

# *Weekender*

NAPLES, FLORIDA

**FOR  
THE  
CHURCH**







November 2020

Dear Weekender:

We are overjoyed that you were able to join us and pray that our time together bears great fruit for Christ's church. Each elder involved is here to serve you over the next few days. It is our prayer that this event will be a time of encouragement, support, renewal and relaxation

The Weekender is a five day experience that gives a practical view of a healthy local church and exists to benefit other local churches, pastors and students as it seeks to

- Promote healthy church polity
- Allow observation of healthy patterns and culture
- Encourage pastors in local church ministry

The notebook you received is designed to compliment the sessions and observation times over the next few days. A PDF version of the notebook has been emailed to each attendee. If you did not receive a copy or would like an email to be re-sent, please contact Joseph Darwin.

## WEEKENDER INFORMATION

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### Contact information

Address: Faith Bible Church  
6464 Immokalee Road  
Naples, Fl. 34119

Website: [faithnaples.org](http://faithnaples.org)

### Pastoral Apprentice & Administrator

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### Social Media

Facebook: Faith Bible Church Naples  
Instagram: [faithnaples](https://www.instagram.com/faithnaples)

### Elders

Justin Harris: [justin@faithnaples.org](mailto:justin@faithnaples.org)  
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Mark Mincy: [mark@faithnaples.org](mailto:mark@faithnaples.org)  
Randy Barrow: [randy@faithnaples.org](mailto:randy@faithnaples.org)



## WEEKENDER INFORMATION

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### Hospitality

#### Attractions:

- Naples Botanical Garden
- Bird Gardens of Naples
- Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary
- Airboat Rides
- Fishing Charters

#### Beaches:

- Vanderbilt Beach (15 minutes west)
- Naples Pier (28 minutes southwest)
- Lowdermilk Park (25 minutes southwest)
- Clam Pass Park (20 minutes west)

#### Shops:

- Miromar Outlets (15 minutes north)
- Mercato (15 minutes west)
- Waterside Shoppes (18 minutes south)

#### Restaurants:

- True Food Kitchen (18 minutes south)
- Seed to Table (3 minutes west)
- Brooks Burgers (5 minutes east)
- Mangino's Pizzeria (6 minutes west)
- Jimmy P's Burgers (6 minutes west)
- Fernandez the Bull (6 minutes west)
- Rocco's Tacos (15 minutes west)
- First Watch (10 minutes west)

#### Coffee:

- Kunjani (18 minutes southwest)
- Narrative (13 minutes west)
- Fit and Fuel (16 minutes west)

## WEEKENDER INFORMATION

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### FAQ's

- What should I wear?

We want you to relax and enjoy your time in Naples while you take time to consider the local church. Feel free to wear shorts or jeans to Thursday and Friday events. Sunday attire is business casual.

- What sessions should I plan to attend?

Please plan to attend all scheduled events as it is beneficial to have each of you at every session.

- What level of interaction should I expect?

Each session on Friday will be discussion oriented. However, please plan to listen and take notes during the Elder's Meeting on Thursday and all events on Sunday morning and evening.

- Will I have time to ask questions about what I am seeing and experiencing?

It is natural to formulate questions during a weekender. There are built in times to ask those questions of various elders. Please take advantage of these opportunities by writing down your questions during events.

- What can I do on Saturday?

Saturday is your day for rest and refreshment. You are free to use it as you wish. Meals are not provided on Saturday but there are lots of great options available near Faith Bible Church. If you would like help planning your day or need suggestions please contact Joseph Darwin.

- What will my wife do?

There is no expectation for your wife to attend any sessions during the weekender. We certainly would welcome her for the 9 AM Sunday Seminars and 10:15 AM service. Wives can also join the Thursday night and Friday night dinner times. If your wife would benefit from meeting with another woman in the church for care or questions, please let us know and we'll try to line something up.



## WEEKENDER INFORMATION

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### Schedule

#### Thursday, November 12:

- 6:00pm Dinner & Welcome with Justin Harris, Philip Bates & Joseph Darwin
- 7:00pm Observation: Elders Meeting (Room 200)

#### Friday, November 13:

- 9:30am Welcome, Information & History with Joseph Darwin & Philip Bates
- 9:45am Session 1: Review Elder Meeting with Philip Bates & Mitch Bueltel
- 10:30am Session 2: Eldership with Mitch Bueltel
- 11:30am Session 3: Membership with Justin Harris
- 12:30pm Lunch Break\*
- 2:00pm Session 4: Church Revitalization with Eric Bancroft (Room 200)
- 3:45pm Session 5: Preaching with Justin Harris
- Organizational Development with Philip Bates (Room 202)
- 6:30pm Dinner at the home of a member\*\*

Saturday, November 14: Open day to spend time with family in Naples. Please feel free to reach out to Joseph Darwin about outings, events and food options in Naples to allow for a relaxing and encouraging day.

#### Sunday, November 15:

- 9:00am Observation: Seminars
- 10:15am Observation: Service
- 12:00pm Lunch with an Elder
- 3:30pm Observation: Planning meeting (Room 202)
- 5:00pm Member's fellowship with dinner
- 5:30pm Observation: Members' Meeting

## WEEKENDER INFORMATION

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Monday, November 16:

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| 8:30am  | Breakfast at Faith & Q & A about Sunday events  |
| 9:00am  | Observation: Service Review (Room 200)  |
| 10:00am | Session 6: Service Planning with Mark Mincy (Room 200)<br>Deacons with Justin Harris (Room 202) |
| 11:00am | Session 7: Targeted Q&A with staff elders (Room 200)  |
| 12:00pm | Lunch and Closing Comments  |
| 1:30pm  | Evaluations, Team Meetings, Group Prayer  |
| 2:00pm  | Travel  |

All sessions will be in Room 100 unless otherwise noted on the Weekender schedule.

\* L'Appetito Pizza & Deli  
2542 Northbrooke Plaza Drive  
Naples, FL 34119

\*\* Robert & Holly Eardley  
181 West Street  
Naples, FL 34108



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# History





## HISTORICAL SUMMARY

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### 1984

In 1984 a group of believers began meeting to form a new church in Naples, FL. Five main families served as the core of this group and two of the founding families are still active members of our community -- Tommy and Terry Turner, Cullen and Constance Walker.

### 1984-1998

FBC met in a variety of places from 1984 to 1998 and was served by a variety of guest and intern pastor/teachers. In this format the church continued to grow and in the early 90's purchased land (6464 Immokalee Road, Naples, FL) at the corner of Immokalee Road and Oaks Blvd. It was the vision of the church leadership to complete the building debt-free (no mortgage or indebtedness). Thus, the church continued to meet at the Vineyards Community Center until the completion of the present facility in 1998.

### 1998-2002

Prior to moving to their permanent meeting center the church called its first full-time pastor. Over the next five years from 1998 to 2002 the church experienced some internal turmoil; for example -- three pastors in less than five years and the attendance dwindling to less than 30 people. The church came to a crossroad in February of 2002 and was discussing dissolution of the ministry. It was at that time they contacted an individual from Clearwater Christian College, Ken Davies, to become their permanent pulpit supply. As time, prayer, discussions, and healing took place the church extended an invitation to Ken Davies to become their full-time pastor in September of 2002. In the early years of his tenure, FBC was like a new church plant with baggage.

### 2002-2010

Although these years created a semblance of stability, there were two critical incidents (moral failure of a member of the pastoral staff and the failed merger with a like-minded church) that had the potential to derail any continued progress toward that end but instead, "God used it for good." Through this experience the leadership of the church was motivated to exercise self-evaluation of the ministry and the leadership structure. The primary outcomes from that

## HISTORICAL SUMMARY

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evaluation were threefold: to be more intentional in discipleship, to begin discussions of a major shift toward biblical polity, and to formulate the mission of the church.

### 2010- 2015

During this period the elder's established a vision statement for Faith. "FBC exists to display God's glory by making disciples through the Gospel of Jesus Christ locally and around the world."

Although still under construction these bullet points summarized what FBC was becoming:

- **Leadership** - Elder led, congregational affirmed, deacon served; stability in leadership has led to confidence from the membership. The church unanimously adopted this model of leadership in August 2014.
- **Small Groups** - The small group ministry of FBC has led to significant growth spiritually and numerically.
- **Theology** - Theologically conservative but not afraid to think outside the box when it comes to the practice of ministry; for example – from our Music/ Worship Philosophy, at Faith Bible Church we are not bound to the oldest hymns of the last century, nor are we slaves to music written in the past few decades. Our focus is not to be entertainment driven but God-focused and Christ-centered!
- **Missions** - The church was partnered with 18 missionaries; about 15% of the budget is invested in missions.
- **Financial Stability** - FBC continued to be debt free.

Under Pastor Ken Davies

Faith Bible Church sought to focus on people not programs, spiritual growth more than numerical growth, and the exposition instead of simple exploration of Scripture.

### 2015 - 2016

Pastor Ken Davies announced his retirement to the elders in August 2015. His last Sunday with Faith Bible Church was in February of 2016. Pastor Justin Harris agreed to be the next senior pastor in December of 2015 but moved to Washington D.C. for a six month internship at

## HISTORICAL SUMMARY

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Capitol Hill Baptist Church. He began serving as the senior pastor at Faith in July 2016. The pastoral change process solidified elder culture at Faith and allowed the church to transition.

### 2016 - present

In the last few years, God has richly blessed the church's former decisions to focus on the gospel, expositional preaching, and biblical church polity. From July of 2016 to present, the church has grown in depth and breadth. The membership has an ever-increasing hunger for Christ as he has revealed himself in the Word. Concerning depth, members regularly discuss and apply the truths learned on Sundays with one another and the lost in our community. Concerning breadth, the attendance has doubled and the membership has almost tripled. All the while the vision for the glory of God through the gospel of Jesus Christ remains front and center.

By God's grace, the best days of Faith Bible Church have yet to come. Looking forward, while the elders pray that the church will continue to grow spiritually and numerically, they especially look to see missionaries, church planters, and pastors raised up among us and sent to other places that would benefit from this very approach to ministry.





# *Discipling*





## Seminars at Faith Bible Church

Faith Bible Church exists to raise up generations of God-glorifying Christ followers. One of the ways we live out our call to make disciples is to mature in our ability to evangelize and edify. Seminars are a strategic teaching environment where members grow in the understanding of God's Word and are equipped for ministry.

## How do Seminars fit into the life of the congregation?

Seminars primarily take place on Sunday mornings at 9AM. The year is divided into classes that run 8 and 4 weeks. Additional one-time seminars are offered throughout the year to equip members in diverse topical studies.

## What defines success?

Success is defined by members faithfully engaging in ministry related to the teaching of God's Word. Are they using what they are learning in ministry to one another and the lost?

## Who is involved in Seminars?

Seminars are open to members and guests and are led by members who are gifted in teaching the truths of Scripture.

Seminar Teams:

- Primary teacher
- Secondary teacher
- Secretary - roster, updates, copies (as needed)

Seminar leaders:

- Prepare to teach for 45 minutes weekly utilizing curriculum, Scripture passage or topic assigned by elder overseeing equipping.
- Work to link principles taught with practical ministry.
- Follow-up with attendees who have further questions (utilize secondary teacher).

## SEMINARS

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- Recruit members and regular attenders to their classes through interpersonal relationships (utilize secondary teacher).
- Invest in potential teachers through co-teaching, secretarial positions (with emphasis on personal relationships).
- Meet weekly with co-teacher for study, preparation and accountability.
- Track attendance and non-attendance (utilize secretarial position).
- Communicate weekly with seminar group (utilize secretarial position).

### Seminar options

#### COMPETENCE

##### Evangelism

What is the Gospel

Two Ways to Live

Evangelism

Gospel 101

##### Discipling Basics

Fundamentals of the Faith

The Course of Your Life

##### Counseling

Instruments in the Redeemer's

Hands

How People Change

Conflict Resolution - Peacemakers

Side by Side

Forgiveness

Pleasing People

#### CONVICTIONS

##### Systematic Theology:

Theo 1

Theo 2

Theo 3

Theo 4

##### Biblical Theology:

OT 1

OT 2

NT 1

NT 2

##### Hermeneutics

## SEMINARS

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### CHARACTER

Stewardship  
Parenting  
Marriage  
Complementarianism  
Self-Discipline  
Technology  
Do More Better  
Spiritual Depression  
God and Money  
Conscience

Respectable Sins  
Fear of Man  
Church Issues  
Missions  
One Another  
Singleness and Dating  
Trusting God  
Suffering  
Unity and Diversity

## SEMINAR PROCESS

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Seminars are a strategic teaching environment where members grow in the understanding of God's Word and are equipped for ministry.

All materials for Seminars are stored in the Faith Bible Church Google Drive and are shared amongst Elders, staff and Seminar teachers.

### 1. Establish and maintain a Scope and Sequence for Seminars

The scope defines the range of topics covered in 9AM classes. The sequence provides the particular order and cycle in which the classes are offered.

Sunday Seminars operate on a quarterly schedule that includes an 8 week rotation followed by a 4 week rotation. It is scheduled in conjunction with the church calendar as a whole.

Seminars are also offered at times other than Sunday 9AM and should be tracked in their own spreadsheet for planning and preservation purposes.

Update the elders by adding an agenda item if the Seminar Scope and Sequence is adjusted or a class is added.

### 2. Research and develop teaching material that will be covered in each Seminar.

Curriculum development should be complete 8 weeks prior to the start of a Seminar to provide adequate time for teacher selection, teacher preparation and class promotion.

- Research curriculum
- Set Course Objectives (learning, living, loving)
- Build course outline
- Write synopsis
  - This will be used for promotion in media, bulletin and for weekly review by the teacher
- Name the course

### 3. Select a lead teacher(s) for the course.

Teachers should come from Elder-approved Seminar teacher team or be approved by the Elders prior to extending an invitation.



## SEMINAR PROCESS

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### 4. Select co-teachers

Co-teachers act as substitute teachers but provide a platform for understudy. The Elders hope to see new lead teachers rise from this group as experienced teachers and Elders model good preparation, prayer and teaching habits.

### 5. Meet with teachers a minimum of two times prior to their start date.

#### Meeting 1: (6 weeks out)

- Explain philosophy of Seminars
- Introduce course curriculum and objectives
- Establish expectations and accountability

#### Meeting 2: (2 weeks out)

- Follow up on preparation
- Answer questions or concerns

Plan additional meetings during the course that will allow for feedback and accountability by an Elder.

### 6. Promote new Seminars

- a. Include in quarterly ministry promotion. (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer) This could be through a ministry card that includes all ministry for that quarter, promotion in a member's meeting, etc.
- b. Include in weekly email, bulletin and social media (3 weeks before start of seminar)
- c. Add to Sunday morning announcement (1 week before start of seminar)

### 7. Develop evaluation forms

- Prepare evaluation forms prior to the start of the course for the benefit of the teachers. They need to know what they are being evaluated against. Use Google Forms for surveys.
- Ideally a pre-survey could be completed by the class to assist the seminar teacher.
- Administer evaluation forms during the last class
- Follow-up with teacher on the evaluations and archive the form in Google Drive



## FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH SEMINAR PLANNING EXAMPLE

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### Fundamentals of the Faith

#### SLO's

##### Learning Objectives

- To grow in knowledge of the truth of who God is and how He operates
- To gain confidence in our identity in Christ
- To understand the Triune nature of God
- To become equipped to defend the hope of salvation

##### Loving Objectives

- To have assurance of salvation
- To develop a deep love of God's Word
- To embrace the sufficiency of scripture

##### Living Objectives

- To rightly divide the Word in ministry to self and others
- To seek opportunities to disciple others
- To continue to grow in the knowledge of Christ

#### Course Outline

| Week | WB Chapter and Section  | Page  | Notes                             |
|------|-------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| 1    | Introduction            |       |                                   |
| 2    | Chapter 1, Section 1-3  | 7-11  | Introduction to the Bible         |
| 3    | Chapter 1, Section 4    | 11-12 | Introduction to the Bible         |
| 4    | Chapter 1, Section 5-7  | 12-14 | Introduction to the Bible         |
| 5    | Chapter 2, Section 1-3  | 15-22 | How to Know the Bible             |
| 6    | Chapter 2, Section 4    | 22-24 | How to Know the Bible             |
| 7    | Chapter 3, Section 1-4A | 25-26 | God: His Character and Attributes |
| 8    | Chapter 3, Section 4B   | 27-29 | God: His Character and Attributes |
| 9    | Chapter 3, Section 4B   | 30-33 | God: His Character and Attributes |
| 10   | Chapter 4, Section 1-2  | 35-37 | The Person of Jesus Christ        |

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH SEMINAR PLANNING EXAMPLE

|    |                        |       |  |
|----|------------------------|-------|--|
| 11 | Chapter 4, Section 3-4 | 37-39 | The Person of Jesus Christ                 |
| 12 | Chapter 5, Section 1-3 | 41-44 | The Work of Christ                         |
| 13 | Chapter 5, Section 4-6 | 44-46 | The Work of Christ                         |
| 14 | Chapter 6, Section 1   | 47-49 | Salvation                                  |
| 15 | Chapter 6, Section 2-4 | 49-52 | Salvation                                  |
| 16 | Chapter 7, Section 1-3 | 53-54 | The Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit |
| 17 | Chapter 7, Section 4-6 | 55-57 | The Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit |
| 18 | Chapter 8              | 58-63 | Prayer and the Believer                    |
| 19 | Chapter 9              | 64-71 | The Church: Fellowship and Worship         |
| 20 | Chapter 10             | 72-77 | Spiritual Gifts                            |
| 21 | Chapter 11             | 78-83 | Evangelism and the Believer                |
| 22 | Chapter 12             | 84-90 | Obedience                                  |
| 23 | Chapter 13             | 91-96 | God's Will and Guidance                    |
| 24 | Review                 |       |  |

Synopsis: FOF is the outgrowth of the belief that the essence of Christianity is truth - truth about the Father, Christ and the Holy Spirit; truth about man's sin and God's plan of salvation; and truth about God's revealed will for the church and our lives. What you believe matters, and it matters eternally.

Class Presentations

Create presentations for participants to follow in class:

Three slides for each of the weekly "questions". Include:

1. Question with a blank
2. Accompanying verse
3. Question with an answer (put answer in different color)

Collaborate presentation amongst teachers

For First Class:

Opening Panel

Questions to be asked by emcee:

1. Why should someone take this Seminar?
2. Why are you passionate about teaching this Seminar?
3. What is the general format of the Seminar?

Introduction

Overview

24 week schedule

Outline of the first 12 with chapter breakdown and weekly homework

What to expect from us:

- Biblical teaching: We will use the Word
- Lecture, Discussion, Q&A: We will use a variety of teaching styles
- Weekly Communication: We will stay in touch during the week
- Availability: We will be available as you study or have questions

What we expect from you:

- Faithful attendance: You will make an effort to be here each week
- Hard work: You will study for 30 minutes a week
- Class involvement: You will share the results of your study and ask questions in class
- Biblical answers: You will commit to supporting your answers from the Bible
- \* Bonus: partnerships (discipling relationships)

Explain how to use the workbook.

Give contact info:

Randy Barrow - teacher  
Philip Bates - co teacher  
Cody Eastman - secretary



## SMALL GROUPS

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Faith Bible Church exists to raise up generations of God-glorifying Christ followers. One of the ways we live out our call to make disciples is through Small Groups.

What are small groups?

Groups of 8-14 adults that exist to equip and mobilize the Faith family in making disciples.

We view small groups as a context for practical fellowship in which Christ is exalted and believers are edified; a place where sound doctrine meets strong relationships.

How do small groups fit into the life of the congregation?

In thinking about discipleship, it's helpful to think of a spectrum, with the whole congregation at one end, one on one relationships at the other, and small groups in the middle.

Our church attempts to prioritize the gatherings of the whole congregation, because that's where the primary teaching is done and where the entire body, with all its diverse parts, most reflects the gospel of Christ.

On the other hand, we recognize that individual discipleship is an effective tool for spiritual growth. In between these two ends of the spectrum, we have small groups working to connect the benefits of our ministry to the whole congregation and the ministry going on between individuals.



How are small groups implemented?

Small Groups at Faith meet a minimum of twice monthly in homes throughout Collier and Lee Counties. Group meetings consist of Bible study, prayer and service through spiritual fellowship. Study is centered on the Bible passage preached during the Sunday morning service with special attention given to application. These practices facilitate the many scriptural "one anothers" for believers and serve as a springboard into deeper levels of accountability and discipling relationships.

## SMALL GROUPS

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There are many intended results including:

- Group members growing in understanding and application of the Word of God.
- Group members encouraging, exhorting, teaching, helping, bearing with, praying for and loving one another.
- Group members extending the gospel to the community. Mature Christians living out the gospel will proclaim Christ in their sphere of influence.

Other potential benefits:

- Cultivating deeper accountability
- Serving by practicing spiritual gifts
- Developing one to one discipling relationships
- Developing spiritual leadership
- Increasing church unity

Those interested in joining a Small Group can find location and calendar information at [faithnaples.org/smallgroups](http://faithnaples.org/smallgroups) or by contacting Mark Mincy at [mark@faithnaples.org](mailto:mark@faithnaples.org).

