baptist Faith & Message 2000 (appendix A) as a guide. We will make every effort to do this with faithfulness to the Scriptures, grace and truth toward one another, and in the spirit of 1 Corinthians 3:4-9 as we ultimately seek to follow the Lord and not man.

The ability of the church to remain biblically faithful through the generations is dependent upon each individual's commitment to the Scriptures and their ability to invest in raising up the next generation to do the same (2 Timothy 3:12-4:5).

## **Article V – Membership**

### **SECTION A Receipt of members**

1. Those who desire to become members of Cornerstone must express their desire to an elder.
2. The elder body (Board of Elders) will schedule a meeting with each member applicant to discuss the applicant's salvation, baptism, and Christian life.
3. Each applicant will be required to provide written intent to the Board of Elders that they will seek to uphold this constitution, the doctrinal statement (see Article IV), and the membership covenant when such covenant exists.
4. When the Board of Elders reaches a consensus concerning an applicant's suitability for membership, a vote to affirm them into the membership of the church may be taken at any regular service of the church or at a duly called members' meeting. The required affirmation is a simple majority among those voting members who are present.

### **SECTION B Rights of members**

1. Every member of the church who is 18 years old and older is entitled to speak and vote at all elections and on all questions and proposals submitted to the church provided the member is physically present.
2. The Board of Elders will notify the congregation at least two weeks in advance of proposed changes to this constitution, annual budget or budget revisions, expenditures or property purchases greater than \$7,500, elder nominees or terminations, or termination of the senior pastor. A three-fourths majority vote of members present and voting shall be required by ballot to accept such proposals.
3. The Board of Elders will notify the congregation at least two weeks in advance concerning votes of affirmation for deacon appointments and changes made to the church manual (operating procedures) when such a manual exists apart from the constitution. The required affirmation is a simple majority of members present and voting.

## **SECTION C Dismissal of members**

1. The Board of Elders may recommend discipline up to and including dismissal from membership when an erring or delinquent member's lifestyle is in contradiction to the Scriptures and/or the doctrinal statement (see Article IV) and/or the membership covenant when such covenant exists while refusing to show evidence of repentance. The procedures and principles set forth in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians 5 shall be followed with restoration as the ultimate goal.
2. Members who have not attended the regular services of the church for a period of six months shall be a member who is not in good standing and has thereby lost voting privileges until such standing is restored. Exceptions to this rule shall apply in cases of illness or infirmity, missionary and Christian service, absence due to military service, and temporary employment not involving permanent relocation. Such exceptions shall be granted and documented in writing by the elders.
3. The Board of Elders will seek to restore members who are not in good standing. However, once the regular services of the church are not attended for a period of twelve months, such members shall have automatically excluded themselves from membership in this church.

## **Article VI – Church Government**

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus Christ our Lord (Matthew 28:18). He is the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4), the Cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20), the Head of the Church (Ephesians 5:23), and the Head of Cornerstone. In submission to His Word, there shall be two classes of officers in the church: Elders and Deacons (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-13). The elders will serve by leading as under-shepherds of the Chief Shepherd. The deacons will lead by supporting the elders, serving the body, and stewarding the church's resources as appointed.

## **Article VII – Office of Elder**

### **SECTION A Qualifications**

1. Only men (see specifically 1 Timothy 2:12; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6) who meet the spiritual and moral qualifications laid out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 are eligible to be elders.
2. Only members of Cornerstone will be eligible to serve as an elder.

## **SECTION B    General responsibilities**

The New Testament refers to elders as overseers and shepherds (Acts 20:17; 1 Peter 5:1-4), and it entrusts elders with the responsibilities of teaching, praying, shepherding, and governing. These responsibilities, and all that they imply, can be classified under two primary categories: the ministry of the Word and the shepherding of the flock.

1. Ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4): There are two primary categories for the ministry of the Word: the public ministry of the Word, such as preaching and teaching; and the private ministry of the Word, such as counseling and personal discipleship. Both the public and the private ministry of the Word consist of teaching sound doctrine and rebuking those who contradict it (Titus 1:9). The ministry of the Word is not limited to elders, but it is a primary responsibility of the elders to administer and oversee it.
2. Shepherding of the Flock (1 Peter 5:1): Teaching the Word of Christ to the body of Christ is a great way to shepherd His flock. Other ways include: governing the flock (1 Timothy 3:4-5), praying for the flock (Acts 6:4), specifically praying for the sick members of the flock (James 5:13-15), taking a personal interest in the souls of the flock (Hebrews 13:17), equipping the flock for ministry (Ephesians 4:12), stewarding the resources of the flock (on a church basis, not individual household basis) (1 Timothy 3:4-5; Acts 11:29-30), and providing an example of Christ-likeness to the flock (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-11). These are just some of the general responsibilities the elders will have in leading and governing Cornerstone Fellowship Church.

## **SECTION C    Structure**

1. The New Testament teaches it was common for a plurality of elders to govern individual churches (Acts 14:23; Acts 20:28; Titus 1:5; Philippians 1:1). While a plurality of elders is desired, a minimum number will not be declared so men who are not qualified or men who do not desire to serve will not be pressured to serve. However, the underlying intent will be to train, equip, and nominate men for eldership as they are ready.
2. The Board of Elders will always include the pastor (or the senior pastor in the event of multiple pastors). By merit of his level of responsibility, the pastor (or the senior pastor in the event of multiple pastors) shall be the designated leader or chairman of the Board of Elders.
3. The Board of Elders will seek to establish a meeting schedule that is conducive to the availability and participation of every elder. A majority of the Board of Elders will constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business at any meeting.

4. The Board of Elders shall pursue consensus as the most appropriate decision-making model. Consensus decision-making acknowledges mixtures and nuances of favor and opposition, and the need for a process of prayer, discussion, and discernment so that all elders reach a unified conclusion.
5. Consensus is only achieved if the majority is in agreement and the minority is willing to join the majority in public support. Consensus requires that each and all elders publicly support the decision of the entire Board of Elders.

#### **SECTION D Nomination, election, and tenure**

1. When there is an opportunity for an additional elder, the Board of Elders shall serve as the search and/or nominating committee and shall by consensus make a unanimous recommendation to the congregation.
2. The Board of Elders will notify the congregation at least two weeks in advance of proposed elder nominees.
3. Church members shall vote by ballot, and each elder candidate shall be voted on individually. A three-fourths majority of members present and voting shall be necessary for extending a call.
4. An elder who has been extended the call by the congregation will be asked to serve a three-year term. Upon completion of a three-year term, the elder will need the consensus and recommendation of the Board of Elders and a three-fourths vote of affirmation by church members in order to serve another term. Three-year terms do not apply to the pastor (or the senior pastor in the event of multiple pastors).

#### **SECTION E Resignation and removal**

1. An elder's service on the Board of Elders may be discontinued by his own decision with written notice.
2. With the consensus of the other elders, The Board of Elders may recommend discipline up to and including the removal of an elder from the Board of Elders when an erring or delinquent elder's lifestyle and service is in contradiction to the Scriptures and/or the doctrinal statement (see Article IV) while refusing to show evidence of repentance.
3. The Board of Elders will notify the congregation at least two weeks in advance of any proposal concerning the removal of an elder or the lead elder (also known as the senior pastor). A three-fourths majority vote of members present and voting shall be required by ballot to accept such a proposal.

## **Article VII - Office of Deacon**

### **SECTION A Qualifications**

Any male or female member who meets the spiritual and moral qualifications laid out in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 are eligible to be deacons.

### **SECTION B General responsibilities**

The primary responsibility of the deacons is to serve the church. Deacons will serve alongside and will be in submission to the elders concerning the oversight of such things as facility, finance, and benevolence operations of the church as appointed by the elders.

### **SECTION C Structure**

There will be no Deacon Board or organized recurring meeting of the deacons as a whole. However, they are welcome to meet and work together individually when their areas of oversight overlap or when such collaboration increases efficiency within and among their appointed areas.

