

# HERITAGE

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*Baptist Church*



*Faith and Practice*

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*Our Belief*

*Our Purpose*

*Our Philosophy*

*Our Practice*

# *Our Belief*

## *Statement of Faith*

*This Statement of Faith along with the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689, does not exhaust the extent of our faith. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith, and London Baptist Confession, accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and are in substantial agreement with them. Yet, our final authority for all matters of faith and practice is the Bible.*

## **The Bible**

We believe the Bible is the Word of God and the only absolute authority for faith and practice. The Bible is the sole source of propositional truth from God that we have today making its revelation the foundation for all understanding. It is both verbally and plenary inspired in the original writings making them completely inerrant in all matters. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their grammatical-historical and covenantal meaning. (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:2-3, 19-21; Ps. 19:1-3,7)

## **The Godhead**

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing uncreated in three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each person is co-identical in nature, power and glory. Equal in every divine perfection in essence, while executing distinct functions in the great work of redemption. None but He can fully comprehend His essence. God is self-existing and infinite in His being and perfection. He is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient in all things and every act of His will is free. The God of the Bible is the only true God who in his holiness justly judges all sin and in his love has provided salvation. (Gen. 1:1; Deut.6:4; Isa.6:3, 40:12-17; Matt 28:19, John 10:30; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 13:14)

## **Jesus Christ**

1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. (Is.7:14, 9:6; Matt.1:18-20; John 1:1,2,14,18; Luke 1:35; Phil.2:5-8)
2. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross in His shed blood as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and that our justification was made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:18-36; Rom. 3:24-26; 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:3-5, 2:24)
3. We believe in His bodily ascension into heaven and that He is now exalted at the right hand of God, as High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Intercessor, Advocate and Head. (Acts 1:9-19; Rom. 8:34; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; Eph.5:23; Heb. 9:24; 1 John 2:1-2).

## **Holy Spirit**

1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, equal with the Father and the Son, and of the same essence (Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3-4).
2. We believe that the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all

believers into the body of Christ at salvation, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption (John 16:8-11; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13-14).

3. We believe that He is the Divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and apply the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit (1 Cor.2:9-16; Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20,27).
4. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses pastors and teachers to equip believers to do the work of the ministry (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11,28; Eph. 4:7-12).
5. We believe that the gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues, the gift of healing, and prophecy in the early church were given as sign gifts to vindicate the message of the Christian gospel in order to lay the foundation of the church. Speaking in tongues never has been a common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit and that ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God may choose to answer the prayer of believers for physical healing (Acts 2:6; 1 Cor. 1:22, 13:8, 14:21-22; Eph. 2:20-22).

## **Creation**

We believe that God created the physical universe, all spirit beings, man, and lower forms of life, without the process of evolution, and that the early chapters of Genesis are a literal and accurate history of a real twenty-four hour, seven day week. God sustains all creation, but exists in no necessary relationship to it (Gen.1,2; Col. 1:15-17; John 1:3).

## **Spirit Beings**

We believe that God created an innumerable company of sinless spirit beings. One of these, though created holy by God, sinned through pride, thereby becoming Satan, the Devil, the enemy of his Creator, leading a host of angels in rebellion against God. He became the god of this age and the ruler of all the powers of darkness and is destined to the judgment of an eternal punishment in the lake of fire (Ezek. 29:12-17; Matt. 25:41; 2 Cor. 4:3-4; Eph. 2:22; Col.1:16; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 12:7-9; 20:10).

## **Mankind**

We believe that man was created innocent in the likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. All mankind has inherited a sinful nature, and are now sinners by birth and by choice, positively inclined to evil. Mankind is totally depraved in that every part of man (mind, emotion, will) is corrupted by sin and

therefore, under just condemnation to eternal ruin by the Holy God without defense or excuse (Gen.1:26-27; 2:17; Ps. 58:3; Rom. 1:20; 3:9-18; 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 2:14).