### Overview of Training for Teachers

Who?

- 8-14 people
- Group Leader that oversees study and prayer
  - Apprentice or Co-leader that is preparing to lead a group
- Group Host that fulfills administrative responsibilities
- Group members that prepare by attending corporate gatherings, personal prayer and study

What?

- Focus on the Word
- Use sermon passage for study
- Make application the goal
- Pray together
- Do spiritual good to one another
- Strategize on reaching unbelievers
- Seek diversity in participants



## SMALL GROUPS

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### When and Where?

- Meet at least twice monthly on any night of the week except Wednesday
- Meet in group participants homes
- Meet separately for gospel opportunities

### What factors contribute to the need for Small Groups?

1. Large numbers do not allow for easy interpersonal application of biblical commands
2. Not all biblical commands given can be accomplished in a formal worship service or on a Sunday morning
3. Our cultural setting makes interaction with other believers more difficult because we do not live near each other.
4. The rise of information and technology coupled with a decline of interpersonal relationships has impaired us relationally thereby requiring us to provide more support.
5. Effective ministry in our busy culture often calls for purposeful, intentional, scheduled time.

### Are Small Groups in the Bible?

You cannot find the concept of small groups as we know it today in the Bible. There is not a model or methodology, nor a formula or command for small groups in the local church. What we see in Scripture is believers gathering at different times for different purposes. Some of these were formal church gatherings while others were believers gathering together for various reasons.

- Acts 2:40–47
- Acts 5:42
- Acts 8:3
- Acts 12:12
- Acts 17:11
- Acts 20:20

### Biblical examples of ministry to one another (do spiritual good)

- Be devoted to one another in brotherly love (Rom 12:10; 1 Pet 3:8)
- Give preference to one another in honor (Rom 12:10)
- Accept one another (Rom 15:17)
- Admonish one another (Rom 15:14; Col 3:16; 1 Thess 5:14)
- Be united with one another (Rom 12:16; 1 Cor 1:10; 1 Pet 3:8)

## SMALL GROUPS

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- Serve one another through love (Gal 5:13; 1 Pet 4:10)
- Show forbearance to one another in love (Eph 4:2)
- Be kind to one another (Eph 4:32; 1 Pet 3:8)
- Be tender-hearted to one another (Eph 4:32)
- Forgive one another (Eph 4:32; Col 3:13)
- Speak to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Eph 5:19)
- Teach one another (Col 3:16)
- Encourage one another (1 Thess 5:11, 14; Heb 3:13; 10:25)
- Build one another up (1 Thess 5:11)
- Help one another (1 Thess 5:14)
- Be patient with one another (1 Thess 5:14)
- Be hospitable to one another (Rom 12:13; 1 Pet 4:9)
- Be sympathetic toward one another (Rom 12:15; 1 Pet 3:8)
- Restore one another (Gal 6:1)
- Bear one another's burdens (Gal 6:2)
- Be humble toward one another (Phil 2:3; 1 Pet 3:8; 5:5)
- Look out for one another's interests (Phil 2:4)
- Confess sin to one another (James 5:6)

### Biblical examples of fellowship:

- Phil 2:1-4 [1] So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, [2] complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. [3] Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. [4] Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.
- I Cor 1:4-9 [4] I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, [5] that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge—[6] even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—[7] so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, [8] who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9] God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- I John 1:3-7 [3] that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. [4] And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. [5] This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. [6] If we say we have fellowship with him

while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. [7] But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

- Acts 2:42-48 [42] And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. [43] And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. [44] And all who believed were together and had all things in common. [45] And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. [46] And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, [47] praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Tit. 2:1-10 [1] But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. [2] Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. [3] Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, [4] and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, [5] to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. [6] Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. [7] Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, [8] and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. [9] Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, [10] not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

Eph 4:1-6, 11-16 [1] I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, [2] with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, [3] eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. [4] There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—[5] one Lord, one faith, one baptism, [6] one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

[11] And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, [12] to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, [13] 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, [14] so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. [15] Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to

## SMALL GROUPS

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grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, [16] from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Faith Bible Church is a community of believers that exists to raise up a generation of God-glorifying Christ followers. One of the ways we live out our call to make disciples is through Small Groups.

1. Ask: What is the mission of Faith Bible Church?
2. Walk through components of the mission statement
  - a. Community of believers
  - b. Raise up a generation
  - c. of God glorifying Christ followers
3. Notice "call to make disciples"
  - a. Ambassadorship
  - b. God's agenda illustration
    - i. Transfer = salvation, evangelism ( justification, redemption, adoption)
    - ii. Transform = sanctification, edification (spiritual maturity, discipling, equipping)
4. "One of the ways"
  - a. Not primary, there are ordained structures and lots of other options but this is highly valued at Faith and a really good method.
  - b. It is A context for disciple making

What are Small Groups?

Groups of 8-14 adults that exist to equip and mobilize the Faith family to delight in Christ, serve others and advance the truth in love.

We view small groups as a context for practical fellowship in which Christ is exalted and believers are edified; a place where sound doctrine meets strong relationships.

1. "That exist" - reason, purpose, the why
  - a. Equip
    - i. Give necessary tools for being AND growing followers of Christ
    - ii. Small group members should walk away with points of practical application to employ and Biblical tools to rely help implementation..
  - b. Mobilize
    - i. Without action, equipping will make us knowledgeable but obese. Mobilization calls for and gives opportunity for ACTION
    - ii. Look at Ephesians 4:11-16
  - c. Goal - delight, serve, advance

2. "Practical fellowship" =
3. "Christ is exalted" = otherwise it is just a social gathering (I Corinthians 2:1-5)
4. "Believers are edified"
5. "Sound doctrine" = beautiful, good, excellent, healthy set of beliefs, teachings
6. "Strong relationships" = mature, nurtured, challenged

How do small groups fit into the life of the congregation?

In thinking about discipleship, it's helpful to think of a spectrum, with the whole congregation at one end, one on one relationships at the other, and small groups in the middle.

Our church attempts to prioritize the gatherings of the whole congregation, because that's where the primary teaching is done and where the entire body, with all its diverse parts, most reflects the gospel of Christ.

On the other hand, we recognize that individual discipleship is an effective tool for spiritual growth. In between these two ends of the spectrum, we have small groups working to connect the benefits of our ministry to the whole congregation and the ministry going on between individuals.

How are small groups implemented?

Small Groups at Faith meet a minimum of three times monthly in homes throughout Naples, Bonita and Fort Myers. Group meetings consist of Bible study, prayer and service through spiritual fellowship. Study is centered on the Bible passage preached during the Sunday morning service with special attention given to application. These practices facilitate the many scriptural "one anothers" for believers and serve as a springboard into deeper levels of accountability and discipling relationships.

1. Notice "passage"
  - a. It does not say sermon, notes or guide
  - b. Scripture is central
2. What is absent and flexible in the "how" is food. Groups do not need to have a meal in order to be a successful group.
3. What components do groups need to have in order to be functional even successful?
  - a. Bible study
    - i. Review and clarify the group's understanding of the text
    - ii. Lead the group to consider application of the text

## SMALL GROUPS LEADER TRAINING

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- iii. Create specific, measurable action steps for putting the text into practice.
- iv. James 1:22-25

NOTE:

In Bible study:

| Dont:                             | Do:   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Restate the entire message        | Have the group highlight one part that encouraged them or rephrase the main idea  |
| Preach a new message              | Use the study and clear presentation of the preaching to guide the group  |
| Give the application to the group | Ask questions that promote conversation about application   |
| Rely solely on the sermon         | Study the passage for yourself prior to the group meeting. Use the Bible study method: observation, interpretation, application |

- b. Prayer - there are many methods of prayer but praying for one another using the Scripture passage is essential.
  - i. Praise God for the truths in the passage
  - ii. Pray for individuals in the group based on
    - 1. what needs to be repented of,
    - 2. what needs to be changed or enacted,
    - 3. the empowerment of the Spirit create effectiveness and
    - 4. the support of one another in the endeavor.
- c. Service - think one another's

### Session 3

In Week One we had an Overview of our Small Group Ministry and how it Fits into the overall vision of Faith Bible Church.

Last Week we spent our time narrowing our focus by discussing the idea of promoting a holistic view or approach to spiritual maturity.

Colossians 1:28–29

[28] Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. [29] For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. (ESV)

We looked at multiple scriptures on the topic of spiritual maturity and we learned

- That spiritual maturity was characterized by Christ impacting every area of the lives of believers.
- That spiritual maturity was a direction and not a place
- That spiritual maturity included an increasing knowledge of the word but that knowledge must be accompanied by obedience in the life of the believer.

Colossians 2:1-3

[1] For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, [2] that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, [3] in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (ESV)

An old business phrase is “What you Measure you can Manage”. That may not apply perfectly to the church or our own Christian lives, but the foundation of that idea is that it is a good /profitable to consider the outcomes that we hope are achieved and to watch for those outcomes as we make efforts in a particular direction.

So tonight we intend to spend our time discussing some of the practical results we can watch for and manage within our groups to give us some indicators on what is happening, i.e. Is our group encouraging individual believers toward spiritual maturity.

To direct our discussion a little, I will give you three main areas and then open up the table to discuss practical goals or outcomes to watch for or maybe direct toward.

There are many intended results including:

- Group members delighting in Christ
- Group members growing in understanding and application of the Word of God.
- Group members encouraging, exhorting, teaching, helping, bearing with, praying for and loving one another.



- Group members proclaiming the gospel in the community. Mature Christians living out the gospel will proclaim Christ in their sphere of influence.
1. “Understanding” & “Application” here must be centered on individuals first. If the group applies only in generalities there will be a lack of authenticity and therefore growth. Think inside out.
    - Tangible examples:
      - Jesus becomes central in personal thoughts, decisions and conversations
      - Growth in a desire for the Word
      - Joy is obviously rooted in spiritual realities and not tied to physical satisfaction alone
      - What are others?
  2. The second two bullet points are a product of the first if done well.
    - a. The one anothers apply to the home and church
    - b. The gospel outcomes typically to the home and community
  3. What tangible outcomes flow out of personal application?
    - a. Within the home?
      - Parenting becomes rooted in the expectations of God’s Word and therefore emphasizes characteristics of God that are vital for gospel health.
        - What does that look like? Obedience, honor, selflessness, holiness, communication, correction, punishment are tied to the gospel.
      - An atmosphere of daily repentance and belief is cultivated in conversation and action.
    - b. Within the church?
      - Relationships are defined not by social conversation by spiritual interest and concern.
      - Giving to God’s work is joyful and sacrificial
      - Service that models Jesus’ work and advances God’s agenda
        - Think of ways this could happen here?
    - c. Within the community?
  4. “Mature Christians living out the gospel will proclaim Christ in their sphere of influence”
    - a. Emphasize mature = heart, living out = walk, proclaim = talk
    - b. Sphere of influence = people they know, daily rhythm

Other potential benefits:

- Cultivating deeper accountability
- Serving by practicing spiritual gifts

- Developing one to one discipling relationships
- Developing spiritual leadership
- Increasing church unity

Those interested in joining a Small Group can find location and calendar information at [faithnaples.org/smallgroups](http://faithnaples.org/smallgroups) or by contacting Philip Bates at [philip@faithnaples.org](mailto:philip@faithnaples.org).

### Overview

#### Who?

- 8-14 people
  - Group Leader that oversees study, prayer and care
    - Apprentice or Co-leader that is preparing to lead a group
  - Group Host that fulfills administrative responsibilities
  - Group members that prepare by attending corporate gatherings, personal prayer and study
1. "Study, prayer and care" = this is what we want group facilitators coordinating and modeling
  2. Co-leader / apprentice = someone that can lead study, prayer and care. Groups leaders should be cultivating these in another member when possible
  3. Administrator = communicator, coordinator, clerk
  4. Members also have a responsibility= attend (corporate gathering and group), pray, study

#### What?

- Focus on the Word
- Use sermon passage for study
- Make application the goal
- Pray together
- Do spiritual good to one another
- Strategize on reaching unbelievers
- Seek diversity in participants

#### When and Where?

- Meet twice monthly on any night of the week except Wednesday
- Meet in group participants homes

- Meet separately for gospel opportunities

What factors contribute to the need for Small Groups?

1. Large numbers do not allow for easy application of biblical commands
2. Not all biblical commands given to the church can be accomplished in a formal worship service or on a Sunday morning
3. Our cultural setting makes interaction with other believers more difficult because we do not live near each other.
4. The rise of information and technology coupled with a decline of interpersonal relationships...
5. Effective ministry often calls for purposeful, intentional, scheduled time.

Are Small Groups in the Bible?

You cannot find the concept of small groups as we know it today in the Bible. There is not a model or methodology, nor a formula or command for small groups in the local church. What we see in Scripture is believers gathering at different times for different purposes. Some of these were formal church gatherings while others were believers gathering together for various reasons.

- Acts 2:40–47
- Acts 5:42
- Acts 8:3
- Acts 20:20
- Acts 12:12
- Acts 17:11

Biblical examples of fellowship:

- Phil 2:1-4 [1] So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, [2] complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. [3] Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant

than yourselves. [4] Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

- I Cor 1:4-9 [4] I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, [5] that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge—[6] even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—[7] so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, [8] who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9] God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- I John 1:3-7 [3] that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. [4] And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. [5] This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. [6] If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. [7] But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.
- Acts 2:42-48 [42] And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. [43] And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. [44] And all who believed were together and had all things in common. [45] And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. [46] And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, [47] praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Biblical examples of ministry to one another (do spiritual good)

- Be devoted to one another in brotherly love (Rom 12:10; 1 Pet 3:8)
- Give preference to one another in honor (Rom 12:10)
- Accept one another (Rom 15:17)
- Admonish one another (Rom 15:14; Col 3:16; 1 Thess 5:14)
- Be united with one another (Rom 12:16; 1 Cor 1:10; 1 Pet 3:8)
- Serve one another through love (Gal 5:13; 1 Pet 4:10)
- Show forbearance to one another in love (Eph 4:2)
- Be kind to one another (Eph 4:32; 1 Pet 3:8)
- Be tender-hearted to one another (Eph 4:32)

- Forgive one another (Eph 4:32; Col 3:13)
- Speak to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Eph 5:19)
- Teach one another (Col 3:16)
- Encourage one another (1 Thess 5:11, 14; Heb 3:13; 10:25)
- Build one another up (1 Thess 5:11)
- Help one another (1 Thess 5:14)
- Be patient with one another (1 Thess 5:14)
- Be hospitable to one another (Rom 12:13; 1 Pet 4:9)
- Be sympathetic toward one another (Rom 12:15; 1 Pet 3:8)
- Restore one another (Gal 6:1)
- Bear one another's burdens (Gal 6:2)
- Be humble toward one another (Phil 2:3; 1 Pet 3:8; 5:5)
- Look out for one another's interests (Phil 2:4)
- Confess sin to one another (James 5:6)

Tit. 2:1-10 [1] But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. [2] Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. [3] Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, [4] and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, [5] to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. [6] Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. [7] Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, [8] and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. [9] Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, [10] not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

Eph 4:1-6, 11-16 [1] I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, [2] with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, [3] eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. [4] There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—[5] one Lord, one faith, one baptism, [6] one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

[11] And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, [12] to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, [13] 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, [14] so that we may no longer be children,

tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. [15] Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, [16] from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

2019 / 2020 Theme

## Week Two Holistic Spiritual Maturity

Open with a review from our last meeting on our focus on promoting a Holistic approach to Spiritual Maturity.

What do I mean by that?

Wheel Christian vrs Pie Christian

When we provide that kind of understanding of spiritual maturity, what areas of life immediately come to mind? Make a list.

Tonight we are going to spend our time looking at several passages of scripture to see what we can glean regarding this idea of spiritual maturity. As each of you are small group leaders this discussion should be easy for me as you all know how to contribute to such a discussion.

Hebrews 5:11–14

[11] About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, **since you have become dull** of hearing. [12] For though by this time **you ought to be teachers**, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, [13] for everyone who lives on milk is **unskilled in the word of righteousness**, since he is a child. [14] But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their **powers of discernment trained by constant practice** to distinguish good from evil. (ESV)

V 11 - You have become dull - Speak of the diligence that must accompany the Christian walk. Why have they become dull?

V12 - You ought to be teachers - Not in the elder sense or by giftedness but as a natural outflow of spiritual maturity. How?

V13 - Unskilled in the word of righteousness. V14 - powers of discernment trained by constant practice. Here is the idea that knowledge tied to doing/practicing our faith, brings an understanding gained only by practice or experience.

Note - So are we saying that as we impact the body of Christ we should be impacting each of the areas we mentioned earlier?

Colossians 1:28-2:3

[28] Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. [29] For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.[1] For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, [2] that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, [3] in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (ESV)

“The systems you have employed are perfectly designed for the results you are getting.”

So what is the system for spiritual maturity that is described here.

“Hearts encouraged by being Knit Together in love”

Allowing us to reach “full assurance”

Knowledge = apprehension of truth, Prudent Judgement

Understanding = Wisdom - Complete yielding, Application of truth to life.  
Prudent Action

This idea is cemented in v 6-7

Colossians 2:6–7

[6] Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, [7] rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. (ESV)

The basis or motivation for the system is our Faith in Christ

We walk in Him as a result of the salvation we enjoy, in response to the salvation we enjoy.

It is not a burden it is "with thanksgiving".

## 2 Peter 1:5-8

[5] For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, [6] and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, [7] and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. [8] For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (ESV)

Virtue = Goodness in action, moral excellency with a good dose of courage, fortitude and resolution.

Knowledge = Discretion, Prudence (Prudent = understanding and therefore taking care for the future). A spiritual knowledge which comes from the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Focus of word is on the FACTS

Self- Control = Having one's passions under control.

Steadfastness = Perseverance, to remain under, a patient endurance in difficult times.

Godliness = reverence toward God. Piety (Not understood), Devout, Totally committed, In sports team language = All In.

Brotherly Kindness = A brotherly love. A fervent practical caring for others.

Love = Desiring the highest good for others. It is what God exhibits toward sinners.

Several observations:

Not to merely be passively pursued and they don't just happen.

Back in verse 5 "make every effort" = that means diligently with zeal.

Doug Baer basketball example Physical Therapy/From Basketball

A straightforward reading of these qualities suggests that they build on one another. Build this up.

A better understanding is that we are to be adding all of these qualities together.



Not a complete List

So what is Peter suggesting? = That we are to be maturing in Christ in all areas of our life.

We are not holding back certain areas.

Think about these qualities in chorus with each other,

What does that look like tomorrow when you are alone, or as you interact with your family, your neighbors, your work.

What does that consistent walk look like next month, next year, in ten years, after a life time?

A Christian that is increasingly impacting their culture with the gospel of Christ, increasingly encouraging one another in their words and their obedience, and increasingly bringing glory to God.

Think of the impact for a Church when a body of Believers in interacting toward maturity.

How do we impact our small groups in this direction?

Ephesians 4:11–16

[11] And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, [12] to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, [13] 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, [14] so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. [15] Rather, speaking the truth in love, **we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ**, [16] from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (ESV)

Touch on the gifts of the church and their purpose = we are to grow in Christlikeness in every way.

Ephesians 4:20–24

[20] But that is not the way you learned Christ!—[21] assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, [22] to put off your old self, which belongs to

your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, [23] and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, [24] and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (ESV)

Colossians 1:28–29

[28] Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. [29] For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. (ESV)

## SERMON NOTES FOR SMALL GROUPS

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Passage: \_\_\_\_\_

Preacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Big idea: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

I never knew:

I was reminded:

I still want to know:

Something I should change:

A biblical truth I could share:

With (names):

A key verse:

My prayer response (repentance/thanks/praise):



## OVERVIEW

### WHO ?

- 8-14 people
- Group leader that oversees study and prayer
- Group host that fulfills administrative responsibilities
- Group members that prepare by attending corporate gatherings, personal prayer and study

### WHAT ?

- focus on the Word
  - use sermon passage for study
  - make application the goal
- pray together
- do spiritual good to one another
- strategize on reaching unbelievers
- seek diversity in participants

### WHEN & WHERE ?

- meet twice monthly on any night of the week except Wednesday
- meet in group participant's homes
- meet separately for gospel opportunities

## A GUIDE TO

# Small Groups



### FAITH BIBLE CHURCH

6464 Immokalee Road  
Naples, FL 34119

[www.faithnaples.org](http://www.faithnaples.org)

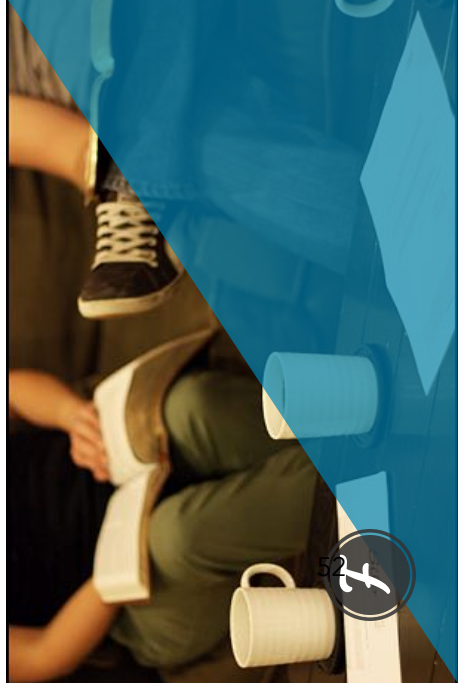


# SMALL GROUPS

Fatih Bible Church is a community of believers displaying God's glory by making disciples through the gospel of Jesus Christ. One of the ways we live out our call to make disciples is through Small Groups.