### **SECTION D Nomination, election, and tenure**

1. The church body is at its best when its members step up and serve as they see needs. However, when such needs reach a point they require structure and oversight, the Board of Elders shall consider the need to appoint a deacon or deacons who can fulfill such a duty (see Acts 6:1-6).
2. The Board of Elders will serve as the search committee and may at their own discretion seek nominations or a willing volunteer from the congregation.
3. Once the Board of Elders has reached consensus concerning their recommendation for a deacon, they will notify the congregation at least two weeks in advance concerning the proposed deacon appointments. The required affirmation is a simple majority among members present and voting.
4. Deacons will be asked to make at most a two-year commitment for service. At the end of the appointed commitment, the Board of Elders will review the appointed role with the deacon. The commitment can be renewed as long as the Board of Elders and the appointed deacon are willing to do so.

### **SECTION E Resignation, removal, and vacancies**

1. A deacon's service may be discontinued by his/her own decision with written notice.
2. The Board of Elders may recommend discipline up to and including the removal of a deacon when an erring or delinquent deacon's lifestyle and service is in contradiction to

the Scriptures and/or the doctrinal statement (see Article IV) while refusing to show evidence of repentance.

3. Such consensus by the Board of Elders will constitute the removal of said deacon.

## **Article VIII - Pastors**

### **SECTION A Qualifications**

The pastor (or senior pastor in the event of multiple pastors) is the lead elder and chairman of the Board of Elders. The qualifications for a pastor are the same as those expressed for elders in article VI.

### **SECTION B General responsibilities**

1. A pastor will disciple others by faithfully preaching and/or teaching God's Word, providing counsel from the Scriptures in group or individual settings, and modeling a growing relationship with the Lord Jesus.
2. A pastor will seek to uphold the purpose of the church as described in article II.
3. A pastor will work within the Board of Elders to uphold the Lord's design for His church as revealed in the Scriptures.
4. The pastor (or the senior pastor in the event of multiple pastors) is responsible for filling the pulpit. If he shall be indisposed, the Board of Elders is responsible for it.

### **SECTION C Selection and term**

1. When there is a need for a pastor, the Board of Elders shall serve as the search committee and shall by consensus make a unanimous recommendation to the congregation.
2. The Board of Elders shall make known in a Sunday morning worship service the proposed calling and vote of a pastor at least two weeks in advance.
3. Church members shall vote by ballot, and each pastoral candidate shall be presented, considered, and voted on individually. A three-fourths affirming majority from members who are present and voting shall be necessary for extending a call.
4. Every potential member of the church staff (all employees of the church who do not bear the title or responsibility of a pastor) shall be interviewed by the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders can hire church staff once he/she is affirmed by the members.

5. All church staff members will serve at will for an indefinite period of time. When applicable all church staff members are responsible to the Board of Elders through the senior pastor.

#### **SECTION D Resignation and removal**

1. A pastor may resign on his own accord with written notice.
2. The Board of Elders may recommend discipline up to and including a recommendation for removal of the pastor (or lead elder) when his lifestyle and service is in contradiction to the Scriptures and/or the doctrinal statement (see Article IV) while refusing to show evidence of repentance. In such an event the Board of Elders will notify the congregation of their recommendation at least two weeks in advance. A three-fourths majority vote of voting members present shall be required by ballot to accept such a proposal from the Board of Elders to remove the pastor.

## **Article IX - Officers**

#### **SECTION A Qualifications**

In addition to the biblical church offices of elder and deacon, Cornerstone will recognize the offices of chairman, secretary, and treasurer. Each of these officers will be appointed by the Board of Elders. The pastor (or senior pastor in the event of multiple pastors) shall be the designated chairman. The secretary will preferably be an elder. Both the secretary and the treasurer may each be appointed among the existing deacons or as deacons appointed for such roles if they meet such qualifications.

#### **SECTION B President of the Corporation**

The pastor (or senior pastor in the event of multiple pastors) will be the principal officer of the church, the president of the corporation, and will preside at all elder meetings as Chairman of the Board. Along with the secretary, he may sign church documents such as mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments which the Board of Elders has been authorized to execute.

#### **SECTION C Secretary (and/or clerk)**

The secretary will have the following responsibilities: (a) be responsible for keeping the minutes of the Board of Elders' meetings in one or more books provided for that purpose; (b) see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws or as required by law; (c) be custodian of the corporate records while keeping a copy of such records with the president of the corporation; (d) keep a register of the name of members with dates of admission, baptism, dismissal, and death; (e) issue letters of dismissal when necessary, and (f) in general, discharge all duties incident to the office of secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the chairman or by the Board of Elders.