## **Salvation**

1. We believe that the only escape from the condemnation of sin is through the atoning and reconciling work of Jesus Christ, the Sinless One. Only in His life, bloody death on the cross, and resurrection has full satisfaction to the justice of God been paid for the sin of men. Thus, salvation for all peoples of the world is exclusively found in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rom. 3:22-28; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:20-28).
2. We believe that salvation is a gift of God received by faith alone in the Lord Jesus. At conversion, a regenerated sinner is justified, redeemed, forgiven, and reconciled to God based solely on the merit of Christ. Conversion is a turning from sin in repentance and to Christ in faith. A sinner is made alive spiritually at conversion being given a new nature not possessed before which will evidence itself in works however great or small (Mark 1:15; John 3:16; Rom. 4:5; 4:24-25; 5:10-11; Eph.2:8-9; Titus 3:5; James 2:26).
3. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation. Every believer is secure for all eternity from the moment of regeneration because of Christ's completed work and the testimony of God's Word which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion or excuses to sin. (John 10:27-30; Rom. 6:1-6; 13:13-14; Eph 4:30; Heb.7:25; 1 Peter 1:4-5).

## **Sanctification**

1. We believe that positional sanctification is the act of God whereby God imputes Christ's holiness to a believer such that he is eternally set apart as belonging to Him by redemption. This position removes the penalty of sin (Heb. 10:10-14, 1 Cor.1:2; Eph.1:4).
2. Progressive sanctification is the process of becoming more like Christ as God imparts holiness and the believer receives it. This breaks the power of sin (John 17:17; Rom.8:29; Gal. 5:16; Phil. 2:12-13; 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:23).
3. Ultimate sanctification will be the portion of every believer when in the presence of the Lord, with the spirit united in a resurrected body, every trace of sin and rebellion will be removed forever. This removes the presence of sin. (1 John 3:2; Rom.8:29-30; 1 Cor. 15:52-54; Eph. 4:30).

## **Final Destinies**

1. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13).
2. We believe that the souls of believers in Christ do at death immediately pass into His presence, to stand before Christ to be judged of their Christian works and for the giving of rewards; and they shall then be associated with Him forever in glory; receiving a resurrected body as He wills (1 Cor.3:11-15; 2 Cor.5:8-10; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).
3. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the final resurrection at the end of the millennium for judgment. The result of this judgment will be that all will be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting separation from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power (Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:6-9; Rev. 20:4-15).

## **Local Church**

1. We believe that the church is an assembly of immersed believers who meet in Jesus Christ; baptized on an acceptable confession of faith; associated for worship, work, fellowship, edification, observance of the ordinances, and the spread of the Gospel to all the world; and having two offices: (1) pastor/ elder (2) deacon, these positions are to be held by qualified men only (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 2:41-42; 20:17, 28; Phil 1:1; 1 Tim. 2:12; 3:1-13; 5:17; Heb. 10:25).
2. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament. God gives the organism of the church growth and direction; making it the essential New Testament entity, as the body of Christ, by which all believers are bound by Scripture to be accountable and to support. (Acts 14:27; 20:17; 28-32; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Cor.3:9; 12:12; Titus 1:5-11; 1 Tim. 3:15).
3. We believe that the local church has the right of self-government directed by the Holy Spirit, and it is accountable only to Christ, and that in all matters of membership, polity, government, discipline, and benevolence the will of the local church is final and free of any external authority and control (Matt.18:15-20; Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1,4; 1 Cor. 3:9,16; 5:4-7,13; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

## Ordinances

We recognize water baptism and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age.

1. Water baptism as immersion is the only form of baptism revealed and commanded in the Scriptures and is properly called "believer's baptism". It sets forth, in a beautiful and solemn way, our faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effects in our lives of death to sin and resurrection to a new life. Having no saving power, it is performed as a symbol to identify a believer with Christ. Thus, it is for those who are already saved the necessary first step of obedience for those who are old enough to believe for themselves (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:38; 10:47-48; Rom. 6:3-5).
2. Lord's Supper is a memorial of the death of Christ until He comes. It was instituted also to confirm saints in the belief that all the benefits stemming from Christ's sacrifice belong to them. It is a bond and pledge of fellowship which believers have with Christ and with one another, thus only those walking in obedient fellowship with Him in His body ought to partake of it (Acts 2:41-42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-32).