Groups of 8-14 adults that exist to equip and mobilize the Faith family in making disciples.

We view small groups as a context for practical fellowship in which Christ is exalted and believers are edified; a place where strong doctrine meets strong relationships.



# WHAT TO EXPECT

Small Groups at Faith meet twice monthly in homes throughout Naples, Bonita and Estero. Group meetings consist of Bible Study, prayer and service through spiritual fellowship. Study is centered on the Bible passage preached during the Sunday morning service with special attention given to application. These practices facilitate the many scriptural "one anothers" for believers and serve as a springboard into deeper levels of accountability and discipling relationships.

## There are many intended results including:

- Group members growing in understanding and application of the Word of God
- Group members encouraging, exhorting, teaching, helping, bearing with, praying for, rebuking and loving one another
- Group members extending the gospel to the community (Mature Christians living out the gospel will proclaim Christ in their sphere of influence.)

## Other potential benefits:

- Cultivating deeper accountability
- Serving by practicing spiritual gifts
- Developing one to one discipling relationships
- Developing spiritual leadership
- Increasing church unity

# FIT

A good question often asked about small groups is where they fit into the life of the congregation. In thinking about discipleship, it's helpful to think of a spectrum, with the whole congregation at one end, one on one relationships at the other, and small groups in the middle.

Our church attempts to prioritize the gatherings of the whole congregation, because that's where the primary teaching is done and where the entire body, with all its diverse parts, most reflects the gospel of Christ.

On the other, we recognize that individual discipleship is an effective tool for spiritual growth. In between these two ends of the spectrum, we have small groups working to connect the benefits of our ministry to the whole congregation and the ministry going on between individuals.



## MEN'S SEMINAR STRUCTURE

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What? Men's Seminar

Why? Objectives:

- Learning what God says about . . .
  - Conversion (the Gospel)
  - Convictions (our confession regarding Theology, Christology, Pneumatology, Anthropology, Soteriology, Bibliology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology)
  - Character (hotspots on character from our church covenant)
  - Competency (Hermeneutics, Marriage/Parenting, Stewardship, Discipling/Counseling, Evangelism/Apologetics, Conflict Resolution)
  - Chemistry (self-awareness, others-awareness, skills-awareness)
- Loving . . .
  - Christ
  - The roles he has given us as image bearers, husbands, fathers, church members, employees, and citizens.
- Living so as to . . .
  - Delight in Christ
  - Lead in the home
  - Serve in the local church
  - Proclaim the gospel to the world

How? Unique and strategically formulated for men

3 rotating 12-week seminars

- Option 1: 3 separate (and unique) rotations of 4 weeks on convictions, 4 weeks on character, 4 weeks on competence
- Option 2: 12 weeks on convictions, 12 weeks on character, 12 weeks on competence
- Consider 8 week seminars based upon historical seminar data \*\*

## MEN'S SEMINAR STRUCTURE

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### CONVICTIONS:

- Conversion/Gospel
- Anthropology:
  - Creation mandate
    - Imago Dei
    - What complementarianism is and is not
      - <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/5-evidences-of-complementarian-gender-roles-in-genesis-1-2/>
      - See pgs. 39-42 in Grudem's "100 questions" book (PDF available)
  - Cultural mandate
    - Vocation
    - Leadership
      - Husbands
      - Fathers
      - Church members
      - Employee/Employer
      - Citizen
- Theology Proper
  - Theology of the father (Doug Wilson)
- Ecclesiology

### CHARACTER:

- Love
- Holiness
- Purity
- Humility
- Self-control
  - Speech
  - Behavior
  - Health
  - Entertainment/technology
- Temperament (i.e. domineering vs. passive, etc.)
- Chemistry



COMPETENCE:

- Feasting on the Word: Habits of grace
  - Reading God's Word
  - Hearing God's Word
  - Having God's Ear
  - Being with God's people (how to listen to a sermon)
- Stages of life
  - Single
  - Married
  - Husband
  - Father
- Stewardship - Use the four sub points as the main points to situate everything else under based upon lunch conversation on 9/29/20\*\*
  - Delighting in Christ (missed opportunity-Creation)
  - Leading in the home
  - Serving in the local church
  - Proclaiming the gospel to the world

## MEN'S SEMINAR STRUCTURE

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### *Strawman structure of topics*

| SELF: Delighting in Christ |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Convictions                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Imago Dei - Created / Destroyed</li> <li>● The Imago Dei - Restored / Consummated</li> </ul>         |
| Character                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Purity</li> <li>● Self Control</li> </ul>  |
| Competency                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reading God's Word</li> <li>● Having God's Ear (Prayer)</li> <li>● Belonging to Christ's Body</li> </ul> |

| FAMILY: Leading in the Home |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Convictions                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Anthropology                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What complementarianism is / is not</li> <li>○ Leadership in the home</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Theology Proper                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Theology of the Father</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| Character                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Love</li> <li>● Temperament</li> </ul>  |
| Competency                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stages of Life                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Singleness</li> <li>○ Husband</li> <li>○ Father</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |

| CHURCH: Serving in the Local Church |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Convictions                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Anthropology                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Leadership as church members</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Ecclesiology</li> </ul> |
| Character                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Love</li> <li>● Temperament</li> </ul>  |
| Competency                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hearing God's word</li> <li>● Being with God's people</li> </ul>  |

## MEN'S SEMINAR STRUCTURE

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| COMMUNITY: Proclaiming the Gospel to the World |  |
|--|--|
| Convictions                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Conversion / The Gospel (Evangelism focused)</li><li>● Anthropology<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Leadership as a citizen, employee/employer</li></ul></li><li>● Vocation (theological)</li></ul> |
| Character                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Holiness</li><li>● Humility</li></ul>  |
| Competency                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Vocation (practical)</li></ul>   |



## SMALL GROUP WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

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Small Group Women's Discipleship Training is a formal training event for female church members interested in learning how to better encourage one another in Christlikeness.

Its purpose is to equip female members for the work of the ministry and advance a proper view of local church ministry.

### SLO's

#### Student Learning Objectives

- to comprehend the supremacy of the Word and relationships in discipling
- to evaluate the spiritual stages of discipling relationships
- to understand the connection between local church leadership and women's ministry
- to recognize our unique spiritual giftedness

#### Student Loving Objectives

- to cherish the power of the Word in relationships
- to embrace the beauty of God's plan for diversity
- to value God's design for the local church

#### Student Living Objectives

- to maintain a chart for current discipling relationships
- to rely on the Word to disciple and evangelize other women
- to seek diversity of current gospel relationships
- to leverage pastors insight for fruitful ministry
- to develop strategies for utilizing God given strengths for discipling

### Method

Two diverse groups praying and discussing the Word and book reports in four, weekly 1 1/2 hour sessions.

9:30am - Pray

9:35am - Discuss pre-class assignments

10:15am - In-class assignment

10:25am - Discuss in-class assignment

10:45am - Pray for discipling relationships

Post-training Evaluation Summary:

- Promote further discussion time outside of class
- Follow-up email to encourage women to go through this with another women at faith
- Diversify groups weekly
- Key in on Gospel Growth Table on a weekly basis (change title to Women's Ministry chart in the last session)

2018 Motion to Elders: Provide a time for formal training for all female church members interested in learning how to better encourage one another in Christlikeness in their unique roles through their small groups.

Being proactive about this training will enable us to equip our female members for the work of the ministry as commanded (Eph 4:12-16), to protect us against the accusation that women in our church are not being cared for, and to head off any potential philosophical conflicts from women who have come from more egalitarian backgrounds.

A Four Week Intensive study focusing on a biblical philosophy of discipling aimed at empowering women to serve one another effectively.

- heavy homework load: approximately 1 book per session with a 2 page report (summary, critique, and commendation/practicalities)
- focus on women who want to initiate and lead ministry (not just women who want to be ministered to)
- no childcare provided
- must attend all four sessions
- offer an alternate time later in the year if needed (evening)

Week 1: *The Trellis and the Vine* by Colin Marshall and Tony Payne

Week 2: *One to One Bible Reading* by David Helm; *Evangelism* by Mack Stiles

Week 3: *Compelling Community* by Jamie Dunlop & Mark Dever

Week 4: *Word Filled Women's Ministry* by Gloria Furman & Kathleen Nielson

Provide mature female discussion facilitators: e.g. Barb Haan, Joanne Troth, Anne White

Email Announcement:

Ladies of Faith Bible,

There will be an opportunity for a four week intensive study to equip the women at Faith for ministering to other women within the church. This is a formal training event with a two-fold purpose. The first being to learn how to better encourage each other in Christ-likeness in your unique roles as women. The second is a focus on the biblical philosophy of discipling aimed to equip the women at Faith to serve one another effectively.

This training will include intensive homework which is designed to prepare you with the knowledge and confidence to disciple other women. It will include required reading of one book per session (1 book per week) with a two page report due as well.

There will be no childcare provided. You must attend all four sessions. The sessions will be held on Wednesdays, March 14, 21, 28 and April 4 at 9:30 a.m. Please RSVP by March 7.

## SMALL GROUP WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

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### Follow-up Email:

I am excited that you have signed up to study Women's Discipleship. The book list for the training is below. A sample two page book review is also attached. Please feel free to work ahead in anticipation of the March 14 start date.

Week 1 (March 14): *The Trellis and the Vine* by Colin Marshall and Tony Payne

Week 2\* (March 21): *One to One Bible Reading* by David Helm; *Evangelism* by Mack Stiles

Week 3 (March 28): *Compelling Community* by Jamie Dunlop & Mark Dever

Week 4 (April 4): *Women's Ministry in the Local Church* by Ligon Duncan and Susan Hunt

\* One page report per book.

I also want to encourage you to pray for the other women who have already signed up.

Ann White  
Joanne Troth  
Barbara Haan  
Mary Allen  
Holly Eardley  
Kathryn Anderson  
Deb Rasmussen  
Joy Komarowski  
Tonya Harris  
Danielle Rose  
Kelly Edman  
Yvette Barrow  
Laurie Mitchell  
Abby Kobosh



Be sure to put your name, date, and what book you read. Formatting should be double-spaced, 12pt. font, and somewhere between 1.5–2 pages.

Your opening paragraph or 1/3 of the report should include a summary of what you read.

Justin Harris  
3/28/18

Mark Dever, *9 Marks of a Healthy Church*  
Pages Read: 9–153

While *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* by Mark Dever is not a definitive ecclesiology, it provides a much needed focus on church health that seems timely for churches today. In this first half of the book, we surveyed the most foundational of the nine marks, namely, expository preaching, biblical theology, the gospel, and evangelism. Dever unpacks these nine marks by explaining that understanding the Word of God through preaching that derives its emphasis from the text is the key to all church health. In the next chapter, he presses for churches to put the Bible together appropriately by grasping the panoramic portrait of God as creator, holy judge, faithful, loving, etc. The next mark highlighted our need to know and teach the good news of Christ's life, death, and resurrection for the salvation of sinners who repent and believe. Finally, the fourth mark of a healthy church obligates churches to take that message of good news to others by means of evangelism.

Here are a few of the thoughts I found most helpful. In reference to expository preaching, I liked how pastors and elders who were challenged to ask if they regularly heard "from God things [they] didn't intend to hear when [they] set out to study their passage" (45). Thus reminding me that the Word of God, as opposed to other Christian resources, should be central in our public teaching settings. The focus on biblical theology blessed me as well. After reading this I was challenged more than ever to think through my ability to put the overall storyline of the Bible together. In response to this, I have added a couple more books on this topic to my reading list.

The next 1/3 or 1/2 of the report should include things you liked or specific ways the book affected your thoughts concerning ministry or discipling. Generally, speaking you talk about things you liked and learned in this section.

The reading also provoked me to consider how much our church gatherings center on the gospel. In other words, it led me to evaluate whether or not the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ for the redemption of sinners is the uniting principle of our corporate gatherings and smaller groups. Many times we just assume the gospel and this should never be the case. Rehearsing the gospel clearly and often in our ministry gatherings will aid our evangelism and also contribute positively to the gospel recall of our fellow church members.

So, in the end, pondering such concrete indicators of health works in a way similar to the diagnostic check ups we use to service our car or the way a bi-yearly physical protects our bodies. Its pretty typical for service providers that strive for excellence to use a checklist to avoid errors and ensure quality. If this level of intentionality serves in other spheres of life, why would we not spend time thinking through these biblically grounded marks of health in our local churches?

I do not really have any outstanding questions or critiques of the assigned reading. To make it better, however, I do think the author could have spend more time developing the biblical texts he used to support his arguments. It seemed like he just assumed that the reader would be familiar with the texts he cited. Nevertheless, when I looked up the passages for myself I was assured to discover that they were all being used appropriately.

In the last paragraph, feel free to list any questions or disagreements you had with the reading. While I don't think there will be many disagreements we certainly want to allow for those.

The Trellis and the Vine by Colin Marshall and Tony Payne is a book that calls out every church today to reevaluate how they are doing ministry. The authors use the trellis and the vine parable to challenge churches to shift back from reactive “event-based ministry”, to proactively making and nurturing disciples. The trellis represents the structural aspect of the church, programs and activities that support ministry. The vine represents the church body that grows by Biblical, prayer-backed, people-focused ministry into disciple-making disciples. It’s a shift from emphasizing church-size growth to Gospel growth. The Biblical framework for this shift is the Great Commission, which focuses on “making disciples” (Matthew 28:19). *- shift left*

The book recognizes that ministries tend to drift towards maintenance mode and get bogged down in caring for the trellis, when what they need to be doing is growing the vine. It lays out a simple plan for growing the “vine”. Start with Biblical and relational training of church members with a heart for God and hunger to grow and with prayer-backed nurturing and teaching in sound doctrine, the church matures in faith and grows as a vine by the Holy Spirit, while at the same time, desiring to disciple others in the same way. In essence, (all part of a team or “vine”) growing at different levels on the trellis, but all growing through discipleship in the love and knowledge of the Lord.

*Just pastors* The shift from the trellis to the vine frees the pastor and other elders from structural maintenance to train leaders, who in turn train others, and creates an environment for spirit-lead discipleship. When this occurs, the authors suggest, many traditional



GOSPEL GROWTH TABLE

| Name | Outreach       |        | Followup | Growth    |       | Training |          |
|------|----------------|--------|----------|-----------|-------|----------|----------|
|      | Raising Issues | Gospel |          | Need help | Solid | General  | Specific |
|      |                |        |          |           |       |          |          |
|      |                |        |          |           |       |          |          |
|      |                |        |          |           |       |          |          |
|      |                |        |          |           |       |          |          |
|      |                |        |          |           |       |          |          |
|      |                |        |          |           |       |          |          |

As referenced on page 87 of *The Trellis and the Vine*.



## TRANSFER AND TRANSFORM CHART

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God's purpose for our lives is seen in these two words.

TRANSFER = salvation, evangelism ( justification, redemption, adoption) MAKE

TRANSFORM = sanctification, edification (spiritual maturity, discipling, equipping)  
MATURE

This should lead to further discipling. MULTIPLY





# Elders





## Part I

### Church Polity / Government

Church Polity is the operational and governance structure of a church. It also denotes the ministerial structure of the church and the authority relationships/responsibilities within the church.

The most commonly used models of church government are:

- Pastor-rule, the church is led by one person
- Congregational-rule, the congregation in regular business meetings, votes and decides on all issues affecting the church
- Elder-rule, the church is led by a plurality of qualified leaders, to provide oversight and direction for the church

Although Scripture does not give a precise leadership and organizational structure it does give two specific offices of leadership, Elders and Deacons (I Timothy 3; Titus 1). It also provides a pattern of structural principles to be applied to church polity (congregational choice of deacons - Acts 6)

We believe that the operational and governance structure of Faith Bible is the pattern set forth in Scripture -- Elder Led, Congregation Affirmed and Deacon Served.

## Part II

### Elder Led

#### 1. Office

It is evident from both Acts 20:17, 28 and I Peter 5:1-2 that the words "elder" (presbuteros), "overseer" (episkopos), and "pastor" (poimen) all refer to the same office. The overseer and pastor are not distinct from an elder but the terms identify the same person. Plus, the terms indicate various features of ministry, not varying levels of authority or separate offices.

- Elder                      presbuteros
  - a term that signifies maturity of experience, wisdom, and self-discipline

- Overseer      episkopos
  - a term used to refer to a manager or supervisor
- Pastor      poimen
  - a term that describes one who leads, feeds, and protects the flock

#### Scriptural overview

*Acts 20:17, 28*

*17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.  
28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (NKJ)*

*I Peter 5:1-2*

*1 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed,  
2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; (NASB)*

## 2. Plurality

The consistent pattern set forth in the NT is that each body of believers is shepherded by a plurality of elders:

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Acts 11:30; 15:2 | "elders" at the church in Jerusalem       |
| Acts 14:23       | "appoint elders for them in every church" |
| Acts 29:17       | "the elders of the church"                |
| I Timothy 5:17   | "the elders who rule well"                |
| Titus 1:5        | "appoint elders in every city"            |
| James 5:14       | "call for the elders of the church"       |

(Elder is used in the singular when John refers to himself in II and III John and Peter refers to himself in I Peter 5:1)

There are several practical benefits of leadership made up of a plurality of Godly men:

- a. Doesn't burn out the lead pastor
- b. Gives the church more than one man's gift

- c. Provides accountability
- d. Protects the church from a self-willed leader
- e. Brings the combined counsel and wisdom from a variety of life experiences
- f. Shares the burden and care for the ministry

### 3. Responsibility/Role

#### Generally

- to serve as a manager and caretaker of the church

I Timothy 3:5

*5 for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? (ESV)*

#### Specifically

- determining church policy (the circumcision conflict – Jerusalem counsel)

Acts 15:6, 22

*6 Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.*

*22 Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barnabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.*

- oversee the church – to care for, manage, and supervise cf. Hebrews 13:17a

Acts 20:28

*20:28 therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers...*

*13:17 obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls...*

- shepherd the church – leading, feeding, protecting, seeking, helping, guiding, directing cf. I Peter 5:1-3

Acts 20:28

*20:28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

*5:2 Shepherd the flock of God, which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;*

- rule (directing the affairs of the church), teach/preach (labor in the Word)

I Timothy 5:17

*17 The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. (NASB)*

- confront sin and correct error

Titus 1:9

*9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.*

- praying for the sick

James 5:14

*14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.*

- setting an example for all

I Peter 5:1-3

*3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;*

#### 4. The Qualifications I Timothy 3:2-7 & Titus 1:5-9

No man is going to be 100% perfect in fulfilling these qualifications. Even the most mature and Godly man is going to fall short to some degree. The point – these qualifications should be generally evident in every believer but must characterize the elder.

must be blameless

“Blameless” is mature Christian living that gives no opportunity for a public accusation or condemnation (Homer Kent). valid

The use of the Gr. participle, “must,” stresses the absolute necessity of living a blameless life. Thus, no overt, flagrant sin can mar the life of one who is a living example for his people to follow. This is the overarching requirement for elders, the rest of the qualifications elaborate on what it means to be blameless (MacArthur). This condition sets the tone for the remaining qualifications including the question of marital status, ruling his-own house well, and having a good testimony in the unbelieving community, etc.

#### husband of one wife

The elder’s marriage should reflect a Christ-like love for his wife and demonstrate his unconditional commitment to her (Eph. 5:25).

Literally in Greek it is “a man of one woman” and when used in connection with the marriage relationship comes to mean, “a husband of one wife” (addressing his moral character and personal/sexual purity). Since character is emphasized by the Greek construction, the elder should be a man who loves only one woman as his wife. Therefore, it should be his nature to isolate and centralize his love only to his wife. (Kenneth Wuest)

#### temperate

The elder is to be alert, watchful, and be characterized by self-control.

#### sober minded

A sober-minded man is disciplined, knows how to properly order his priorities, and is serious about spiritual matters.

#### good behavior

The Gr. word means “orderly.” The elder’s life is not to be chaotic; if he cannot order his own life, how can he bring order to the church?

#### hospitable

It is a compound Gr. word meaning “lover of guest/strangers.” He sets the example for the church in welcoming guests and opening his home to build relationships.