**SECTION D Treasurer**

The treasurer will have the following responsibilities: (a) monitor the financial books of the church; (b) keep regular books of account; (c) render an account of the financial condition of the church to the Board of Elders whenever the Board sees fit; and (d) any other duties assigned to the Treasurer by the Board of Elders.

**SECTION E Nomination, election, and tenure**

1. The Board of Elders will appoint a secretary and a treasurer each year at an annual meeting scheduled for such purpose.
2. The secretary and treasurer will hold their appointed office until their successor has been elected for the following year. The commitment to such offices can be renewed as long as the Board of Elders and the appointed officer are willing to do so.

**SECTION F Resignation and removal**

Because the secretary and treasurer must be either an elder or a deacon, their resignation and removal as an officer will follow the same procedure based on their role as elder or deacon.

## **Article X – Financial Policies**

**SECTION A Fiscal year**

The fiscal year of the church is to begin on the first day of January each year.

**SECTION B Budget**

The treasurer shall work with the Board of Elders to prepare a proposed budget for the next fiscal year. The budget shall be presented to the congregation in a Sunday morning worship service at least two weeks in advance. A three-fourths affirming majority by written ballot from members who are present and voting shall be necessary to accept the budget.

**SECTION C Sale of assets**

A sale, lease, exchange, mortgage, pledge or other disposition of property or assets of Cornerstone Fellowship Church of appraised value greater than \$7,500 shall be made by the Board of Elders only when the congregation was notified at least two weeks in advance by bulletin and such authority is granted by a three-fourths affirming majority by written ballot from members who are present and voting.

**SECTION D Contracts**

The Board of Elders may authorize any officer(s) or agent(s) to enter into any contracts or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the church, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances when the exercise of such authority does not contradict this constitution. Contractual expenditures greater than \$7,500 shall be

executed by the Board of Elders only when the congregation was notified at least two weeks in advance by bulletin and such authority is granted by a three-fourths affirming majority by written ballot from members who are present and voting.

**SECTION E Seal**

Cornerstone Fellowship Church shall not maintain a corporate seal.

## **Article XI – Miscellaneous**

**SECTION A Amendments**

The Articles of Incorporation and these bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed and new articles and bylaws may be adopted when the Board of Elders presents such recommendation to the congregation at least two weeks in advance, and receives a three-fourths affirming majority by written ballot from those members who are present and voting.

Cornerstone’s first and original Articles of Incorporation and bylaws will be installed by the planting church pastor, Brad Eckerley, so elders and membership can be defined and established who will then uphold the roles and rights set forth by this constitution.

**SECTION B Dissolution**

Upon dissolution of the Corporation, the Board of Elders shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Corporation, seek every opportunity to hand over remaining assets for the purpose of restarting or replanting a like-minded church for the purpose of making disciples of Jesus Christ and advancing God’s Kingdom.

## **CERTIFICATION OF ADOPTION OF BYLAWS**

The undersigned, being the appointed chairman of Cornerstone Fellowship Church, Inc., an Indiana Nonprofit Corporation, does hereby certify that the attached Bylaws of said church were constituted and/or amended in accordance with this constitution and do now constitute the Bylaws of the church.

Dated this 21st day of November 2021.

*Pastor Brad Eckerley*

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Chairman

# Appendix A: Baptist Faith & Message 2000

As presented at <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/>

## 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 therefore 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 Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

[Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 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 without 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](#); [Isaiah 53:1-12](#); [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 Saviour, 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 them 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 inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are 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; 1 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 Saviour, 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 Saviour.

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 unto 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, and 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 through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

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 Saviour, 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 prerequisite to the privileges of 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; 28:1ff.; 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; 1 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 particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly 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; 5:1ff.; 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 3:7ff.; 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 thus upon a 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 constantly 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, therefore, 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 co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these 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 pre-eminence 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; 7:24ff.; 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; 1 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; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.](#)

## **XVI. Peace and War**

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

[Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36, 38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.](#)

## XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. 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 being ordained of God, 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.](#)

## XVIII. 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. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, 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.](#)