## Separation

We believe that separation is a doctrine as well as a practice and that the separation principle runs through the entire Bible. True spiritual fellowship is the result of common faith and practice. We believe there are several aspects of biblical separation.

1. Political separation of the church from the state (Luke 20:25).
2. Personal separation of the believer from the world and sin in order to serve God. We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. Therefore, personal separation involves a separation from acts of sin, the world system, heretics, and false teachers (Josh. 24:15; Rom. 12:1-2,14; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:15-18; Titus 3:10; 1 John 2:15-17; 4:1; 2 John 10-11).
3. Ecclesiastical separation of the church from apostasy. While recognizing the unity of all believers, it is also evident that unbelief and error in many organized fellowships has developed to the point where recognized apostasy exists. We are to reprove apostates rather than recognize them, to rebuke rather than to reason with them, to reject rather than to receive or unite with them. Loyalty to Christ also demands separation from those groups who walk with or tolerate religious unbelief and apostasy (2 Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11-15; 2 Tim. 4:2-4; 2 John 10-11).



4. Familial separation from an erring brother when doctrinal or ethical compromise creeps into his life or ministry. We believe that we must separate from those brethren who continue in disobedience to the Word of God. The goal of this separation being reconciliation by the repentance of the erring brother (Matt. 18:15-22; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:11; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15).

## **Missions**

We believe that God has given the Great Commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to reach the lost among us and go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20).

## **Civil Government**

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home 2) the church; and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; I Peter 2:13-14).

## **Giving**

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of the portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. God established the tithe as a pattern for proportionate giving. Every Christian should give offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to support the local church, to relief of those in need, and for the spread of the Gospel (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17).

## **Moral Issues**

### **1. Sanctity of human life**

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defect, gender selection, population or birth control, or the mental well-being / health of the mother are acceptable. Human life is precious and bestowed by God and should be received and protected by every believer (Gen 1:1; 30:22; Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 127:3; 139: 14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49; Jer.1:5; Luke 1:44).

We believe life choices that affect the health and wellbeing of the family should be made by the family. It is within the family's jurisdiction to make these decisions. Parents have the final authority over their children in this matter (Eph. 6:1-4). While it is wise for families to seek help from a variety of professionals, doctors, and specialists regarding their health and wellness issues, they should not be intimidated, coerced, or forced to make decisions or receive treatments against the parents will. (Prov. 15:22) We believe the ability for parents to make health choices for their families to be a fundamental issue of religious freedom as ordained by God. Families must be free to apply God's Word to their lives. This must include health and wellbeing principles. We stand against all forms of forced medical treatments.

## **2. Human sexuality**

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman. That any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, immorality, adultery, pornography, are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. (Gen. 2:24; 3:16-19; 19:5,13; 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4).

Because God has ordained marriage and defines it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself; we believe only marriages between a biological man and a biological woman covenanted before God are legitimate. Thus, this church shall only participate and promote weddings that solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. We understand the wedding ceremony to be a sacred religious act of worship before God. (Gen. 1-3; Matt. 19:3-9)

## **3. Family Relationships**

We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God, but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (elders and deacons) of the church. Women are blessed to nurture life. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15, 5:8; 3:4-5, 12, 14-15; 2:8; Titus 2:1-8;).

We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a heritage from the Lord and are to be valued and received from God as such. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk.10:6-12; Eph. 5:21-33, 6:1-4; Col. 3:18-21; Heb 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7).

#### **4. Divorce and Remarriage**

We believe that marriage is a divine institution and God intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce is a distortion of God's intention for marriage. Scripture does teach that divorce may have been initiated (though not required): in the case of habitual sexual unfaithfulness and abandonment by the unbeliever. We do not believe two true believers should get a divorce, they should reconcile. We also believe God forgives all sin. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 5:31-32; 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Cor. 7; 1 Tim. 3:2,12; Titus 1:6).

#### **5. Lawsuits Between Believers**

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe that the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander (1 Cor.6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32).