#### able to teach

“Able to teach” is the ability to communicate Biblical truth in such a way that it is understandable and practical in its application. The requirement includes both the capability and readiness to teach.

not given to wine

An elder must not have a reputation as a drinker; his judgment is not to be clouded by alcohol (as well as any other addictive drug); his lifestyle is to be radically different from the world and lead others by example to holiness not sin or sinful lifestyle (Romans 12:1-2; I Cor. 8:9; II Cor. 6:3).

not violent

The elder is to respond to difficult situations calmly and gently; under no circumstances is he to "strike out" with physical or verbal violence.

not greedy for money (lover of money)

Even in the first century church there were men that became pastors in order to gain wealth. A leader who is in the ministry for the money reveals a heart set on the world, not the things of God.

gentle

The elder is considerate, genial, gracious, quick to pardon failure, and one who does not hold a grudge.

not quarrelsome

He is peaceful, reluctant to fight/argue; one who promotes unity and harmony. He can disagree without becoming disagreeable.

not covetous

The elder's motivation is love for God and his people, not money or the love of things (Mt. 6:33; Mk. 12:29-31).

rule his own house well

The elder's home life, like his personal life should be a model for marital harmony/fidelity, parental discipleship, and servant leadership. The point – if he cannot manage his own home, how can he manage the church (I Tim. 3:4-5)?

Issues of divorce should be related to this matter. A divorced man gives no evidence of a well managed home, but rather that divorce shows weakness in his spiritual leadership. If there has been a Biblically permitted divorce, it must be so far in the past as to have been overcome by a long pattern of solid family leadership, healthy and wholesome parent/child relationships, and marital harmony.

Concerning divorce and remarriage:



- A believer whose unbelieving spouse “departs” (depart is a term referring to divorce) he is not disqualified from being an elder (I Cor. 7:10-16).
- A believer who was divorced when he was an unbeliever is not disqualified from serving as an elder (Romans 6:5-6).
- A believer who is the innocent party in a divorce involving adultery is not disqualified from being considered as a potential candidate as an elder (Mt. 5:31; 19:9).

But these do not preclude an examination into any pattern of behavior that may reveal a character flaw (e.g., a man who has had multiple marriages as an unbeliever). In other words, the fact that there is not necessarily a disqualification does not of itself endorse a particular candidate.

It is important to remember that just because a man is disqualified from serving as an elder (because of one or several of the requirements) he is still a valuable member of the body of Christ and can serve in other capacities within the body.

not a novice

The primary focus of this requirement is the spiritual maturity of the person being considered for the office of elder.

a good testimony

The ones “outside,” those who are not part of the fellowship and specifically, those in need of salvation. He should live a life that is consistent with his profession of faith when he is among unbelievers (pay bills on time, man of his word, a good neighbor, controlled in his speech, etc.).

Part III

Congregational Affirmed

*The portrayal of congregationalism in the New Testament is quite an incomplete picture. We get it in snatches, asides, and assumptions. It is, however, clearly present, and the more one thinks of it, the more obvious it becomes throughout. Nevertheless, the peripheral, assumed nature of it would seem to leave us quite a bit of freedom to exercise the “Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word,” of which the Westminster divines wrote (chapter one). (A Display of God’s Glory, Mark Dever, p. 37)*

A. Defined

Congregationalism is the understanding that the last court of appeal in a matter of life of the local church is, and should be, the local congregation. Therefore, no body from outside can mandate something for a particular congregation, whether in a matter of discipline or doctrine.

B. Four Matters from the NT handled by the Congregation

1. ...of disputes between Christians

Mt. 18:15-17 a dispute between brothers (prescription)

*“Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.*

Notice the court of final appeal – not the pastor, board of elders, church committee, national assembly or conference – it is the church (local congregation) whose action is the final court of appeal.

Acts 6:1-5 problem over the distribution of the church’s resources (description)

*Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,*

Notice that even the apostles (who delineated error, defined doctrine, recalled the words/works of Jesus, chosen by Christ, etc.) handed over responsibility to the congregation for *choosing out seven men...to appoint over this business.*

I Cor. 6:4 quarrels among Christians cf. I Cor. 5:12 (prescription)

*If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?*

In the matter of disputes between Christians, the most legally untrained believers, who know the Word of God and are living in obedience to it, are far more competent to settle a dispute among the brethren.

2. ...of doctrine (note the doctrinal nature of the epistles to the churches)

Galatians 1:8 preaching of the gospel (implication)

*But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.*

Even in matters of the fundamental definition of the Gospel, the congregation appears to be the court of (earthly) final appeal. Paul is writing to the Christians who compose the churches of Galatia. He makes it clear that not only are they competent to sit in judgment on what claims to be the Gospel, but they must.

II Timothy 4:3 false teachers and false teaching (implication)

*I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*

Paul is warning Timothy and the congregation in Ephesus that times are coming when many people will find it intolerant to submit (*because of itching ears*) to the confrontational nature of the Word (*sound doctrine*). The point is that the congregation (*they will*) is responsible and will be held accountable - whether selecting them, approving them, or simply tolerating false teaching/teachers.

3. ...of discipline

I Cor. 5: 1-5; 7; 11-13 (prescription)

*1-5 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife! And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my*

*spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

*7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover was sacrificed for us.*

*11-13 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person. For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”*

This is not a matter merely for the Paul, or whatever elders may have been in place at Corinth but a matter for the congregation as a whole. The congregation is responsible to address sin in their midst and seek repentance or removal.

#### 4. ...of church membership

II Cor. 2:6-8 (description)

*This punishment, which was inflicted by the majority, is sufficient for such a man, so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.*

The congregation had excluded this one from their fellowship (possibly the one previously mentioned in I Cor. 5). The process of discipline and punishment was enough (*sufficient for him*). Paul is now writing to the church as a whole urging the man's re-admission into the church. Paul could urge and challenge but the congregation had the final say in the matter of church membership.

#### C. Strengths of Congregationalism

Although there is no certain polity that prevents a church from error, decline, and sterility (imperfect leaders and imperfect people); historically, congregationalism:

- promotes unity - vision, doctrine, purpose
- protects purity - accountability, personal holiness, doctrine/gospel
- produces ownership - commitment and investment (time, service, financial)
- propagates evangelism - consistency of message through life and conversation

D. Application to Faith Bible Church

- admission of membership
- submitting names for elder/deacon consideration to elder board
- affirmation of lay elders
- affirmation of deacons
- voting for prospective pastor(s)
- buying/selling of property
- consideration of financial items that exceed budgetary matters
- approval of budget

Conclusion

*How much further a congregation decides to involve itself corporately in decisions about the leadership, the staff, and the budget, is then a matter of prudence and discretion for decision within individual congregations. Neither nominating committees nor trustees are found on the pages of the New Testament. You look in vain for finance committees or small group leadership teams. Belief in the sufficiency of Scripture, however, doesn't forbid such structures; it just relativizes their authority. It clearly demonstrates that they are not of the essence of the church, and that they must submit themselves to the wisdom of the whole congregation. (A display of God's Glory, Mark Dever, p. 37)*

Part IV

Deacon Served

The article that follows was written by Benjamin Merkle and is reproduced with permission.

The Biblical Qualifications and Responsibilities of Deacons

Who should be a deacon? What does the Bible say deacons should do?

THE TWO BIBLICAL OFFICES: ELDERS AND DEACONS

Comparing the office of deacon to the office of elder will help us answer these questions. The primary spiritual leaders of a congregation are the elders, who are also called overseers or pastors in the New Testament.

Elders teach or preach the Word and shepherd the souls of those under their care (Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; Titus 1:9; Heb. 13:17).

Deacons, too, have a crucial role in the life and the health of the local church, but their role is different from the elders'. The biblical role of deacons is to take care of the physical and logistical needs of the church so that the elders can concentrate on their primary calling.

This distinction is based on the pattern found in Acts 6:1–6. The apostles were devoted “to prayer and to the ministry of the word” (v. 4). Since this was their primary calling, seven men were chosen to handle more practical matters in order to allow the apostles the freedom to continue with their work.

This division of labor is similar to what we see with the offices of elder and deacon. Like the apostles, the elders' primary role is one of preaching the Word of God. Like the seven, deacons serve the congregation in whatever practical needs may arise.

## THE QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

The only passage that mentions the qualifications for deacons is 1 Timothy 3:8–13. In this passage, Paul gives an official but not exhaustive list of the requirements for deacons.

The similarities of the qualifications for deacons and elders/overseers in 1 Timothy 3 are striking. Like the qualifications for elders, a deacon must not be an addict (v. 3), not greedy for dishonest gain (v. 3), blameless (v. 2; Titus 1:6), the husband of one wife (v. 2), and an able manager of his children and household well (vv. 4–5). Furthermore, the focus of the qualifications is the moral character of the person who is to fill the office: a deacon must be mature and above reproach. The main difference between an elder and a deacon is a difference of gifts and calling, not character.

Paul identifies nine qualifications for deacons in 1 Timothy 3:8-12:

1. Dignified (v. 8) This term normally refers to something that is honorable, respectable, esteemed, or worthy, and is closely related to “respectable,” which is given as a qualification for elders (1 Tim. 3:2).
2. Not double-tongued (v. 8) Those who are double-tongued say one thing to certain people but then say something else to others, or say one thing but mean another. They are two-faced and insincere. Their words cannot be trusted, so they lack credibility.

3. Not addicted to much wine (v. 8) A man is disqualified for the office of deacon if he is addicted to wine or other strong drink. Such a person lacks self-control and is undisciplined.
4. Not greedy for dishonest gain (v. 8) If a person is a lover of money, he is not qualified to be a deacon, especially since deacons often handle financial matters for the church.
5. Sound in faith and life (v. 9) Paul also indicates that a deacon must “hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.” The phrase “the mystery of the faith” is simply one way Paul speaks of the gospel (cf. 1 Tim. 3:16). Consequently, this statement refers to the need for deacons to hold firm to the true gospel without wavering. Yet this qualification does not merely involve one’s beliefs, for he must also hold these beliefs “with a clear conscience.” That is, the behavior of a deacon must be consistent with his beliefs.
6. Blameless (v. 10) Paul writes that deacons must “be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless” (v. 10). “Blameless” is a general term referring to a person’s overall character. Although Paul does not specify what type of testing is to take place, at a minimum, the candidate’s personal background, reputation, and theological positions should be examined. Moreover, the congregation should not only examine a potential deacon’s moral, spiritual, and doctrinal maturity, but should also consider the person’s track record of service in the church.
7. Godly wife (v. 11) It is debated whether verse 11 refers to a deacon’s wife or to a deaconess. For the sake of this discussion, we will assume the verse is speaking about the qualifications of a deacon’s wife. According to Paul, deacons’ wives must “be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things” (v. 11). Like her husband, the wife must be dignified or respectable. Secondly, she must not be a slanderer or a person who goes around spreading gossip. A deacon’s wife must also be sober-minded or temperate. That is, she must be able to make good judgments and must not be involved in things that might hinder such judgment. Finally, she must be “faithful in all things” (cf. 1 Tim. 5:10). This is a general requirement which functions similarly to the requirement for elders to be “above reproach” (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6) and for deacons to be “blameless” (1 Tim. 3:10).
8. Husband of one wife (v. 12) The best interpretation of this difficult phrase is to understand it as referring to the faithfulness of a husband toward his wife. He must be a “one-woman man.” That is, there must be no other woman in his life to whom he relates in an intimate way either emotionally or physically.
9. Manage children and household well (v. 12) A deacon must be the spiritual leader of his wife and children.

In general, if a *moral* qualification is listed for elders but not for deacons, that qualification still applies to deacons. The same goes for those qualifications listed for deacons but not for elders. For example, a deacon should not be double-tongued (v. 8, ESV). Paul does not explicitly say this about elders, but no doubt it applies to elders since Paul has said that elders must be “above reproach,” which would include this prohibition.

Still, we should observe the differences in the qualifications, since they either signify a trait that is particularly fitting for the office-holder in order to accomplish his duties, or is something that was a problem in the location to which Paul writes (in this case, Ephesus). This should be more clear as we turn to considering a deacon’s responsibilities.

### THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEACONS

Whereas the office of elder is often ignored in the modern church, the office of deacon is often misunderstood. Based on the New Testament, the role of the deacon is mainly to be a servant. The church needs deacons to provide logistical and material support so that the elders can focus on the Word of God and prayer.

The New Testament does not provide much information concerning the role of deacons. The requirements given in 1 Timothy 3:8-12 focus on the deacon’s character and family life. There are, however, some clues as to the function of deacons when their requirements are compared with those of the elders. Although many of the qualifications are the same or very similar, there are some notable differences.

Perhaps the most noticeable distinction between elders and deacons is that deacons do not need to be “able to teach” (1 Tim. 3:2). Deacons are called to “hold” to the faith with a clear conscience, but they are not called to “teach” that faith (1 Tim. 3:9). This suggests that the deacons do not have an official teaching role in the church.

Like elders, deacons must manage their house and children well (1 Tim. 3:4, 12). But when referring to deacons, Paul omits the section where he compares managing one’s household to taking care of God’s church (1 Tim. 3:5). The reason for this omission is most likely due to the fact that deacons are not given a ruling or leading position in the church—that function belongs to the elders.

Although Paul indicates that a person must be tested before he can hold the office of deacon (1 Tim. 3:10), the requirement that he cannot be a new convert is not included. Paul notes that if an elder is a recent convert “he may become puffed up with conceit” (1 Tim. 3:6). One implication concerning this distinction could be that those who hold the office of elder are more susceptible to pride because they possess leadership over the church. On the contrary, it is not as likely for a deacon, who is in more of a servant role, to fall into this same sin. Finally, the title “overseer” (1 Tim. 3:2) implies general oversight over the spiritual well-being of the congregation, whereas the title “deacon” implies one who has a service-oriented ministry.



Beyond what we can glean from these differences in qualifications, the Bible does not clearly indicate the function of deacons. Yet based on the pattern established in Acts 6 with the apostles and the Seven, it seems best to view deacons as servants who do whatever is necessary to allow the elders to accomplish their God-given calling of shepherding and teaching the church. Just as the apostles delegated administrative responsibilities to the Seven, so the elders are to delegate certain responsibilities to the deacons so that the elders can focus their efforts elsewhere. As a result, each local church is free to define the tasks of deacons based on their particular needs.

What are some duties that deacons might be responsible for today? They could be responsible for anything that's not related to teaching and shepherding the church. Such duties might include:

- *Facilities*: The deacons could be responsible for managing the church property. This would include making sure the place of worship is prepared for the worship service, cleaning up, or running the sound system.
- *Benevolence*: Similar to what took place in Acts 6:1–6 with the daily distribution to the widows, the deacons may be involved in administering funds or other assistance to the needy.
- *Finances*: While the elders should probably oversee the financial business of the church (Acts 11:30), it may be best left to the deacons to handle the day-to-day matters. This would include collecting and counting the offering, keeping records, and so on.
- *Ushers*: The deacons could be responsible for distributing bulletins, seating the congregation, or preparing the elements for communion.
- *Logistics*: Deacons should be available to help in variety of ways so that the elders are able to concentrate on teaching and shepherding the church.

## CONCLUSION

Whereas the Bible charges elders with the tasks of teaching and leading the church, deacons' role is more service-oriented. That is, they are to care for the physical or temporal concerns of the church. By handling such matters, deacons free up the elders to focus on shepherding the spiritual needs of the congregation.

Yet even though deacons are not the congregation's spiritual leaders, their character is of utmost importance, which is why deacons should be examined and held to the biblical qualifications laid down in 1 Timothy 3.

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## ELDER JOB DESCRIPTION

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### Qualifications (Titus 1; 1 Tim 3):

1. Wants to be an elder
2. Exemplifies godly character
3. Can teach the Bible
4. Leads family well
5. Established believer
6. Engaged in shepherding work

### Job Description:

1. Engages in relationships with congregation to encourage spiritual growth
2. Participates in the teaching ministry of the church (large or small)
3. Protects sound doctrine/teaching
4. Perpetuates doctrine/teaching by raising up leaders
5. Watches for sheep (especially the limping, fighting, and biting)
6. Leads flock through wisdom and service
7. Shepherds as part of the team
8. Prays for the flock
9. Manages the household of God



### Majority model of decision making for elders

We love unity and even unanimity, but do not require this in order to lead together. We make decisions by majority rule, meaning that any item that is approved or rejected by a simple majority of the elders present and those voting absentee prior to the meeting shall be binding in all matters. The only exception to majority rule is for votes on whether a man is biblically qualified to be an elder, which shall require a unanimous vote of the elders. Within this framework, we nevertheless work for as much agreement as reasonably possible. We take time to understand one another and engage in healthy discussion around each matter. We also typically allow for time to pass between when a matter is introduced and when it is voted on. Practically speaking, most of our votes are unanimous.

There are several reasons for our approach. *First*, we believe it is a biblically sound way to lead as a plurality. To require unanimity would be to demand more of ourselves than we understand Scripture to require. Each of us is limited in our understanding of Scripture, our maturity, and our perspective. These kinds of differences are to be expected among Christians (Ro. 14), especially on matters on which the Bible does not directly speak. Naturally, the church's leaders will likewise share a variety of differences. Whereas a consensus model allows an outlying "no" or "yes" vote to decide a matter, lending strength to the exceptional parties, the majority model acknowledges our shared fallibility and mutual dependence. This concept of majority decision making does have precedent in Scripture (2 Cor. 2:6). *Second*, there are several ways that a majority rule model actually encourages greater team and church unity. Men are freer to dissent if they disagree because they are not afraid of holding the whole group up by their opinion. We are also trained to prefer and trust one another, as we have to lead with the decisions preferred by other brothers. In this way we are doing the very thing we want our people to do on matters of prudence and wisdom. We also remain focused around our shared mission to make disciples, since unanimity can stop or significantly slow our work.

### Committees

We have two types of committees: Ad hoc and permanent. An ad hoc committee is typically made up of volunteers, formed by a vote of the elders and assigned a specific charter and timeline. A permanent committee (such as Finance or Personnel) operates in perpetuity. Committee members of permanent committees are assigned by the Elder Team with special attention to the size of the committee, continuity of service (meaning we seek for the each committee to have 1 or 2 men remain from previous year(s)), and the gifts/desires of each man. Committees may be charged to select from a range of options and bring a singular option to the elders (usually permanent committees) or to simply investigate/study a topic and bring back options to the elders (usually an ad hoc committee). We trust our committees and take all committee recommendations very seriously.

### Elder-only sessions

An elder-only session is designed for highly sensitive discussions. The most common matters of business are discussions regarding future elders and sensitive discipleship or discipline situations. If necessary, we will use an elder-only session to discuss the removal of an elder, or to hold a Chairman review session. These sessions exclude all observers. The minutes are kept by an elder and distributed with a special password for elder eyes only.

### Voting

The following practice is followed with all votes during our meetings. First, a formal motion is made by an elder and entered into the minutes. Second, the motion is seconded by a separate elder. Third, the Chairman will ask for discussion on the motion. Fourth, when the Chairman observes that appropriate discussion has taken place, he will call for a vote. Fifth, the Chairman will ask for a show of hands for each option, beginning with votes in the affirmative. This is followed by votes in the negative, and finally by abstentions. He will verbally announce the total for each option, including any absentee votes, after each option is recorded so the Secretary can accurately record the results. A vote is not valid unless 50% or more of the elders are present or have voted absentee. We may seek input from others in the room, but only

votes from current elders will be binding in our voting practice. The Chairman does not formally follow Robert's Rules of Order.

### Straw poll

From time to time, the Chairman may take a non-binding straw poll to assess the direction of a discussion. This may be done over email or during a meeting. The results will be shared with the elders.

### Absentee voting

Elders should make every effort to attend all meetings and place all votes in person. Absentee votes will be allowed only when the matter has already had opportunity for discussion in a prior meeting or when an urgent email vote is required. In the case of an  
Elders at Faith Bible Church absentee vote, the Chairman will announce the absentee submission as the vote is taken or, in the case of an email vote will email the results of the vote.

### Moving forward together

As a plurality of elders and for the good of the unified leadership of our church, we move forward together in all matters. This means that each elder publicly and privately supports the will of the majority, regardless of his individual vote. It is not a problem for the congregation to know that we often disagree among one another, but we do not intend to share how a vote fell, or who landed on a given side. Elders deferring to one another models how we want our members to defer to one another.





## ELDER CHAIR JOB DESCRIPTION

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All elders at Faith Bible Church (whether paid by the church or some other means of employment) accept the responsibility for:

- Engaging in relationships with congregation so as to grow members in maturity
- Participating in teaching (large or small) on a regular basis
- Protecting sound doctrine (through focused and disciplined study of the Word)
- Perpetuating the teaching (by training other leaders as God grants the opportunity)
- Looking out for the sheep (limping, fighting, biting)
- Leading flock through wisdom and service (confidently and gently)
- Shepherding as a part of the team (preserving unity amongst elder team)
- Modeling maturity (exemplary leadership in holiness and love)
- Praying for the flock (at least praying through membership directory on a weekly basis)
- Overseeing the Household of God (by means of attendance at elders' meetings and members' meetings)

The Elder Chair exist to wisely facilitate the unified leadership of the elder team.