#### **6. Conscientious Objection**

We believe that Christians are prohibited from participating in any unjust war. We are not permitted to give our sons to such murderous pursuits in view of breaking the sixth commandment (Exodus 20:13). On the other hand, God has established the State and given it the sword to defend life by punishing evil. (Romans 13:1-8; 1 Peter 2:13-16) We believe just wars, while not desirable, are sometimes necessary to defend against evil. (Genesis 9:6)

# *Our Purpose*

## *Purpose Statement*

*God has given His church her purpose, we must recognize it and seek to live it, by the grace of God.*

## **Our Purpose Statement**

*Heritage Baptist Church exists for the purpose of glorifying God by obeying His commands as disciples, who seek to make disciples of all people.*

## **We Must Glorify God**

The single and highest reason for doing anything in this church is the glory of God. To glorify God is the pursuit of His character as we respond to His impressive, overwhelmingly beautiful, almighty, holy presence. It is our primary concern that all our actions, attitudes, plans and purposes bring glory to God. His preeminence and majesty must be reflected in every priority and practical choice we make.

*1 Corinthians 10:31 “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”*

## **We Must Be His Disciples**

A disciple is one who follows Jesus by obeying Him in all aspects of life. He is a learner who is committed to his Master, the Lord Jesus Christ. This involves imitation of the Master’s thoughts, attitudes, behaviors and beliefs. A disciple is characterized by eternal life, self-denial, service, suffering, love for others, and a knowledge of God. Disciples are always part of a community who help others walk with Jesus in real life.

*John 15:7 “By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.”*

## **We Must Make Disciples**

God’s Word calls us personally and corporately to disciple our world. This is a complete discipleship including evangelizing, immersing, and teaching believers “all things” or as Paul described it “the whole counsel of God”. In this sense discipleship is not complete until we come to “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”. “To make disciples” simply means helping others to walk with Jesus in the real world. This is a worldwide mission that starts at home and reaches to all peoples in all places.

*Matthew 28:19-20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

**Our Mission:**  
**Glorify God by Faith in All Scripture for All Life**

# *Our Philosophy*

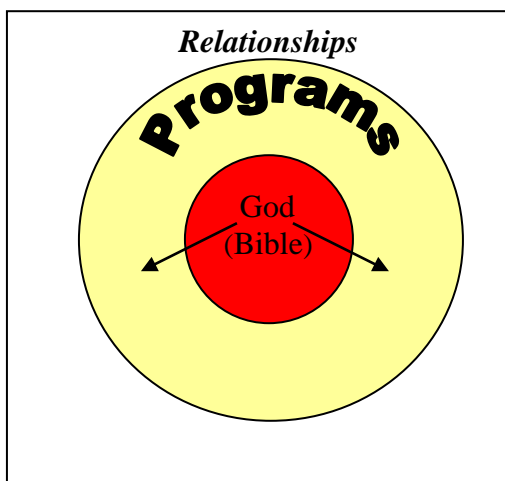
## *Philosophy of Biblical Ministry*

*How we understand the nature and function of the church is vital to accomplishing our God given purpose. The following is given to describe some of our core values and principles that are used in determining our practice, as we seek to glorify God.*

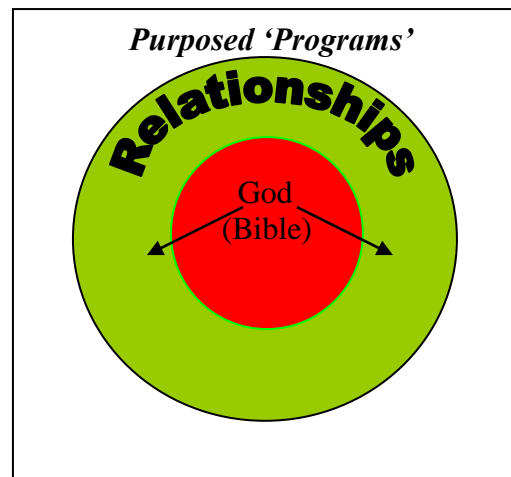
## Truth Communicated In The Context Of Love

We desire to communicate and model truth in the immediate context of loving relationships to produce organic growth, and not truth in the context of 'the program' alone. Christ's body is a living organism that thrives on relating to Him through His Word and prayer. A body that is connected to the Head, will grow in their ministry as they love one another. Thus, ministry is the free flow of grace from God through us to other people. We must all belong and participate in this ministry life of the church and seek to provide biblical instruction as an interpretation of life.

**NOT THIS:**



**BUT THIS:**



*Ephesians 4:15-16 "but, speaking the truth in love, [the church] may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— From whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."*

*John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

***God must be the center and His truth must reach people where they live- in their relationships with one another.***

# Our Governing Principles

Our ministry as a whole and each individual ministry must persistently pursue our purpose statement and biblical philosophy. These governing principles are set forth to direct and apply our biblical philosophy of ministry. God's work must be done God's way, with motives and methodologies that are pleasing to Him.

*2 Timothy 2:5 "And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules."*

## Sola Scriptura

Since the Bible is God's infallible and inerrant Word, it stands as our only authoritative rule for life and belief in all preaching, teaching, music, associations, and methodologies. Error in any clearly inscripturated truth must never be tolerated. Maintaining pure doctrine must be our utmost priority in both systematic theology as well as its moral applications.

*Titus 2:7-8 "In all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you."*

## Relational Integrity

Priority must be given to the development and growth of personal relationships. How we are relating to one another reveals how we are relating to God. The greatest commandment demands a genuine personal relationship with God and the second is the command to love others as we love ourselves.

*1 John 4:20-21 "If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also."*

## Relational Context

The best place for truth to take root and grow is in the context of loving relationships. Thus, we resolve to be accountable to the brethren and not let sin destroy us. This means we seek to promote healthy relationships in the body where we are to, love one another (1 John 4:7), forgive one another (Ephesians 4:32), pray for one another (James 5:16), care for the needs of one another (Romans 12:13), exercise the spiritual gifts for the body (1 Peter 4:10), preserve the unity of the body in love and humility (Ephesians 4:1-3), build up and encourage one another (Romans 14:19), admonish one another to live godly lives (Colossians 3:16), walk together in humility (Philippians 2:3), and to be hospitable to one another (1 Peter 4:9).



*Ephesians 4:1-3 “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”*

## **Servant Leadership**

All leaders must recognize that greatness in the kingdom means that you will be the servant of all. Leadership in the church is limited to male leadership in the roles of pastors and deacons. We seek to grow and support godly leaders, who will pastor the congregation. God raises up spiritual men to fill these roles in the local church, thus we must be committed to training godly leaders who will serve the body and recognize how God has gifted them. All men are to participate as servant leaders in their homes and in the church according to their gifts and abilities.

*Mark 10:43-44 “But whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all.”*

## **Local Church Centered**

All New Testament ministry is body ministry, that is done in and through the body of Christ, the church. While the church in prospect or overall body of Christ is a consideration in Scripture, the concentration of the New Testament is on the visible body of Christ in local churches. The mission of discipling our world was committed to this visible body. The carrying out of this mission must be done within the ministry of churches and within the accountability of churches. Church ministry must not be confused with church buildings, since much, if not most, of our mission as a gathered church is actually accomplished as we are scattered within our homes and communities.

*Ephesians 1:22-23 “And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”*

## **Church and Home**

Church ministry must never supplant or suppress the importance of individual families, nor should families the church. The church and home must never be viewed as competing institutions. Rather they must be viewed as complementary. The church cannot replace the home, nor the home the church. Scripture teaches that our home must be built on serving Jesus Christ through His church. We must encourage and equip members of the family to serve Christ within the setting of their homes and assist them in developing holy, healthy and happy relationships within their families.

*Ephesians 5:25 “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.”*

## **Family Structured**

The church is a family, as such, it should be structured like a family so it can effectively minister to other households. The family is God's basic organization for ministry, thus we seek to work within that structure and not against it. We do this by teaching parents their roles in society and disciple them to train their children. The best 'teacher' a child has is his or her parent. Thus, we seek to train parents so they can better perform their responsibility. We do not seek to take any responsibility away, rather we seek to integrate all ages to facilitate the discipleship process between parent and child in the local church. We also understand there to be great strength in multigenerational ministry and relationships- just like in a family.