- Facilitation (responsible for wisely facilitating the unified leadership of the elder team)
- Protection (against the blindness of any one elders personal perspectives or agenda)
- Moderation (draw out each team member's concerns or perspectives)

Chairman Components:

- Creates agendas that reflect our current values and promote the execution of our ministry strategy.
- Ensures meetings proceed in accordance with the church's values and needs
- Facilitates elder meetings in an efficient manner
- Engages each elder intentionally and deliberately
- Manages any troublesome or overbearing behavior among the elders
- Ensures elders are operating with institutional integrity with regard to the bylaws
- Equips elders outside of meetings as needed to promote unity (if being aggressive) and participation in meetings (if being passive)
- Maintains a close relationship with the Sr. Pastor to build unity and provide accountability toward aligning all church ministries with the will of the elders

\*Prudentially, it would be wise for him to be a lay elder but not essential



## SAMPLE ISSUES MEETING

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Faith Bible Church  
Elder Meeting Agenda - Issues Meeting  
9-11-19

Devotional and Prayer – (ab) 5 min

...reflecting on a scripture that is impacting them, followed by an opening prayer. This is intended to encourage the elders to hear the hearts of the other members via scripture and prayer.

Agenda Additions and Approval – (mb)

Approval of Prior [Meeting Minutes](#) – (ab) 5 min

[Financial Statement Presentation](#) – (mb) 10 min

Pressing Shepherding Matters:

- [John & Liz Doe](#) (jh) 20 min
- [Emilia Scott](#) (rc) 20 min

Theology / Direction - [Baptism, Communion and Membership](#) (jh) 30 min

...As a board and as a church we desire to continue to build our unity in theology. As such we intend to build a library of written positions on various matters of doctrine. These agenda items may be driven by trends in society that require a position by this board, by issues that arise among us that need clarification and agreement, or simply by understood weaknesses or inaccuracies felt among us. These items will generally be motion driven, will be based upon work done significantly outside regular meetings in a reporting and question format, and should drive toward unity.

Rhythm and Culture - (None)

...All elders should maintain an air of trust. To encourage this attitude amongst our board, it is important that each man keep the board apprised of changes that occur in operating methods. These are not intended to be votes, but informative disclosures so that all elders are aware of changes that occur in the rhythm and intentions to “lean” or influence our culture. For this line item to be successful, it is important that we error on over communication and on allowing ministry heads to operate and not be micromanaged.

Ministry Review - Youth Ministry Philosophy (pb) 20 min

...It is important that all Elders be knowledgeable and “in the loop” regarding the purpose, staffing, and methods for individual ministry. It is also important that those charged with oversight of those ministries be afforded the room to function without fear and with efficiency. It is important that all charged with ministry responsibility work under the understanding that they are working under the united vision of the elders. Therefore, each issues meeting we will

## SAMPLE ISSUES MEETING

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highlight an area of ministry to continually build a library of ministry documents on which all elders agree. This year we intend to review the ministries below. This item is placed here in our agenda so that ministry participants can attend this portion of the meeting to provide information and “feel” the leadership support and enthusiasm for the work.

[Family Ministry: High School and Middle School](#) (pb)

[Family Ministry: Children](#) (pb)

### Management:

- Review of [Org Chart](#) and Job Descriptions planning for pastoral change (jh & pb) 30 min
- Review of [Member Meeting Agenda](#) (pb) 5 min

...Whereas “Rhythm and Culture” matters dictate communication and disclosure to the board, “Management” matters tend to require reporting, motions, discussion and agreement. Typically, ministry heads would bring agenda items to the agenda for the purpose of a required reporting, such as committee report, or to seek agreement on a specific item, such as a women’s ministry plan.

### Administration: (mb) 10 min

- Review of Elder Agenda Items Process
- [Calendar Review](#)
- Prioritization and Deadline of Open Tasks
- Future meeting date

### Adjournment

## SAMPLE PEOPLE MEETING

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Faith Bible Church  
Shepherding Meeting – 9-24-19

Devotional and Prayer – Bill

Agenda Additions and Approval – Mitch

[Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes](#) – Randy

[Shepherding Prayer Through the Directory](#): (Note - Requested Prayer Requests from each) mitch

Care List Updates:

[People Worth Watching](#) - justin

[Public](#) - mitch or per elder assignment

[Private](#) -per elder assignment

People Oriented Theology and Management

[Mark Self Followup Discussion](#) - justin

Theology and Management:

Update on Youth Ministry [Plan](#) - philip

Motion for Approval of Youth [Leaders](#) - philip

Motion for Approval of [Seminar Schedule](#) - philip

Motion for Approval of Updated Pastoral Job Description - justin

[Member Care / Admin](#)

[Equipping / Family](#)

[Senior Pastor](#)

Administration:

[Calendar Review](#) - mitch

Prioritization and Deadline of Open Tasks

Future meeting date

Adjournment



## T.R.A.I.N.

Elders are gifts from Jesus to his church (Eph. 4:7-16; 1 Cor. 12). Part of the responsibility of the congregation is to recognize these gifts and appoint them to the office so they can serve the body (Titus 1:6). In this sense, elders cannot be made, they must be given. We ought always be watching to see whom the Lord is raising up and is already doing the work of an elder without the title.

While we believe this to be true, we also believe elders must be trained. Gifts from God are to be fanned into flame and not neglected (1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6). This takes time, prayer, and gracious favor from the Lord. As elders, we acknowledge that it is our responsibility from God to help gifted brothers to grow in needed ways so they are able to help shepherd the church of God (Acts 20:28).

What follows is a recommended plan for raising up future elders. We use the acronym T.R.A.I.N. since it is a common NT word used to describe the process of investing in another person so that when "he is fully trained will be like his teacher" (Luke 6:40). [fn, 1 Tim. 4:6-8, 2 Tim 3:16, Titus 2:4, 11-12; Heb. 12:11]

Time

Read

Attend

Involve

Nominate

These are not necessarily consecutive, some happen at the same time.

### Time with Current Elder

- Intentional Discipling Relationship with Other Elders (examine life, marriage, money, relationships)

### Read Important Works

- Biblical Texts (Acts, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, Pastoral Epistles, 2 Peter)
- Doctrinal Works (the Fundamentals of the Faith, Systematic Theology Seminar, and Life at Faith Curriculum provides an excellent opportunity for training and discussion)
- Faith Bible Church Doctrinal Statement
- Recommended Books (Word-Centered Church, Compelling Community, Elders, Trellis and the Vine, Christian Ministry, Is God Anti-Gay, 50 Crucial Questions About Manhood and Womanhood)
- Past Memos (All Position Statements, What/Why/How Forms, etc.)

### Attend Elder Meetings

- as an observer (VIEW)
- as a participant at table (VOICE)
- interview by elders including a "lightning round" with 2-3 sentence answers on topics like: women career outside of the home, spiritual gifts, pre-trib rapture, KJV, democrat / republican, kneeling during the national anthem, alcohol, birth control, homeschool, double predestination, single elders, w/o children elders, how often Lord's Supper (open, closed, how often), dancing, smoking, 5 point Calvinist, flags in the main hall, can Catholics go to heaven, or anything from the [potential leader questionnaire](#)

### Involve In the Work of Ministry

- teaching (Prayer and Praise, Wednesday evening devotionals, Small Group summer studies)
- counseling (allow guys to sit in on membership interviews, counseling sessions, etc)
- discipling (sit in as they meet with guys they are discipling)

### Nominate to the Congregation

- final step gives the congregation the opportunity to affirm this man as an elder
- allows congregation opportunity to voice concerns about the brother
- host a "get to know you" lunch or coffee where elder can share testimony, take questions



- CONSIDERATION
  - Congregational input
    - send "[Weekly Update Announcement for Congregational Input](#)"
  - Watch list
  
- OBSERVATION
  - Discerning Aspiration
    - Hand out "Elders" and ask the question: What would prevent you from eldership in the next five years?
    - Use Communication Tool #1 = "[Chair Invite to Observe](#)"
  - Inviting men to observe
  - Clarifying observer role
  - Observer debriefing
  
- CANDIDACY
  - Observer advances to formal and internal elder candidacy
  - Evaluating men for public recommendation
    - Send "[Invite To Candidacy](#)"
    - Send "[Prospective Elder Questionnaire](#)"
    - Send "[Reference Questionnaire](#)" to wife (if applicable) and one other member
    - Send "Specific Job Description", (see elder job description file)
  - Public candidacy
    - send "[Introducing Candidates for Eldership](#)" to members
  
  - See "[Candidacy Process Overview](#)" for more details
  
- APPOINTMENT
  - Congregational affirmation
    - Send "[Preparing for Appointment to Eldership](#)" to members
  - Notification of result
    - Inform candidates of result
  - Public appointment in the Sunday service
    - Send "[Announcing Date for Public Appointment](#)" to members

- New elder orientation
  - Discuss specific job description
  - share pressing issues
  - equip with tools
    - todoist subscription and integration
    - twist subscription
    - google drive access
    - faithnaples.org email
    - GiANT training

The purpose of this document is to serve our church—including members, prospective elders, and future leadership—with a clear description of how a member becomes an elder. This document is formal in that we mean for it to guide our ministry, but it is informal in that it does not function with the authority of a constitution. It is intended to be a written version of the qualifications, responsibilities, and relationships that we assume in the course of ministry, and in this way helps provide clarity for prospective elders as well as continuity across time.

## I. WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR AN ELDER?

- 1 Timothy 3:1-7: *“The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.”*
- Titus 1:5-9: *“This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you—if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God’s steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.”*
- 1 Peter 5:1-4: *“So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.”*

The office of overseer is a “noble task,” and men who aspire to serve the church in this role, desire a good thing (1Tim. 3:1). Yet because of the nature of shepherding the flock of God, the man must also meet certain qualifications in order to be entrusted with the

care of the flock. These are a protection to himself and to the flock, and an expression of Christ's shepherding care. The congregation, led by their elders, should heed Paul's words to Timothy, "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands" (1Tim. 5:22).

## SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications for elder are mostly straightforward. But there are several points that need some explanation and agreement. To see that we're all reading these the same way, what follows is a simple exposition of the qualifications anchored in 1 Timothy 3. These qualifications assume that the office of elder is a role held by men, an expression of authority and leadership rooted in Adam's unique role from creation (1Tim. 2:12–14).

*A summary qualification.* At the head of his lists, Paul includes a summary qualification to interpret the whole: "an overseer must be above reproach" (1Tim. 3:2). This is not to say that the man must be free from sin, but he must be free of public accusation. This qualification helps us to understand the nature of the qualifications which follow.

*Things to look for.* The first qualification to look for is sexual and marital devotion. Literally, he is to be a *one-woman man*. This does not exclude widowers or divorcees, granted that a divorce is not a cause for reproach (one-woman man would be an unnatural way to exclude divorced men). With a divorcee, this is a matter of credibility and a variety of factors will come to bear on that: the circumstances of the divorce, how public it was, how long ago it was, how it is understood in the community, etc. As with the rest of the qualifications, we are not given a litmus test but a judgment call. While marriage is normative, neither does this exclude single men, Paul himself being single. Second, we must look for self-mastery, expressed in three additional qualifications. The sober-minded man is stable, attentive, and alert. The self-controlled man is disciplined, not driven by fleshly desires but able to control himself by the Spirit. The respectable man has mastery over his mind and life, accruing respect from those who watch him. Finally, we must look to the man's ministry. The hospitable man is a welcoming presence, using his time and his home as a means of ministry. He must also be able to teach, the chief qualification that distinguishes an elder from a deacon. This man should be competent in handling the Word, making the Scriptures clear for hearers and not confusing. He

teaches and defends sound doctrine with studied clarity and settled confidence.

*Things to look out for.* While there are plenty of good things to look for in a potential elder, there are also things to look out for. First we must consider if he is a drunkard. This question does not concern whether he drinks alcohol, but whether he drinks too much alcohol. He must control and not be controlled by his appetites. Second, this man must not be combative, or quarrelsome. He must consider the force of his words, the volume of his words, the tone of his words, and the consistency of his words. Finally, he must not be greedy or a lover of money. This does not mean that he cannot be wealthy. Rather, he must not love money to the extent that he gives all of his time and attention to getting money. He must not gain his money through shady or underhanded dealings. This man must love God rather than money.

*Things to look into.* Due diligence requires that we look into several things when considering a man for eldership. The first is his home. The church is like a family whose leadership involves nurture, order, and care. If a man can't take care of his home, then we should not expect he can faithfully care for the church. For a point of evidence, can he manage his home? Are his children submissive? This does not mean that his children are perfect or necessarily converted, but that the man fosters a godly atmosphere of parental discipline. A second thing to look into is his experience. Simply, is he an experienced Christian? He must not be a new Christian. New believers do not mature evenly. They may excel in sexual purity but not in humility, or in humility but not in sexual purity. This is something Satan will exploit in someone who is made an elder too quickly. A third and final thing to look into is his reputation. An elder with a problematic reputation with outsiders will fall into disgrace.

## II. ARE THERE EXPECTATIONS SPECIFIC TO FAITH?

In practical application of the Scriptural requirements of eldership, Faith elders should meet the following expectations: 1) adherence to the confession of faith and substantive agreement with official elder doctrinal positions, 2) membership in good standing at Faith, 3) availability for the regular and seasonal rhythms of elder responsibilities, and, 4) the assessment and approval of the elders.

*Hearty agreement with doctrinal positions.* One way we protect the church's unity and mission is through shared agreement on specific doctrines, their formulation, and

prioritization (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 4:16). Around these things we enjoy peace and a foundation for engaging our shared mission. Each elder must be able to heartily affirm several documents. The Confession of Faith forms the doctrinal boundaries for membership at Faith, including any clarifying positions, such as statements on gender and sexuality. Shared agreement on internal doctrinal summaries (i.e., official elder doctrinal positions) provide an additional layer of unity. Because Jesus instructed his disciples to be careful about the promises they make, if an elder develops a reservation about a point of doctrine represented in either of these categories, he should notify the Chairman of the Elders (Matt. 5:33–27).

*Membership in good standing.* Being “examples to the flock” includes modeling healthy church membership (1Pet. 5:3). Elders don’t graduate out of normal church membership, but are looked to as pacesetters among the flock, models of faithfulness to our Membership Covenant. This includes faithful participation in our larger church gatherings such as Sunday worship services, member’s meetings, etc. This also means demonstrating how to live out the New Testament “one another” commands, through prayer, bearing burdens, and genuine Christian love.

*Availability for regular elder duties.* Overseeing and caring for believers is a time-intensive privilege. Depending on individual and family circumstances, some elders may have more time and flexibility than others. Every elder, however, should participate in essential ministry activities: prayer and ministry of the Word, whether in public or private; participation in regular elder board meetings (2nd and 4th Weds. each month, from 8–11:59 PM); participation in elder team meetings; upholding “standards of faithful pastoral care” and involvement at special elders’ meetings (e.g. emergency or time-sensitive discussion) including the Annual Elder Planning Meeting (usually takes place in April).

*Assessment and approval of the elders.* For practical purposes, a man may be qualified biblically but still not be a good fit for our team. For example, a man may feel strongly about one or several matters of tertiary importance that make it difficult for him to lead

with his brothers. This side of the new creation, good Christian men will disagree. For the sake of the team's unity and the church's mission, overall fit is important. Discerning compatibility in this sense requires honesty on the part of both parties, the right questions, and a good measure of grace and patience.

### III. WHAT IS THE PATHWAY INTO ELDERSHIP?

The Lord gives elders to his church (Eph. 4:11), but the gifts of these leaders are identified through a process marked by three things: prayer, shared agreement, and patience.

In Scripture, prayer envelopes the process of identification and appointment to office, recognizing the church's need for the Lord in this sacred affair: "And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed" (Acts 14:23; cf. 6:6). The process of appointment is also shared. From a variety of passages we discern a pattern of congregational agreement in the Lord under elder leadership (Acts 6:3; 14:23; 6:1–6; 14:23; 1 Tim. 5:17–22; Tit. 1:5; Heb. 13:17). This biblical pattern is practically wise, as the process of examination for eldership requires up-close attention in which an entire congregation cannot practically engage. Finally, the eldership affirmation process is deliberately patient. Paul exhorted Timothy, "do not be hasty in the laying on of hands," and offered two reasons. First, hasty appointments multiply the effects of sin, and with it the responsibility for that sin, leading us to "take part in his sins" (1Tim. 5:22). Second, sin is sneaky and both character and doctrine take time to discern: "the sins of some people are conspicuous ... but the sins of others appear later" (1Tim. 5:24).

The Lord has not given us an exact process for appointing elders, but he has told us who they are to be and what they are to do. With that in mind, through the following process we seek to facilitate the church's agreement in the Lord around biblically qualified appointments.

#### Pathway Overview

##### 1. CONSIDERATION

- Congregational input
- Watch list

2. OBSERVATION

- Discerning Aspiration
- Inviting men to observe
- Clarifying observer role
- Observer debriefing

3. CANDIDACY

- Observer advances to formal and internal elder candidacy
- Evaluating men for public recommendation
- Public candidacy

4. APPOINTMENT

- Congregational affirmation
- Notification of result
- Public appointment in the Sunday service
- New elder orientation

Note: See "[Pathway to Eldership Overview: admin process](#)" for more details

Pathway Specifics

1. CONSIDERATION

The elder board ensures the flock's doctrinal integrity and care into the future by carefully identifying men for future elder service.

*Congregational education and input.* Elders look for regular opportunities to instruct the congregation in biblical and practical responsibilities concerning the appointment of elders. This is a crucial and ongoing work. Throughout the year, members are invited



to review the biblical qualifications, and to prayerfully consider suggesting names for consideration for eldership.

*The Watch List.* Current elders look out for men who meet the qualifications and demonstrate shepherding care for the flock. Seminar teaching posts and small group leadership are natural paths with congregational input also playing an important role. The chairman places a discussion of potential elders on the eldership's agenda once per month. He will also maintain a list of men that have been mentioned during these sessions. This list may be short or long, and represents only the possibility of more serious consideration. The bar for addition to this list is deliberately low and additions can be made through a motion, second and majority agreement. At this stage, elders do not speak with those on the list.

## 2. OBSERVATION

The observation phase gives potential candidates and current elders a low-pressure opportunity to discern the appropriateness of exploring eldership more seriously.

*Discerning aspiration.* Using the watch list, the elders will invite potential candidates to observe elder meetings. This is a discernment phase, so it's okay for there to be some unknowns about a man's character or doctrine at this point. Additionally, we will often give away a copy of "Elders" by Jeraramie Rinne and ask the man after reading the book, "What would keep you from being an elder here in the next five years?" This is not a promise of eldership but a concrete way to assess how he may need to be disciplined, developed, or delayed for any further consideration.

*Inviting men to observe.* If a potential candidate confirms interest, the Chair will extend an invitation to observe. Observation may last for as little as two months to as long as two years. Either party can discontinue the observation process at any time.

*Clarifying the observer's role.* In this observation, phase potential candidates are both observing and being observed. This observation is expressed in a variety of ways. In

meetings, while giving general deference to elders in discussion, observers should participate as invited. The Chair may ask for an observer's input directly. He may also open a discussion by inviting more overt participation. From time to time, the Chair or elder assigned will connect with the potential candidate for feedback and coaching. Eldering involves more than meetings, and for this reason observers will be assigned an elder to shadow on occasion. Outside the meetings, observers should thoughtfully watch the elders lead while current elders get acquainted with the potential candidate in character, in doctrine, and in overall fit. Every elder can't get to know every observer to the same extent, so a degree of trust is involved in men who evaluate an observer more up close. Nevertheless, each elder should engage the observers to the extent he feels necessary to make an informed decision either to advance, delay, or discontinue observation.

*Observer debriefings.* The Chair or another assigned elder will host a periodic debriefing conversation after elders meetings with one or a group of observers, to field any questions on meetings or the material in this document and to get a sense of fit. etc.

### 3. CANDIDACY

The elder candidacy phase allows the congregation to formally consider a man for eldership. It involves a patient public period for congregational input. The elder candidacy phase strengthens the church's confidence and shared unity around the men eventually appointed to eldership.

*Observers to advance to formal and internal elder candidacy.* The elders will agree by unanimous vote on which men to pursue with an invitation, and then to present as candidates.

*Evaluating men for candidacy.* Once the elders have agreed on men to invite to candidacy, they will move forward with evaluation. An elder will be assigned to approach a potential candidate with a "[Prospective Elder Questionnaire](#)," which asks them to answer a variety of questions on character and doctrine, a process that involves

their wife. Upon completion, the team will schedule an interview conversation with at least two elders and the man.

*Public candidacy for eldership.* If the candidate agrees and if the elders vote unanimously to advance, then the man will be nominated for eldership and presented to the congregation as an elder candidate. The candidacy period is not a defined timeframe, but should be no shorter than two months. The goal is to give the congregation time to evaluate candidates and approach the elders with affirmations or concerns. Most members will not engage each candidate up-close, but we want to provide enough time for anyone interested to do so.

See "[Candidacy Process Overview](#)" for more details.

#### 4. APPOINTMENT

*Congregational affirmation.* Near the end of candidacy, a final ballot of names is presented to the congregation. The members have a final opportunity to ask any questions or bring to light any objections concerning an Elder candidate. At a Member's Meeting, members vote to affirm the nominees listed on the ballot given to them. If we have led our sheep properly, and if they are taking our lead, then there should be no unexamined objections to a candidate on the basis of qualification by the time of vote.

*Notifying new elders and the congregation.* The Chair or Executive Pastor will notify candidates of the result of the vote and work with the Senior Pastor to schedule Public Appointment during an upcoming worship service. An announcement will be published in the Faith weekly email with notice and a date for Public Appointment.

*Public appointment.* In a worship service soon after the members' vote, new Elders are publicly recognized and installed before the church family. In the pattern of Scripture, current Elders gather around them, lay hands on them, and pray for them in front of the congregation (Acts 6:6; 14:23; 1Tim. 4:14; 5:22). This solemn and public appointment

emphasizes the weighty role into which new Elders step, and reinforces the members' responsibility to submit to and pray for the leaders God has given.

*Elder orientation.* Elder candidates participate in an orientation led by the Elder Chairman (or someone he designates). This informal process brings candidates up to speed on issues which the Elders have already been discussing, and it allows the chairman (or someone he designates) to communicate expectations for them as Elders based on their already agreed upon specific job description.

#### IV. WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELDERS?

Shepherding is a tremendous responsibility. Peter exhorts elders, “shepherd the flock of God that is among you... and when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory” (1Pet. 5:2, 4). What does this shepherding work entail, and how do we go about that practically? We think about shepherding in six categories of responsibility.

##### 1. KNOWING THE SHEEP

*Scriptural explanation.* Jesus knows his sheep by name, and so we want to know our sheep by name (Jn. 10:3). This means, in the first place, knowing who is and who isn't one of our sheep. For this purpose, Jesus instructed his disciples in matters of church membership, including baptism, church discipline, and the Lord's Table (Matt. 16:19–20; 18:15–20; 26:17–30; 28:18–20). He also equipped them to discern who belonged to him (Matt. 7:21–23; 8:18–22; 13:20–23; 15:15–20; 19:13–30). More than knowing our sheep by name, we desire to know our sheep, their stories and their struggles. Jesus lived among his disciples and called people into a relationship, and so our relationship with the sheep is not an aloof or a professional affair.

*Baptism and the Lord's Supper.* Elders know the flock, in part, through the signs Jesus gave to his church for knowing the church: the signs of the new covenant, baptism and the Lord's Supper. In baptism a believer and the church together signify a person's identification with Christ and his church (Ro. 6:1–5; 1Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:1–6). In the Lord's Supper, the believer and the church signify their ongoing identification with Christ and his church (Matt. 26:26–29; 1Cor. 10:16–17; 11:17–34). As those entrusted with the church's spiritual leadership, elders naturally lead in these signs by participation and administration.

*Personal Initiative.* Jesus Christ “Calls his own sheep by name” (John 10:3), highlighting his personal knowledge of those under his care. This should be characteristic of those who would serve as his under-shepherds, as well. Of course, human shepherds are limited in

ways that Jesus was not. Nevertheless, as elders give an account for the flock they should be personally acquainted with the sheep that make up that flock. Each elder should give himself to knowing the sheep. As such, elders should be present and relationally engaged at the church's corporate gatherings and church-wide functions, such as Member Meetings or special events.

## 2. CARING FOR THE SHEEP

*Scriptural explanation.* The Lord "[tends] his flock like a shepherd," and "[gathers] the lambs in his arms" (Isa. 40:11). The Lord tenderly cares for his sheep, and so do his undershepherds (1Pet. 5:1–3). Elders shepherd "willingly," not "under compulsion," not for "shameful gain", or with a "domineering" spirit (1Pet. 5:1–3). They lead the flock as a whole, and yet tend to the needs of specific sheep, each with their own ailments, histories, and needs. In this spirit, the church's first leaders prioritized the care of widows (Acts 6:1–6; 1Tim. 5:3–16).

*Homes and hospitals.* One of the qualifications of an elder is that he be hospitable (1Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:8). As a matter of ongoing ministry, elders spend time in homes, a context ideally suited for meaningful conversation and modeling in marriage, parenting, and life. This happens through personal ministry, and through our small group structure. Hospitals are another important context for personal care. Medical crises are naturally important opportunities for spiritual care and reflection. For this reason, each elder is made aware of member hospitalization or severe medical cases.

*Partnering for practical needs.* Elders partner with deacons in two ways for the benevolent material support of needy saints. Our first line of care is through the Deacon of Benevolence and small groups with the support of the Pastor of Member Care. The Pastor of Member Care will keep the elder board informed and engaged through the elder care list.

## 3. FEEDING THE SHEEP

*Scriptural explanation.* In keeping with Jesus' great commission, disciple making entails "teaching them to observe all that [Jesus] commanded" (Matt. 28:20). From Jesus' command

flows the teaching ministry of the church. To ensure growth in maturity, Christ gives shepherds and teachers to the church to “equip the saints for the work of the ministry” for “unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to mature manhood” (Eph. 4:11–13). Equipped in sound doctrine, members “speak the truth [to one another] in love” (Eph. 4:15; Eph. 4:14; 1Tim. 1:10; 6:3; Tit. 1:9; 2:1). This is why elders must be able to teach (1Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:9). In the pattern of Paul the Apostle, elders teach “in public and from house to house,” instructing the church in “the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:20, 27).

*Personal ministry of the Word.* This ministry of teaching will look different for each elder. For some, this will take the form of regular public preaching or teaching, either in the pulpit or a seminar. For others, this will be expressed in the counseling office or across the coffee table. Whatever the venue, elders are men with their Bibles open, ready to lead from the Word.

*Overseeing the church’s teaching ministry.* In addition to the personal ministry of the Word, elders are responsible for the church’s overall teaching ministry. The elders set apart the Senior Pastor for focused study and preaching, protecting his time and attention for this time-intensive and church-shaping work. In addition, the elders invest care to examine the doctrine and ability of every hired teaching role. They also give oversight to the selection of curriculum and direction for children, adults, and other groups within the church. The elders will also approve any outside speakers and adult seminar teachers. Once an outside speaker or seminar teacher is approved, they remain on a list until they are removed.

#### 4. GUARDING THE SHEEP

*Scriptural explanation.* Jesus spoke against false shepherds, and the Apostle Paul warned concerning “fierce wolves” (Jn. 10:1; Acts 20:28-31). As elders equip the saints through their teaching, they guard the flock from doctrinal departure (Eph. 4:14-16). Shepherds also directly confront false teachers, “charging certain persons not to teach any different doctrine” (1Tim. 1:3–6). In addition to doctrinal instruction and defense, elders guard the flock by leading the church to address sin in her midst in keeping with Jesus’ instructions for restorative church discipline (Matt. 18:15–20). This is a means of loving straying sheep, protecting the church’s purity, and ensuring the potency of her witness (Eph. 5:25–27).

*Competent to counsel.* Elders teach the church in order that the church's members will teach one another with the Word (Eph. 4:15). As needed, elders may provide more structured and up-close counsel for members. The church has set apart a paid elder for expertise in the area of biblical counseling who equips, coaches, and resources elders in their counseling efforts. In all of our "warning" and "teaching" we proclaim Christ in order that we may present everyone mature in him (Col. 1:28).

*Guarding Doctrine.* As guardians of the flock, elders should not only maintain doctrinal precision and a working understanding of biblical and historic Christian orthodoxy, but they should also be well-acquainted with cultural trends and prevalent forms of false teaching. As wolves sneak into the flock to devour the sheep, elders must be able to recognize and confront this kind of predatory divisiveness in order to maintain peace, safety, and unity.

*Corrective church discipline.* Sometimes shepherding means tracking down a stray sheep. In Matthew 16, Jesus gave the "keys to the kingdom" to his disciples by which to identify those who were in the kingdom, as well as those who did not belong to the kingdom: "whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:18–19; 18:15–20). Corrective church discipline is a restorative process whereby the church brings the Word of God to bear on the life of one in sin with the hopes of winning them to repentance. The process begins in private (one-on-one). Should unrepentance persist the process may include two or three witnesses, and eventually the entire church (Matt. 18:15–17). If the individual persists in unrepentance, then the church will treat them "as a Gentile," which is to say they are no longer the object for the church's pursuit as a brother or sister, but her evangelism. By leading the church in this process, the elders pursue the rescue of erring sheep and guard the church's purity and the potency of her witness.

## 5. LEADING THE SHEEP

*Scriptural explanation.* One of the terms used for the office of elder is, "overseer" (Acts 20:28; 1Tim. 3:1; 1Pet. 1:2). This term carries with it a connotation of leadership and managerial oversight. Elders are given to "keep watch over your souls and those who will have to give an



account” (Heb. 13:17). This charge does not mean that elders are as unaccountable kings or rulers, for we recall they are not to domineer over those under their charge (1Pet. 5:3). Nevertheless, one way the elders shepherd under Christ’s leadership is by seeing to the church’s well ordered life, and her undistracted and energetic pursuit of her mission.

*Elders meetings, Member’s Meetings.* Two meetings are basic to our elder leadership. First, elders meetings, held twice monthly for approximately two hours each, are where elders discuss and decide matters related to the church’s care and life. Elders meetings are not the sum of elder leadership, but they are crucial nevertheless. Member’s Meetings are the primary way elders lead the flock in her responsibilities of membership, discipline, and in advancing her mission together.

*Communication and questions.* Elders are eager to lead and sheep are generally eager to follow. But in the absence of clear and consistent communication, the church is vulnerable to confusion and conflict as sin and Satan will conspire to exploit gaps in members’ knowledge (2Tim. 2:26; 1Tim. 6:4). For this reason, the elders seek avenues for public and written communication that are planned and proactive. As a complement to this, elders are available for questions in a variety of ways, whether in person, over email, or through regularly planned Q&A sessions. It is not possible or desirable for every elder to answer or address every question they might receive. For this reason, elders may direct a member to a particular elder who oversees an area.

*Exemplary Living.* As leaders, elders are examples to the flock of a godly life (1 Peter 5:3). While personal holiness is possible for all Christians and is evidence of their new birth, elders should model holiness, hospitality, prayer, and evangelism.

*Direction.* As leaders among the flock, elders are responsible for directing the life of the church. They are ultimately responsible for the church’s operation, ministry structures, and future plans.

## 6. SHEPHERDING TOGETHER

*Scriptural explanation.* When the Apostle Paul issued a challenge to the Ephesian elders, he addressed them as a group (Acts 20:16–28). He told Titus, “appoint elders in every town” (Tit. 1:5). Peter, likewise, exhorted “the elders among you,” and exhorted his readers, “be subject to the elders” (1Pet. 5:1, 5). When the Bible speaks about the spiritual office of the church—the elders—it speaks of qualified men serving together. These men need one another for a variety of reasons: they are limited in their perspectives and time and energy. They are also men vulnerable to temptation and sin. For these and other reasons, elders invest time in one another, for the sake of each man and the flock they partner to lead.

*Elder teams.* In light of varied strengths, limitations of energy, and nature of ministry needs, the elder board is organized into smaller teams that are ultimately accountable to the entire group. The biblical job description seems to naturally fall into three categories of need/giftedness—doctrine, discipleship, and direction.

- Doctrine includes responsibilities to protect (position papers, confession of faith updates, analyzing teaching) and advance biblical truth (preaching, teaching seminars, elders-addresses).
- Discipleship includes responsibilities to show personal care for each member of the flock—both formative (personal pastoral care in grounding one in sound doctrine or equipping them for a particular expression of ministry) and corrective (personal pastoral care in/through physical, emotional, or spiritual distress).
- Direction includes responsibility to oversee the household of God (stewardship of talent, money, and time).

Since one’s time/energy, inclination/interest, and giftedness/effectiveness will typically stand out in one or two of these areas, the elder board openly acknowledges these differences and operates in light of these differences to increase effectiveness and efficiency as an elder board.

*Elder retreats.* Elders meet annually for a retreat extending from Friday evening through Saturday. In this retreat they give themselves to extended prayer, reflection in thanks to God, and extended discussion on the upcoming ministry year and a focused doctrinal or practical subject.

## 7. Additional Responsibilities

## PATHWAY TO ELDERSHIP

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- *Oversight of The Church Budget and Finances.* As opposed to deacons or a finance committee, the elders will annually approve the church budget as well as make unforeseen decisions as they arise, e.g., facility maintenance. Staff elders will be recused from personal compensation decisions.



## “WEEKLY UPDATE ANNOUNCEMENT”

As a congregation, we consider the appointment of any new elders several times a year. The elders lead out in this process and are always on the look-out for who the Lord might have to serve in either of these biblical offices. This includes soliciting suggestions from our members. Members are encouraged to read the qualifications for both offices found in 1 Timothy 3:1–13 and Titus 1:5–9 and to suggest biblically qualified brothers for either role to your current elder or deacon. Suggestions are welcome at any time throughout the year.

## CHAIRMAN INVITATION TO OBSERVATION

### “AN INVITATION TO THE ROLE OF ELDER OBSERVER”

(Hi [NAME],

Acts 20:28 charges us to “pay careful attention” to ourselves and the church. According to 2 Tim 2:2, a crucial aspect of our call is to reproduce ourselves by entrusting sound doctrine to faithful men with the ability to teach the doctrine to others. This means prayerfully identifying men with the potential to be elders. But not hurrying the process since the scriptures charge in 1 Timothy 5:22 to “not lay on hands too hastily.”

In evaluating our elder identification and appointment process, we identified the need for careful up-close evaluation of potential future elders. At the same time, a potential elder also needs to see the current elders discussing shepherding the flock and how we seek to be equipped through applying the Word together. So we instituted the role of Elder Observer.

What is an Elder Observer? The purpose of the observation role is to give both the observer and the elders a chance to discern the appropriateness of moving forward into eldership. This is part of an ongoing process to identify and develop elders. It also helps to ensure cohesion as new men are brought into eldership after having been with us for a time.

A part of shepherding the flock, elders seek to identify and develop future elders on an ongoing basis. At any time during the year the elders may ask a man to join as an observer. A period of observation may last for as little as 3 months to as long as 1–2 years. If an observation

## COMMUNICATION TOOLS FOR ELDER CANDIDACY

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period matures into formal consideration for eldership, the elders will ask the brother into the formal nomination process. There's no official limit to how many observers may serve at a time, but there is a practical limit of around 4–5.

As an Elder Observer, you will be expected to join us for our meetings on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month. In a given meeting you will mostly observe the elders in the course of their work. However, we want to observe you as well, and we also want to benefit from your insight and wisdom. As it seems right, please chime in. In most cases, it will make sense for the elders to bat a topic around for a while before you make a contribution. We do have many elders, after all. But as you have a contribution, especially as it dovetails with your unique expertise or experience with a person or ministry, please participate. In order to contribute to a discussion, we ask you to raise your hand (as all the men do) and the elder chair will call on you. The elder chair may also ask for your input on a topic as the discussion unfolds. As your observation period unfolds, feel free to approach the chair to ask for any input or direction. We also want you to be interacting with your current elder outside of the group meetings. We hope your role and participation will feel natural over time. We'll also make time for post-meeting debrief with the chair. You may also be assigned some reading material outside the meeting.

Because of some meeting protocol and procedure changes over the past 18 months, each new elder candidate (regardless of whether they have served as an elder in prior years), is asked to serve as an Elder Observer in our meetings [DATE START AND DATE COMPLETE].

Our elder team has prayerfully reviewed your name and would like to formally invite you to serve as an Elder Observer beginning [DATE OF OBSERVATION START].

Serving as an Observer is not a commitment on our part or yours to serving as an Elder during the next term, or ever. There are several possible outcomes to serving in this role:

You decide you are not qualified or able to serve as an elder.

We decide you are not qualified or ready to serve as an elder.

We don't have an open slot for you right now.

We have an open slot, but another Observer would be a better fit right now.

## COMMUNICATION TOOLS FOR ELDER CANDIDACY

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Either of us would like more time for observation.

We both decide you're ready to be presented to the members for affirmation as an elder candidate.

Each of these outcomes is a success in seeking the Good Shepherd's provision for our flock, and the reason we have added the observation period.

Would you prayerfully consider investing 15-20 hours over the next 3 months in exploring together whether God would have you shepherd His flock? Please also evaluate whether you can participate at all of the following dates.

[DATE OF ELDER MEETING 1]

[DATE OF ELDER MEETING 2] [ETC.]

Please let me know if you have any questions. I'm also able to meet for further discussion.

Would you be so kind as to reply by [DATE REPLY NEEDED] with your decision?

In Christ for the Faith Elders,

[CHAIRMAN NAME], Chairman

## COMMUNICATION TOOLS FOR ELDER CANDIDACY

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### “INVITATION TO ELDER CANDIDACY”

Hi [NAME],

On behalf of the elders, I’m writing to invite you into the first step in the process for elder candidacy. We have arrived at this point after much prayer and extend this invitation with joy.

The Apostle Paul wrote this to the elders at Ephesus before he departed from them: “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). One way we seek this kind of careful Spirit-led appointment is to give hearty attention to the qualifications he has given to us by inspiration in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9. In this way we care for Christ’s church and avoid “hasty” appointments (1Tim. 5:22).

Please see attached for our Prospective Elder Questionnaire. Complete and return this to [NAME] by [DATE].

In Christ for the Faith Elders,  
[CHAIRMAN NAME], Chairman

### “INTRODUCING CANDIDATES FOR ELDERSHIP” (AS NEEDED)

The Apostle Paul wrote this to the elders at Ephesus before he departed from them: “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). One way we seek this kind of careful Spirit-led appointment is to give hearty attention to the qualifications he has given to us by inspiration in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9. In this way, together, we avoid “hasty” appointments (1Tim. 5:22). We are pleased to announce several men for candidacy for the office of elder: [NAMES]. Having evaluated these men up close, the elders now invite your participation in this process. Please read the Scriptural qualifications noted above and reach out to any elder with concern. Barring any unforeseen concern raised



## COMMUNICATION TOOLS FOR ELDER CANDIDACY

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during this stage, the membership will vote to affirm this candidate [OR THESE CANDIDATES] on [DATE], followed by a public appointment in the following weeks.

### **“PREPARING FOR APPOINTMENT TO ELDERSHIP” (AS NEEDED)**

After a period of elder candidacy, the elders are pleased to put [NAME OF CANDIDATE] before our church body for appointment to eldership. Our process of evaluation is careful and includes an opportunity for the Faith family to express any concern that the elders may not know of in light of the qualifications for this office in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9.

Questions or comments can be communicated to any elder personally or by email to [EMAIL ADDRESS]. Barring any unforeseen concern raised at this stage, the membership will vote to affirm this candidate [OR THESE CANDIDATES] on [DATE], followed by a public appointment in the following weeks.

### **“ANNOUNCING DATE FOR PUBLIC APPOINTMENT OF NEW ELDERS” (AS NEEDED)**

From the church’s earliest days, the appointment of leaders has been a public and prayer-filled joy: “And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed” (Acts 14:23). After a patient process of identification, evaluation, and congregational affirmation we joyfully announce the appointment of the following men to the office of elder: [NAMES]. We will appoint these men publically in our Lord’s Day gathering on [DATE].



## CANDIDACY PROCESS OVERVIEW

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After unanimous elder agreement an observer will advance to the candidacy phase.

1. Conversation with candidate, give process overview, Q and A, prayer
  - The time required for the process and its outcome are indeterminate. The candidate's involvement in progress will not be disclosed by the elders. The candidate may share with others as he wishes.
2. After consultation with his wife (if married) and prayer, the candidate communicates to the elders his desire to begin the process.
3. The candidate will then complete an extensive questionnaire, consulting only the Bible.
  - personal history and walk with Jesus
  - Self-assessment regarding biblical qualifications for elder
  - Biblical and theological knowledge
  - How he would act in various situations
4. Two other people who know the candidate well (including his wife, if married) will also complete an assessment of the candidate regarding typical qualifications for elders.
5. Based on 3 & 4 above, the elders will establish a tailored reading program for the candidate. After each reading, the candidate will meet with at least one elder to discuss it.
  - what was encouraging and helpful, where he disagrees, what he would like to discuss further.
6. Based on 3 & 4 above, the elders will establish appropriate opportunities to hone and assess the candidate's gifts (e.g; teaching, counseling, conducting membership interviews)
7. The candidate will continue to be invited to participate in elder meetings, without a vote, to give him the opportunity to pray and reason with the elders regarding the issue at hand.
8. The elders will regularly confer among themselves regarding the candidate's progress and readiness to serve as an elder.
9. When the candidate is deemed ready, the elders will announce at the members meeting that he meets the biblical requirements for elders and elders recommend his election.
10. The congregation will then evaluate the recommended nominee. Concerns will be taken up with the nominee and, if unresolved, with the elders.
11. The congregational vote will occur at the members' meeting following an election recommendation. 2/3 majority is required for election.
12. The new elder will be installed at a subsequent worship service and begin serving.



## PROSPECTIVE ELDER QUESTIONNAIRE

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### SECTION 1 – Personal & Spiritual History

Type in your answers to the questions below, taking as much space as necessary.