*1 Timothy 3:15 " But if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."*

## **Biblical Separation**

While Christ was certainly the "friend of sinners," He also was "separated from sinners." The Bible clearly teaches separation from sin and error as an indispensable part of a holy life and ministry. Separation from error and those who promote it is also an essential demonstration of love for the truth and a Holy God. God warns that sinful or corrupt associations will corrupt good behavior. By conviction we are a church that is fundamental and will separate over error both individually and corporately. This is a Biblicist position. While loving all men, saved or lost, we will only participate in joint ministry with those in harmony with our moral and doctrinal convictions.

*Romans 16:17 "Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them."*

## **Indigenous Principle**

While we are spiritually, ethically, and doctrinally aliens and pilgrims in our society, we are physically citizens of that society. God commends and commands good citizenship. As in the case of foreign missionaries who rightly seek to be culturally sensitive while staying spiritually distinct, we too are missionaries to our communities and surrounding cultures. Our purposes and plans must reflect a sensitivity to the communities where we seek to communicate truth.

*1 Corinthians 9:19-22 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law...that I might win those who are without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.*

## **Financial Integrity**

As financial stewards both of finances and facilities, we will give an account to God for what we have done with what God has given us. The ministers and ministries of the church must be supported by the tithes and offerings of its members. Care must be taken and accountability provided for the collection, accounting, and distribution of all church receipts. Our financial dealings must reflect honesty and openness, planning for the future, and an emphasis on people over things, and the judicious use of borrowing as a tool, not a crutch.

*2 Corinthians 8:20-21 “Avoiding this: that anyone should blame us in this lavish gift which is administered by us— providing honorable things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.”*

## **Heart Focused**

Scripture makes it perfectly clear that the real problems of mankind are internal rather than external, matters of the heart, not merely outward behavior. Therefore, our ministry must focus on addressing the true cause of problems, rather than just treating the symptoms. The symptoms of sin or external problems must be addressed, but our priority focus must be on the “weightier matters” (Matt. 23:23) of the heart.

*Luke 6:45 “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”*

## **Spirit Led**

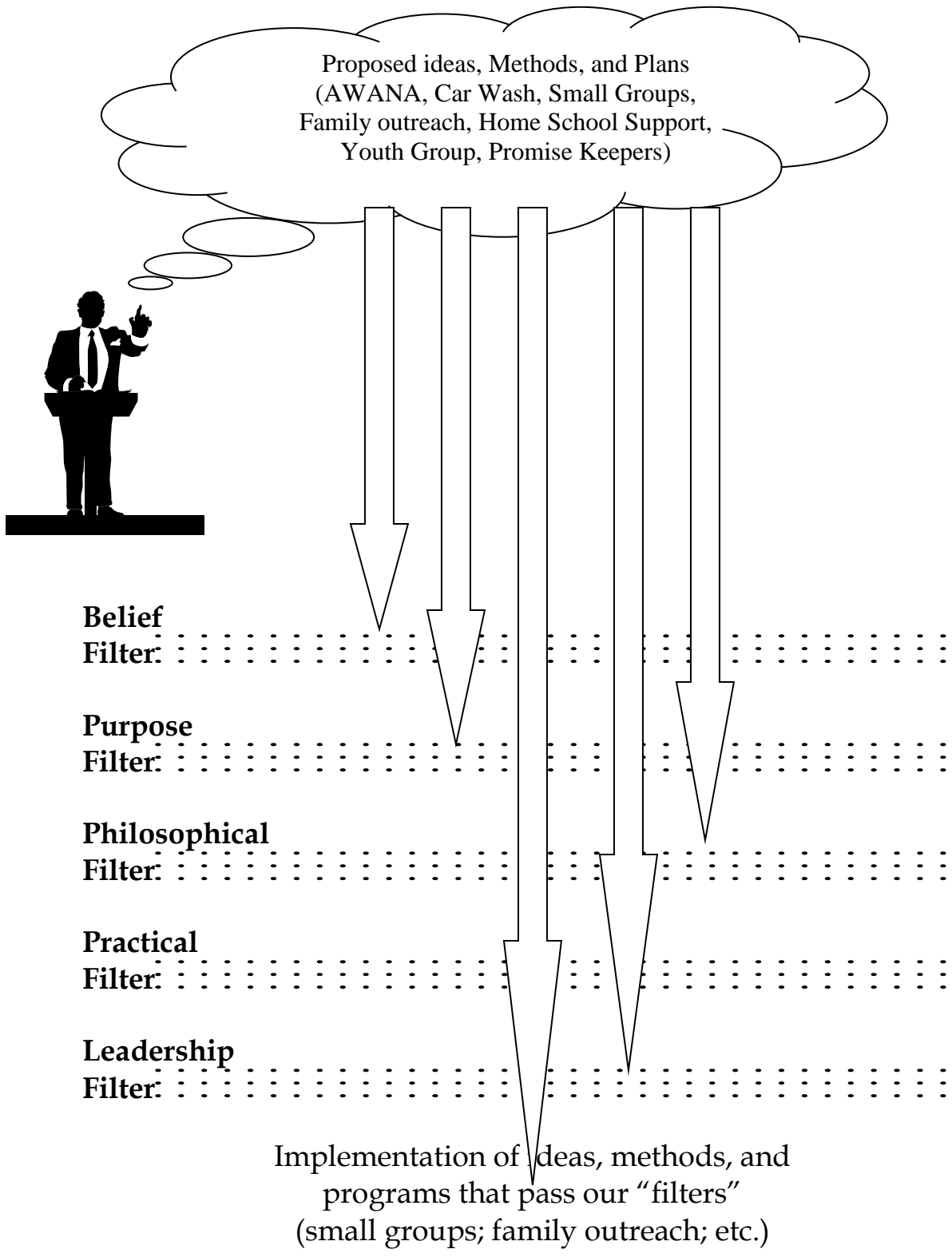
The Spirit of God moves and directs the Church of Jesus Christ. Thus, before we do anything we ought always to pray to receive a fresh filling of the Spirit. We must seek God with prayer and fasting before planning how to serve Him.