1. What is your conversion testimony (spiritual journey from pre-conversion to the present)?
2. Are you delighting in Christ? Give concrete examples for your answer.
3. How are you cultivating your relationship with the Lord? Describe your present habits of grace (spiritual disciplines) – both the habits you are currently employing for growth and the disciplines that you regularly struggle to employ.
4. What areas of sin do you have a propensity towards? What are idols in your life with which you regularly contend?
5. What do you do to fight off temptations in these other areas?
6. Through what avenues has the enemy attacked you in the areas of lust and sexual impurity? How do you pursue sexual purity in your heart/life?
7. How has pride or selfishness manifested itself in your own heart and outwardly toward family, church or community? How are you pursuing humility and selflessness?
8. Describe your conviction and practice of giving financially to the local church.
9. How are you serving others in the church?
10. If single, how are you preparing yourself spiritually to one day lead a wife and family? If married, how are you leading your family spiritually?
11. If married, what do you feel are the three greatest strengths of your marriage and the three greatest weaknesses?
12. In what ways do you sense God's call to, and giftedness for, the ministry of an elder?

PROSPECTIVE ELDER QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION 2 - Self-Examination

Prayerfully complete the form below, assessing yourself against this list of the characteristics of elders that are found in Scripture. Rate how you fulfill each qualification, using the scale of 1 = poorly, 3 = average, and 5 = very well. Give specific reasons for each assessment.

| QUALIFICATION  | RATING (1-5) & REASON |
|--|-----------------------|
| <p>1. ABOVE REPROACH</p> <p>Elders must be blameless, presenting no patterns of scriptural disobedience or grounds for accusation. (1 Tim 3.2, Tit 1.7)</p>                                |                       |
| <p>2. HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE</p> <p>Attitude of total commitment to his wife in all aspects of the marital relationship. (1 Tim 3.2; Tit 1.6; Matt 19.9; 1 Cor 6.16; 7.10-16)</p>             |                       |
| <p>3. TEMPERATE (SOBER_MINDED, DISCIPLINED)</p> <p>Elders must be self-controlled, enslaved to nothing, free from excesses. (1 Tim 3.2, 2 Tim 4.5, Tit 1.8)</p>                            |                       |
| <p>4. PRUDENT (SELF-CONTROLLED)</p> <p>Elders must be sensible, wise, balanced in judgment, not given to quick, superficial decisions based on immature thinking. (1 Tim 3.2, Tit 1.8)</p> |                       |
| <p>5. RESPECTABLE</p> <p>Elders must demonstrate a well-ordered life and good behavior. (1 Tim 3.2)</p>  |                       |

PROSPECTIVE ELDER QUESTIONNAIRE

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>6. HOSPITABLE</p> <p>Elders must be unselfish with their personal resources. (1 Tim 3.2, Tit 1.8)</p>   |  |
| <p>7. ABLE TO TEACH</p> <p>Elders must be able to communicate the truth of God and exhort sound doctrine in a non-argumentative way. (1 Tim 3.2, 2 Tim 2.2, 2.24, 4.2; Tit 1.9, Acts 6.4)</p>  |  |
| <p>8. NOT GIVEN TO DRUNKENNESS (NOT A DRUNKARD)</p> <p>Elders must be free from addictions, and must be willing to limit their liberty for the sake of others.<br/>(1 Tim 3.3, Tit 1.7)</p>  |  |
| <p>9. NOT VIOLENT, BUT GENTLE</p> <p>Elders must be gentle and characterized by forbearance, kindness, and tenderness. They must correct their opponents with gentleness.<br/>(1 Tim 3.3, 2 Tim 2.25, Tit 1.7).</p>  |  |
| <p>10. NOT QUARRELSOME (PEACEABLE)</p> <p>Elders must not be given to quarreling or selfish argumentation (1 Tim 3.3, 2 Tim 2.24-25)</p>   |  |
| <p>11. FREE FROM THE LOVE OF MONEY (NOT GREEDY FOR GAIN)</p> <p>Elders must not be stingy, greedy or out for sordid gain. They should not be preoccupied with amassing material things, but rather should be a model of giving. (1 Tim 3.3, 1 Pet 5.2)</p> |  |
| <p>12. MANAGE OWN HOUSEHOLD WELL</p>   |  |

PROSPECTIVE ELDER QUESTIONNAIRE

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>Elders must have a well-ordered household, a healthy family life, and well-behaved children. (Pertains to children still under the authority of their parents.) (1 Tim 3.4-5, Tit 1.6)</p>                        |  |
| <p>13. NOT A NEW CONVERT</p> <p>Elders must not be new believers. They must have been Christians for long enough to demonstrate the reality of their conversion and the depth of their spirituality. (1 Tim 3.6)</p> |  |
| <p>14. GOOD REPUTATION WITH OUTSIDERS</p> <p>Elders must be well respected by unbelievers, and must be free from hypocrisy. (1 Tim 3.7)</p>  |  |
| <p>15. NOT OVERBEARING</p> <p>Elders must not be stubborn, insensitive or prone to force opinions on others. They must be more interested in service than self-pleasure. (Tit 1.7)</p>                               |  |
| <p>16. NOT ARROGANT (NOT SELF-WILLED)</p> <p>Elders must be humble, not conceited. They must not assume they are always right. (Tit 1.7, 1 Pet 5.3)</p>  |  |
| <p>17. NOT QUICK TEMPERED</p> <p>Elders must not be easily angered. They must exercise patience in difficult situations. (Tit 1.7, 2 Tim 2:24)</p>   |  |
| <p>18. LOVING WHAT IS GOOD</p>   |  |



PROSPECTIVE ELDER QUESTIONNAIRE

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Elders must desire the will of God in every decision. (Tit 1.8)</p>  |  |
| <p>19. UPRIGHT</p> <p>Elders must be honest, fair and impartial. Their judgments must be based on scriptural principles.<br/>(2 Tim 4.5)</p>  |  |
| <p>20. HOLY</p> <p>Elders must be reverent, continually desiring to be separated from sin. They must be devoted to prayer, the study of Scripture and the guarding of their own spiritual walk. (Tit 1.8, Acts 20.28)</p>                                       |  |
| <p>21. HOLDING FAST TO THE WORD OF GOD</p> <p>Elders must be stable in the faith, obedient to the word of God, continually seeking to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. (Tit 1.9, 2 Tim 4.2-5)</p>  |  |
| <p>22. KIND TO EVERYONE</p> <p>Elders must be friendly, considerate, and courteous to everyone, both within the church and outside.<br/>(2 Tim 2.24)</p>  |  |
| <p>23. AN EVANGELIST</p> <p>Elders must be gospel-centered, always seeking to bring the lost to faith in Christ. They must not only evangelize from the pulpit and the podium, but in their personal interactions with unbelievers as well.<br/>(2 Tim 4.5)</p> |  |
| <p>24. AN EXAMPLE TO THE FLOCK</p>  |  |

PROSPECTIVE ELDER QUESTIONNAIRE

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|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>Elders must present an encouraging example to the church. They must faithfully pursue conformance to the image of Christ. (1 Pet 5.3, 2 Tim 2.22)</p>   |  |
| <p>25. SHEPHERD THE FLOCK</p> <p>Elders care for the church of God. They are characterized by careful attention to all the flock. They come alongside those in need. (1 Pet 5.28-29)</p>               |  |
| <p>26. NOT SERVING UNDER COMPULSION, BUT EAGERLY.</p> <p>Elders must desire to serve the church in this office. They must serve willingly, not under a begrudging sense of obligation. (1 Pet 5.2)</p> |  |

Other Comments:

## PROSPECTIVE ELDER QUESTIONNAIRE

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### SECTION 3 – Biblical & Theological Knowledge

In a concise manner, provide a biblical and thoughtful response to each of the following Bible survey questions & topics.

1. State and explain your beliefs about the authority and inerrancy of the Bible.
2. What is the overarching story/theme (meta-narrative) of the Bible? Trace out & explain how this theme is carried from Genesis to Revelation.
3. What is the focus of Genesis 1-2 and then Genesis 3? What is the foundational importance of these chapters as they relate to the rest of Scripture?
4. Why or why not are the Ten Commandments relevant to our Christian faith today?
5. What are the Gospels and what is the distinct focus of each?
6. What do you see as the most significant points of Romans 3, Ephesians 1-2, and Colossians 1?
7. What does the Bible teach about the roles that husbands, wives, and children are to fulfill in the family? Would you call yourself an egalitarian, a complementarian, or neither?
8. How would you define the role of an elder? How does this role differ from a deacon?
9. Can someone serve as an elder or deacon if they have been divorced? Why or why not?
10. The following are a few so-called discrepancies in the Bible. One verse says one thing and the other seems to contradict it. Explain why/how they are not contradictions.
  - a. Matthew 20:20; Mark 10:35
  - b. James 2:23-24; Galatians 3:6-7
  - c. James 1:13; Genesis 22:1
  - d. Proverbs 26:4; Proverbs 26:5
11. Briefly define and explain your beliefs on the following topics. What key texts do you

## PROSPECTIVE ELDER QUESTIONNAIRE

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rely on to support those beliefs?

- a. The Trinity
- b. God's sovereignty
- c. Sin and the Fall
- d. The gospel
- e. The Church and regenerate church membership
- f. Reformed theology
- g. Baptism
- h. Congregationalism

12. Briefly state and explain your beliefs on the following pressing ethical issues of our day. What key texts do you rely on for your beliefs?

- a. The sanctity of human life (abortion & euthanasia)
- b. Homosexuality & same sex "marriage"
- c. Identifying as a different gender and undergoing "gender-reassignment" surgery
- d. Reconciliation among people of different ethnicities ("race relations")

## PROSPECTIVE ELDER QUESTIONNAIRE

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### SECTION 4 – Application

This section asks how you would respond in various challenging circumstances. Pick 10 of the questions below to answer briefly (a few paragraphs or less). Then indicate which of the remaining questions you feel fairly comfortable answering ("Somewhat confident") and which you are unprepared to answer ("Need to know more").

1. An unsaved young woman confides in you about her "live-in" boyfriend. They are engaged in a sexual relationship. Her parents do not know about it and you know the family. What would you say to the girl, and would you say something to the family?
2. Would you marry two non-believers? Why or why not?
3. How would you use Scripture to prove that abortion is a sin?
4. What would you tell a close Christian friend who wanted to marry an unbeliever?
5. How would you use the Bible to help a young man, who thinks he is a homosexual because "God made him that way," to see the truth?
6. A church member has just been in an accident. There is no brain activity and this person is being kept alive by a machine. The family asks you what they should do. Do you tell them to "pull the plug"?
7. How would you respond to a couple that just miscarried nine weeks into a pregnancy? What scriptures would you take them to?
8. A person comes to you and asks about the morality of masturbation as a means of dealing with sexual desire. How do you counsel them?
9. A man comes to you for counseling, and asks you to keep what he is about to say between you and him. Would you agree? Why or why not? What Bible passages support your answer?
10. A woman tells you her husband is beating her. What is your counsel?
11. A woman comes to you and tells you that her husband says she cannot cut her hair to be too short, since the Bible says, "a woman's long hair is her glory." What do you tell her?

## PROSPECTIVE ELDER QUESTIONNAIRE

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12. How would you respond to a member who asks whether gambling is a sin? What reasons would you offer for your answer?
13. Someone tells you they like to smoke marijuana because all of God's creation is useful for us in the right quantity. What do you say?
14. In a small group there are those that believe that drinking is a sin and others that feel that drinking is part of their freedom in Christ, both have Scripture at the ready. How do you teach both sides of this debate and try to protect unity?
15. A woman asks if she must keep silent during church services per 1 Corinthians 14.34. What do you tell her?
16. A young woman in the congregation tells you she feels called by God to be a pastor. What do you tell her?
17. A member of the congregation suddenly declares that he does not believe in the deity of the Holy Spirit. He thinks the Holy Spirit is lesser than the Father and Son. And the Son is lesser than the Father. He has been teaching Seminars for 2 years. What do you do?
18. A husband and wife lose a child in a car accident. The child was 4 years old. Using the Scriptures, if they asked you where their child was, what would you say?
19. Bob is not a Christian, and everyone in the church knows this by his lifestyle. He has even told people he does not believe in God. He then dies one day in a plane crash. His wife is a devout Christian. She believes he is in heaven because God is all loving and forgiving. She comes to you to be assured of Bob's resting place. What do you say?
20. A lesbian couple who was "legally married" a year ago, has recently started attending Faith on Sunday mornings. Upon hearing the gospel message, God opens their hearts to receive the gospel by faith and they are saved. They have been living together and they parent a 2 year old child. How do you begin to counsel here?

## ELDER AFFIRMATION FORM

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After deliberation and prayer, the current elders at Faith Bible Church, believe that [Mitch Bueltel] meets the biblical qualifications of an elder. Furthermore, we believe he is able and willing to accomplish the tasks below:

### Qualifications (Titus 1; 1 Tim 3):

- Wants to be an elder
- Exemplifies godly character
- Can teach the Bible
- Leads family well
- Established believer
- Engaged in shepherding work

### Job Description:

- Engages in relationships with congregation to encourage spiritual growth
- Participates in the teaching ministry of the church (large or small)
- Protects sound doctrine/teaching
- Perpetuates doctrine/teaching by raising up leaders
- Watches for sheep (especially the limping, fighting, and biting)
- Leads flock through wisdom and service
- Shepherds as part of the team
- Prays for the flock
- Manages the household of God

In accordance with our constitution, we present him to you for formal affirmation. If you are convinced that [Mitch Bueltel] meets the qualifications of pastoral leadership or if you do not know [Mitch] and are willing to trust the elders' judgment in this nomination, please indicate by circling "yes" below. If you are convinced the elders' are in error and that Mitch should not be recognized as an elder at Faith Bible Church, please circle "no" below and provide a brief explanation.

YES

NO





## ELDER VOWS

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1. Do you reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Savior? I do.
2. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, totally trustworthy, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, the supreme, final, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice? I do.
3. Do you sincerely believe the Statement of Faith and Covenant of this church contain the truth taught in the Holy Scripture? I do.
4. Do you promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the statements in the Statement of Faith and Covenant you will on your own initiative make known to the elders the change which has taken place in your views since your assumption of this vow? I do.
5. Do you subscribe to the government and discipline of Faith Bible Church? I do.
6. Do you promise to submit to your fellow elders in the Lord? I do, with God's help.
7. Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to accept the office of elder from love of God and sincere desire to promote His glory in the Gospel of His Son? I have.
8. Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in promoting the truths of the Gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise to you on that account? I do, with God's help.
9. Will you be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all your duties as elder, whether personal or relative, private or public, and will you endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your manner of life, and to walk with exemplary piety before this congregation? I will, by the grace of God.
10. Are you now willing to take personal responsibility in the life of this congregation as an elder to oversee the ministry and resources of the church, and to devote yourself to prayer, the ministry of the Word and the shepherding of God's flock, relying upon the grace of God, in such a way that Faith Bible Church, and the entire Church of Jesus Christ will be blessed? I am, with the help of God.

To the Congregation (Will the members please stand):

1. Do you, the members of Faith Bible Church, acknowledge and publicly receive this man as an elder, as a gift of Christ to this church? We do.
2. Do you accept your responsibility to love him and pray for him in his ministry, and work together with him humbly and cheerfully, that by the grace of God you may accomplish the mission of the church, giving him all due honor and support in his leadership to which the Lord has called him, to the glory and honor of God? We do.



# Membership





## MEMBERSHIP PROCESS PROPOSAL

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Faith Bible Church exists to raise up generations of God glorifying Christ followers

2016 Membership Process Update Intended Outcome: To equip the believers at our church to become a part of our church.

### Specific Equipping Goals

1. Understand and appreciate the local church and their commitment to it
2. Align with the mission of Faith Bible Church
3. Agree to submit to the doctrine and polity of Faith Bible Church
4. Understand the role of and their relationship to the elders (leadership)
5. Embrace the obligations that members have of one another
6. Receive the gospel and its implications for the church
7. Begin to establish relationships with an elder and at least one other member
8. Provide the church adequate information for affirmation and subsequent care

### Procedure

#### 1. Attend a "Life at Faith" Event

"Life at Faith" is a learning environment in which the people at Faith Bible Church may learn why and how to be a part of Faith Bible Church.

Note: See "LAF What Why How" document for more details

#### 2. Meet with Pastor and/or Member

- Opportunity for Pastor/Member to
  - get to know the incoming member
  - hear the incoming member's salvation testimony and understanding of the gospel
  - help the incoming member understand the church
  - begin pastoral and membership care
- Opportunity for Incoming Member to
  - clarify any questions they have about the purpose, preaching, or practices of the church
  - establish or deepen a relationship with a pastor and church member

3. Affirmation by the Church (culminating in baptism [as needed] and/or membership reception)

- baptism after member meeting
- letter of commendation before member meeting

Advantages of Update

1. More accessible for incoming and existing church members
2. Opens up opportunities for current members to serve
3. Provides a great introduction for the unsaved or doctrinally ungrounded
4. Increases the efficiency of the membership process
5. Ensures only known Christians affirm the incoming member
6. Enables broader elder involvement in teaching

Updated Aug. 2016

## Life at Faith Event

### What

Life at Faith is a training event in which attendees learn about Faith Bible Church

### Why

to introduce visitors to who we are as a church (mission, values)  
to equip attendees to become a part of Faith Bible Church  
to nurture relationships for future gospel influence

### How

Ingredients:

- hospitable and relational environment
- outgoing church members and elders other than staff
- formal teaching component
- concrete action steps
- administrative follow-up

## SESSION 1: WHO WE ARE

Vision: who we are

Faith Bible Church exists to raise up generations of God glorifying Christ followers.

Mission: what we do

Live a life that delights in Christ, serves His people and advances the truth in love.

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## SESSION 2: WHAT WE EMPHASIZE

Values: what we emphasize

As Faith Bible Church works to accomplish its mission, we will do so emphasizing the following core values:

1) OBEDIENCE: submission to the sufficient Word

- expository preaching
- big-God theology
- biblical counseling
- complementarianism (See page 39)
- non-continuationist (See page 13, section 12)

2) DEVOTION: allegiance to Biblical church structure

- organization
- elder led / congregational affirmed
- every member ministry
- membership
- ordinances (i.e. believer's baptism, communion)
- discipline

3) COMMUNITY: interdependent and affectionate growth of the body

4) MATURITY: personal and passionate Christ-likeness

5) MULTIPLICATION: every member a disciple maker

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SESSION 3: HOW YOU CAN BECOME A PART

1. Principle

- ontological membership
  - official membership
  - organizational membership
-



## SESSION 4: HOW YOU CAN BECOME A PART

2. Practice: what our members do.
  1. essentials:
    - corporate gathering
    - interpersonal relationships
    - member's meeting
  2. opportunities:
    - small groups
    - seminars
    - corporate prayer

### What's next:

1. Read the church covenant, confession and constitution
2. Meet with an elder so he can get to know you
3. Congregation agrees to oversee your discipleship by affirming you at a member's meeting
4. Baptism is scheduled or an introduction Sunday is scheduled by which you become a part of the church

Finally: Thank you, Giveaway books, Sign-up

Administrative follow-up

1. Communicate appreciation for attending and confirm an invitation to meet with a pastor
2. Track progress of potential members using Todoist
3. Check in with Elders assigned to information meetings
  1. send spreadsheet to Elders for Shepherding Information Meeting sign-up
  2. schedule meetings for elders and/or add scheduled meetings to Elder calendar
  3. obtain membership forms
4. Extend an invitation to meet with an Elder for information meeting if one has not been scheduled after two weeks.
5. If nominated by the Elder, prepare for nomination process
  1. upload and input forms into PCO\*
  2. add potential new members to next member's meeting agenda
  3. distribute and collect new member presentation forms
  4. schedule new members for baptism as needed
  5. obtain individual pictures for member's meeting
6. Present to congregation
  1. schedule New Member presentation for Sunday AM
  2. email instructions to new members
  3. add names to PCO service template
7. Update Directories
  1. change status of membership in PCO
  2. add pictures to planning center
  3. add info to ICD\*\*
  4. take couples picture and upload to ICD
  5. add pictures and names to weekly update

\* Planning Center Online

\*\* Instant Church Directory

(see copies)

Life at Faith packet:

Welcome  
Overview  
Covenant  
Confession  
Constitution  
Playbook  
Creeds  
Two Ways to Live  
Danvers Statement  
Apostle's Creed  
Nicene Creed  
The Elephant In The Room



## MEMBERSHIP PROCESS EMAILS

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### INVITATION TO LIFE AT FAITH

Hello Fred,

I wanted to invite you to a Life at Faith luncheon we are having after the service this Sunday. After eating lunch, we will be discussing what it means to be a part of Faith Bible Church. This is an informal time that is meant to inform and encourage.

Let me know if you have any questions or would like to join us on Sunday afternoon.

Philip Bates  
Associate Pastor | Faith Bible Church

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### FOLLOW-UP TO LIFE AT FAITH

Thank you for attending our Life at Faith luncheon. We were so blessed to learn more about each of you, have the opportunity to share a meal together and hear how God is working in your life. We trust the conversation about membership was helpful and gave you more information about Faith Bible Church. We have already heard from some about their interest in meeting with an elder and from others who had further questions. May I set up a meeting for you to meet with an elder?

Since we believe God has entrusted us with the responsibility to care for one another, this meeting allows us the opportunity to get to know you and answer any questions you may have about how to best partner with Faith Bible Church. This time together will also help us learn how to best serve you and your family. Feel free to contact me so that I can help you make arrangements.