*Acts 13:2 “As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”*

## **We Base Our Practice On Biblical Principles**

These governing principles are used in determining the direction, plans and purposes of this church. Certainly some methods for ministry are specifically prescribed by Scripture and are therefore “non-optional” (preaching, witnessing, etc.). Other methodologies must be evaluated first in light of our beliefs, then be subjected to our purpose and overall governing principles. Only then may an idea move to be considered a possible option for our church to participate and sponsor. Practical issues such as feasibility, timing, finances, leadership and testing must be an important consideration. Finally, we recognize our dependence on God Almighty to mold His church by the power of the Spirit, thus we must seek His face diligently before any plan is pursued.

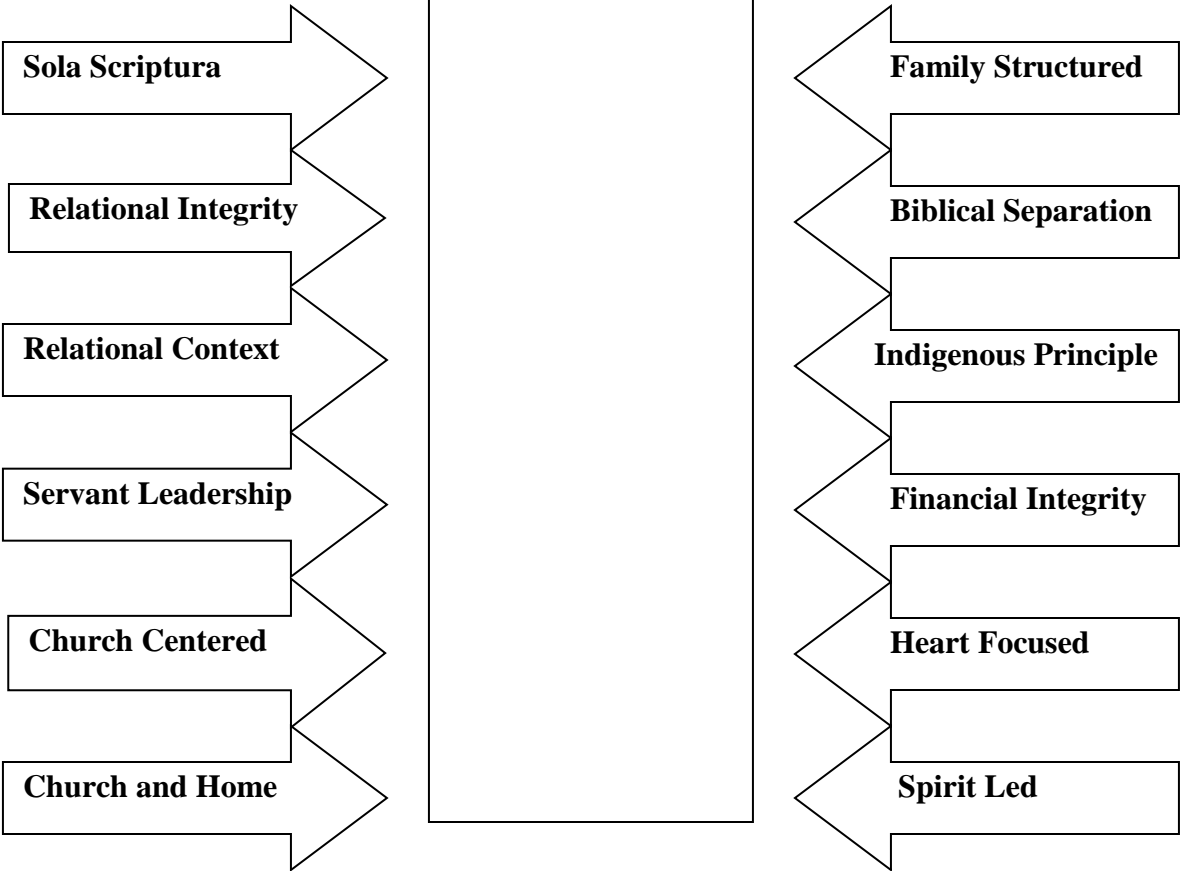
Consider the following diagram as a basic tool for evaluating purposes and methods:



*Our Mission:*  
***Glorify God by Faith in All Scripture to All Life***

Our ideas, purposes,  
and methods enable us  
to fulfill our purpose

**Our “filters” - Belief, Purpose, Philosophical,  
Practical, Leadership**



# *Our Practice*

## *The Practice of a New Testament Church*

**It is essential that we practice what we preach. We only believe that which we actually do. We seek to continually conform our practice to the standard of God's Word. Because none of us has fully arrived, we will always be growing. But grow we must, until "we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph.4:13). This growth is based by grace through faith as we obey God and love one another, as expressed in our church covenant.**

# Our Five Ministries

## We Purpose To Minister in Prayer and the Word

*We meet to preach the Word and pray*

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.” (Acts 2:42) “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.” (2 Tim. 4:2) “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17)

## We Purpose To Minister by Evangelism and Discipleship

*We meet for evangelism and discipleship*

Jesus gave us the command to “make disciples” and He also gave us a method. Jesus called a small group “to be with Him and that He might send them out (Mark 3:14).” Thus, we meet in discipleship groups as families to facilitate growth in becoming more like the Lord Jesus, and participate in outreach activities to reach our community with the gospel.

## We Purpose To Minister As A Church Community

*We meet to love one another*

We purpose to follow the patten of Scripture to love God and love one another. Authentic community is built as we follow this pattern. Jesus taught us to love one another as He has loved us (John 13:34). Faith in Jesus Christ is the unifying essence of our community and His love is our witness.

## We Purpose To Minister As Families

*We meet to equip families to be families*

God calls men to shepherd their families. We have been given the keys in the Word of God for the reestablishment of the multi-generational family (Psalm 78). The problems facing the family is complex, thankfully the answer is simple. We must minister to families as families so God’s creation order and design can be upheld.

## We Purpose To Minister As Leaders

*We meet to develop biblical leadership*

Ministry is the free flow of grace from God through us to other people. It takes on as many different needs as there are in the community, some spiritual, some physical. Helping a neighbor is as much a ministry as teaching a class on love. Biblical leadership in the home and church is critical for all we are called to do.