I have attached the Faith Constitution, Statement of Faith and Covenant in case you would like to read them before the meeting.

Once again we are thankful for your interest in Faith Bible Church.

Jeff Edman  
Ministry Assistant | Faith Bible Church

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## MEMBERSHIP PROCESS EMAILS

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### WELCOME TO MEMBERSHIP WITH BAPTISM

Good afternoon,

I want to be the first to say welcome to membership at Faith Bible Church. You were affirmed by the congregation and we are so excited to have you join us as we seek to raise generations of God glorifying Christ followers together. On Sunday, July 15, we would like to see you baptized which will officially begin your membership. Will you be here that Sunday?

Philip Bates  
Associate Pastor | Faith Bible Church

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### WELCOME TO MEMBERSHIP WITH PRESENTATION

Good Afternoon,

Welcome to membership at Faith Bible Church. You were affirmed by the congregation during our last Member's Meeting and we are so excited to have you join with us as we seek to raise generations of God glorifying Christ followers together. On Sunday, December 16, we would like to introduce you to the congregation as new members.

Please let me know if you will or will not be here on that day. Here are a few details to look forward to:

Following the message, Pastor Justin will invite you to stand with him in the front, introduce you to the congregation and affirm our Covenant with you. At the conclusion of the service, we would like you to stand in the front of the auditorium so that people can meet and welcome you. If you have any questions feel free to reach out to me.

Again, thank you for partnering with us in ministry. If you have any questions feel free to reach out to me.

Jeff Edman  
Ministry Assistant | Faith Bible Church

## MEMBERSHIP PROCESS EMAILS

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### BAPTISM

Good morning Luke,

I am so excited to see you baptized this Sunday. I want to serve you by working through some details about February 10.

You will be sharing your testimony from the baptismal pool. Here are a few guidelines for sharing your testimony to the congregation:

1. Make it 1 to 2 pages double spaced (12 pt. font)
2. It's typically best to have an opening paragraph on your life before Christ, another paragraph on when you received Christ, another on how your life has changed since Christ, and finally a closing line on why you want to be baptized.
3. Remember to explain the gospel for those that may not know what that entails.

Please write and send your testimony to Pastor Phil by Thursday, February 7 so that he can make any adjustments necessary.

What will take place on Sunday:

Before the service begins, please go upstairs and change into something that you would feel comfortable getting wet, and put on a white baptismal robe over your clothes. Andrew Bates will be baptizing on that Sunday. After the opening song, you will make your way into the baptismal pool. Andrew will be with you to guide you through the process. Andrew will then introduce you to the congregation and you will present your testimony.

After presenting your testimony, Philip will ask you one question:

Do you confess Jesus Christ as Lord?

Upon your confession, he will then baptize you. At this point, you will simply need to bend your knees as if sitting in a chair, put your hand over your nose/mouth and he'll take care of everything else.

When you come out of the water, there will be someone there with a towel for you as you make your way back to the restroom to change into some dry clothes. You may leave the robe and towel on the floor in the restroom and we will collect them later.

I am here to serve you. Please let me know what questions you might have.

Jeff Edman  
Ministry Assistant | Faith Bible Church

## MEMBERSHIP PROCESS EMAILS

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Good Morning!

Since you have now been affirmed as a member of Faith Bible Church, I want to pass along some information that will be of great benefit to your partnership with us .

1.) We have a member's directory that we would like you to have that includes pictures and contact information for all of our members. There are two forms of this directory that you can use. The first is a physical copy that you can pick up in the front office on Sunday and/or we have an app that you can use as well. You can download this app with the following link:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/instant-church-directory/id589542221?mt=8>. Logging into the app is simple: you can create a login by using the email address that we have on file for you and creating a password. We encourage members to use their directory to pray for other members of the church.

2.) As a member of the church you will now be added to a Weekly Update email that we use to prepare for the Sunday Gathering, inform about upcoming opportunities and share prayer and service opportunities. This typically goes out weekly on Fridays.

3.) We want you to be aware that we use an app called Planning Center for scheduling all of our regular ministry positions. Upon getting more involved in serving, you will receive emails that come from Planning Center informing you of when you are scheduled for a position. We will not schedule you for something without first talking to you about it, so you will not receive any surprise emails. If you are interested in getting to know more about what areas you can serve in feel free to contact Pastor Phil at [philip@faithnaples.org](mailto:philip@faithnaples.org).

4.) If you aren't already, we would love for you to get involved with one of our small groups. Our small groups take the summer off but they will begin again in September. In August there will be a chance for every member to sign up for a small group. Pastor Phil can answer any further questions you may have.

5.) We would also like you to be aware of our online giving option which can be accessed from our website at [faithnaples.org](http://faithnaples.org) under the Donation tab. Many of our members use this option and it can be particularly helpful if you are interested in setting up recurring donations. Feel free to give through the offering each week or use the donation boxes located at each exit.

6.) If you would like to be part of a prayer chain that one of our members oversees, please contact Cyndy Kendall: [randckendall@comcast.net](mailto:randckendall@comcast.net)

If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me. Looking forward to serving alongside you.

Philip Bates  
Associate Pastor | Faith Bible Church



## HOW TO CONDUCT AN EFFECTIVE SHEPHERDING INFORMATION MEETING

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Even though there's no one set way to conduct a shepherding meeting, it is often helpful to try to achieve three things in the course of a meeting:

1. Get to know the person attending the church.
2. Help him and/or her understand the gospel, the church and the ordinances.
3. Begin pastoral care for the individual.

Note: We have developed a [Google Form](#) to simplify the meeting. It can be sent to the potential member prior to the meeting and is available in ministryadministration/membershipfolder/shepherdinginformationmeetings on Google Drive. This form includes biographical information and previous church information.

The form does not include gospel or Faith Bible Church details. We would like the elder conducting the interview to hear and write these details. Please do not send the entire form prior to the shepherding information meeting.

### Preliminaries

- Introduce yourself along with anyone else in the room.
- Find out the purpose of the meeting by asking questions to determine where the meeting is headed. You are determining if this individual needs further evangelism, desires to be baptised, should partner with Faith having already been baptised, or needs help finding another church.
- Based on the information received, give a brief overview of the meeting.
  - Gospel details
  - Faith details
  - Biographical details (may have already completed)
  - Church details (may have already completed)
- Pray

#### Note:

- Be sure to complete the shepherding information form for them.
- Make sure they have read the covenant and confession prior to the meeting.
- Plan to take their picture for the membership meeting. Please take individual pictures and a couple picture when applicable.

### Gospel Details

- Ask if they are in Christ.
- Ask if they have been baptized by immersion as a believer, and if so, where and when.
  - The date of baptism can be very general. The year of the baptism would suffice.
  - A good way to see if there might be any issues to discuss regarding the baptism would be to ask if the person was baptized: 1) In a church, and 2) By a pastor. If the answer is no to any of these, then you can explore the details further.
  - For applicants who are coming from a paedo-baptist or Church of Christ background or have not been baptized:
    - Ask if they have read "Understanding Baptism".
    - Ask them if they understand and agree with it.
    - Ask them if they have any physical disabilities preventing baptism.
- Ask the person about their personal background and life before salvation. People are formed for good and ill by their backgrounds, their experiences, and their families. As a pastor, this information will help you care for the new member as he or she becomes part of your flock. This could include but is not limited to:
  - Where they were born and grew up
  - Family background
  - Church background
  - Where they went to school
  - Where this person has been post-education
  - How they got to Naples
  - Life pre-conversion
- Ask how they started following Jesus. This is the most important piece of information to get in the shepherding information meeting. A church must be confident its members are genuinely converted, and a person's understanding of their conversion will often reveal quite a bit about their spiritual maturity. Many times, this question is used by God to reveal that the potential member may very well not be converted at all.
- Ask the person to give you a description of their life after they confessed Christ as Lord.
- Ask the person to share how they are enjoying the means of grace (i.e., Word, prayer, church).

## HOW TO CONDUCT AN EFFECTIVE SHEPHERDING INFORMATION MEETING

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- Ask them who Jesus is.
- Ask the person to briefly share with you what the Gospel is. You may be surprised how many Christians cannot clearly articulate the good news about Jesus. They may believe the gospel but not understand it well enough to communicate it. Or, more commonly, they might leave out an important part of the gospel, such as the need for sinners to respond in repentance and faith.
  - You're basically looking for the four main points: God, man, Christ, response (repentance & faith)
  - Following their presentation, feel free to ask questions that will clarify what they mean or draw out their understanding of certain things.

If this person seems to give a credible profession of his faith, then you can continue with the church membership portion of the meeting.

However, if you don't think this person is in Christ, at this point you would suggest getting together to further understand the gospel.

Once this is resolved (could be months), the church membership portion of the meeting can be resumed.

### Faith Details

- Ask the person why they want to partner with Faith.
- Ask the person if they have any concerns about partnering with Faith.
- Ask the person if they have read and agree with the Church Covenant, Confession and Constitution. Many of the more difficult subjects are thoroughly covered in our Life at Faith events, but the interview occasionally generates good opportunities to explain some point of doctrine or correct a misunderstanding.
  - If they have misunderstandings or disagreements work through them and take notes.
  - Establish Pastoral Care – see prayer questions on form

### Biographical Details (if they did not fill out online form)

- Fill out basic biographical information.
  - Get the full name, including middle name. Also ask for what name they normally go by.

## HOW TO CONDUCT AN EFFECTIVE SHEPHERDING INFORMATION MEETING

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- Don't forget to ask for apartment numbers!
- If the person gives you more than three phone numbers, ask them for their preferred two numbers and indicate that on the application. Make sure you also indicate if the number is home, work, or cell.
- Don't assume someone's marital status, make sure you ask, "Are you married? Have you ever been married? Do you have any children? Have you been divorced?"
  - Fill out divorce information if necessary
  - If the person has been divorced, you will need to explore this further and take more notes. Some questions to consider:
    - How long ago was the divorce?
    - Why did you divorce your spouse? The point here is to determine whether or not this was a biblical divorce.
    - Were you and your spouse Christians when you got divorced?
    - Have you tried to reconcile with your ex-spouse? Are they open to reconciliation?

### Church Details (if they did not fill out online form)

- Fill out prior church membership or attendance information .
  - Ask for the previous church of which they were a member or attending.
  - Ask supplementary questions regarding previous church.
    - Two questions that are important to ask are "Why did you leave your previous church?" and "In what ways did you serve in your previous church?".
    - Many times the individual will not know detailed dates of attendance or have an address for the church they previously attended. Do your best to collect the data that you can and the membership coordinator will work to collect other necessary information.
  - Ask how long they have attended Faith Bible Church.
  - Ask how they were introduced to Faith.

### Emergency Contact Information (if they did not fill out online form)

- Please fill this information out. If they specifically request not to share, note it on the form.

### Wrap Up & Involvement at Faith

The membership interview is a great time to clearly set expectations and explain how the person can get involved with Faith.

### New Member Expectations

1. Attend regularly on Sunday mornings.
  - Encourage them to see this as their primary ministry for the first few months: being here regularly, getting to know people, and letting others get to know them.
  - Explain the value of Seminars describing what classes are currently offered.
2. Pray for the church. Point them to the directory app before they leave encouraging them to pray through it regularly.
3. Attend Member's Meetings. Typically one Sunday night every six weeks. Give a brief explanation of a member's meeting if time allows.
4. 1-on-1 Discipling.
  - Ask if they're interested in 1-on-1 discipling. Encourage them to pursue discipling relationships on their own by taking initiative with members that they get to know. Small groups are a great place to pursue discipling relationships. If after several months, they have been unable to find anyone to meet with, they can contact someone in the church office.
5. Give faithfully. The NT does not command a percentage, but 10% could be a good place to start, and increase from there as the Lord enables you.
6. Join a small group. Give them contact information for the small group coordinator or a small group leader.
  - Explain small groups and ask them if they are involved or if they would like to be. Not required, but a great way to get connected with other Christians during the week and be encouraged.

Explain what happens next:

## HOW TO CONDUCT AN EFFECTIVE SHEPHERDING INFORMATION MEETING

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- Information will be presented to the elders who will decide whether to present to the congregation.
- Their membership will be voted on at the next members' meeting. They should not plan to attend that members' meeting.
- Someone from the office will contact them after the members' meeting about baptism or being presented to the church.
- Any questions?

### Begin Pastoral Care

At this point in the conversation, I should have a pretty good idea about what a candidate might need as he enters into the life of the congregation. At the end of the meeting, it's good to set up a plan for ways the candidate can integrate into the church. In some special cases, it becomes clear the person would benefit from some special follow up (like counseling, Fundamentals of the Faith, or even an evangelistic course). In those cases, it is best to begin that process before the candidate leaves the meeting.

At the conclusion of the meeting it's helpful to pray for the new member, that he or she would be fruitful in the life of the church and vice versa.

It's a privilege to conduct membership interviews. It can feel wearisome when a lot of people want to join and our schedule (and those of our other elders) is tight. But it's important to the church's health that we carefully examine people before they become members, and it's a joy to hear candidates' testimonies of God's grace and to consider together how God might bless them through the church.

Take their picture!

EMAIL completed form to [membership@faithnaples.org](mailto:membership@faithnaples.org) & [philip@faithnaples.org](mailto:philip@faithnaples.org).



## Shepherding Information Form

| ATTENDING MEETING   |            |    |
|---|------------|----|
| Pastor:   | Attendees: |    |
| DATE OF MEETING   |            |    |
| Date  |            |    |
| SALVATION TESTIMONY                                       |            |    |
| Are you in Christ?  |            |    |
| Have you been baptized?                                   |            |    |
| If yes, do you remember the date and location?:           |            |    |
| If no...  |            |    |
| Have you read "Understanding Baptism" by Bobby Jamieson?  | yes        | no |
| Do you understand and agree with it?                      | yes        | no |
| Do you have any physical disabilities preventing baptism? | yes        | no |

Give a brief description of your personal background and life before salvation.

How did you start following Jesus?

Give a brief description of your life since you confessed Christ as Lord.

In what ways are you enjoying the means of grace (i.e., Word, prayer, church)?

Who is Jesus Christ?

How would you explain the gospel?



**UNDERSTANDING FAITH BIBLE CHURCH**

Why do you want to partner with Faith Bible Church?

Do you have any concerns about partnering with Faith?

Read the church covenant with the potential member.

Do you have any questions about the church covenant?

Do you agree to live out this covenant with the church?

yes

no

Have you read the church constitution?

yes

no

Do you understand and agree with it?

yes

no

Do you have any misunderstandings or disagreements?

**ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RYTHM OF FAITH BIBLE CHURCH?**

Sunday mornings

Notes:

Pray - (use picture directory)

Notes:

|                                   |        |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| Members Meetings (6 x's per year) | Notes: |
| Small Groups                      | Notes: |
| Wednesday Nights                  | Notes: |
| Explain how they can give.        | Notes: |
| Weekly Update                     | Notes: |

**PASTORAL QUESTIONS, NOTES AND RECOMMENDATION**

Ask: How can the church family pray for you?

Ask: How can we best extend spiritual care? What is your greatest spiritual need? How can we help you grow spiritually? Any current struggles? Any past situations or failures we should be aware of?

Additional Comments:

|  |       |               |             |             |
|--|-------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| Understands the Gospel?  |       | Notes:        |             |             |
| Did you take an individual picture?  |       |               |             |             |
| Did you take picture of them as a couple?  |       |               |             |             |
| Recommended for Membership?  |       |               | Date:       |             |
| Elder filling out form should contact previous church within one week of meeting with potential new member. Ask: How can we best shepherd this new member? |       |               |             |             |
| Notes from pastoral contact with previous church:  |       |               |             |             |
| Pastor's Signature:  |       |               |             |             |
| <b>If potential member did not fill out a digital form, please fill out the following sections.</b>  |       |               |             |             |
| <b>BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION</b>  |       |               |             |             |
| Full Name:   |       |               | Birth Date: |             |
| Street   |       |               | Appt. #:    |             |
| City   | State |               | Zip         |             |
| Occupation:  |       |               |             |             |
| Home Phone:  |       | Mobile Phone: |             | Work Phone: |
| Email:   |       |               |             |             |

**FAMILY**

|           |  |            |               |        |
|-----------|--|------------|---------------|--------|
| Married?  |  | Notes:     | Wedding Date: |        |
| Divorced? |  | Notes:     |               |        |
| Single?   |  |            |               |        |
| Widowed?  |  | Notes:     |               |        |
| Spouse:   |  |            |               |        |
| Children: |  |            |               |        |
|           |  | Birthdate: |               | Notes: |
|           |  | Birthdate: |               | Notes: |
|           |  | Birthdate: |               | Notes: |
|           |  | Birthdate: |               | Notes: |
|           |  | Birthdate: |               | Notes: |
|           |  | Birthdate: |               | Notes: |

**CHURCH INFORMATION**

|                  |            |        |     |      |
|------------------|------------|--------|-----|------|
| Previous Church: |            |        |     |      |
| Street:          |            |        |     |      |
| City:            |            | State: |     | Zip: |
| Phone:           | Attendance | from:  | to: |      |

Reason for leaving:

Were you a member in good standing? If not, why not?

In what ways did you serve at your previous church?

How long have you attended Faith Bible Church?

How were you introduced to Faith Bible Church?

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFO**

Full Name:

Relationship:

Phone number:



# Shepherding Information Form

Thank you for your interest in partnering with Faith Bible Church in raising up generations of God glorifying Christ followers. The church desires to care for you in the best way possible and the questions on the next few pages allow us to do that. Please take some time and fill out the information before you meet with an elder.

\* Required

## Biographical Information

1. First and Last Name \*

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2. Birthdate: \*

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*Example: January 7, 2019*

3. Address: \*

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4. Occupation:

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5. Phone (Mobile Preferred to Receive Texts):

---

6. Email: \*

---

### Family

Please fill out all information where applicable

7. Married?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

8. Wedding Date:

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*Example: January 7, 2019*

9. Spouse Name:

---



10. Divorced?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

11. If divorced, how many times?

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12. Widowed?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

13. Single?

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

14. Please list your children and their birth dates:

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### Church Information

15. Previous Church:

---

16. Address of previous church:

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17. Date range you attended:

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18. Reason for leaving:

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19. Were you a member in good standing? If not, why not?

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20. In what ways did you serve at your previous church?

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21. How long have you attended Faith Bible Church?

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22. How were you introduced to Faith Bible Church?

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### Emergency Contact Information

Who should we contact in case of an emergency?

23. Full Name:

---

24. Relationship:

---

25. Phone Number:

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This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS Baptism and Membership – Faith Bible Church

1. Is baptism required for membership at Faith Bible Church?

Jesus has commanded all believers to be baptized, and to disobey this command reflects a lack of submission both to Christ and His church. Therefore, only baptized believers are affirmed as members of Faith Bible Church.

2. Does Faith Bible Church affirm as members brothers or sisters who have not been baptized as a believer (including brothers or sisters who have only been baptized as infants)?

Faith Bible Church does not affirm as members brothers or sisters who have not been baptized as believers. Though we realize that many brothers and sisters view their infant baptism as biblical baptism, we are thoroughly convinced that the clear testimony of Scripture is for believers to be baptized after their confession of faith in Christ. This conviction leads us as a local church to only affirm members who believe, model, and teach this conviction. Therefore, we encourage followers of Christ who do not share this conviction to join a local church that shares their baptismal conviction. At the same time, we gladly embrace friendship and partnership together in the gospel alongside such brothers and sisters as a part of the global church.

3. Does Faith Bible Church affirm as members brothers or sisters who have not been baptized as believers by immersion (i.e., those who have been baptized as believers by pouring or sprinkling)?

Biblically, baptism is immersion. Because Scripture includes no examples of baptism by any other mode, we do not accept as members brothers or sisters who have not been baptized (i.e., immersed in water). The only exception to this is in cases where a believer is (or was) physically unable to be immersed in water. Beyond this exception, we are sympathetic with brothers and sisters who were “baptized” with water in another form by another local church that did not practice baptism by immersion. However, we require such brothers and sisters who desire to become members of Faith Bible to be baptized by immersion for various reasons: (1) as a church, we firmly believe baptism by immersion is biblical and exclusively practice baptism by immersion; (2) we believe it is good for every member of the church to be united together in a clear identification with Christ in his death and his life—an identification which is most clearly illustrated in baptism by immersion; and (3) as we participate together in the Great Commission, making disciples who will be baptized by immersion, we believe it is beneficial for members of the church to have modeled such baptism

## BAPTISM FAQ

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in their own lives. In light of these reasons, we require all potential members of Faith Bible Church who have not been baptized by immersion to be baptized by immersion in obedience to the command of Christ as a portrait of the gospel of Christ for the fulfillment of the mission of Christ.

4. Does Faith Bible Church affirm as members brothers or sisters who have not been baptized in the context of a local church (i.e., those who were baptized either on their own with another person or in a small group of some sort)?

We believe baptism is a practice of the local church to be administered under the authority of local church elders, and we baptize believers in gatherings of Faith Bible Church under the leadership of our elders. However, we are open to affirming as members of Faith Bible Church brothers or sisters who were previously baptized in a non--church setting (i.e., outside of a gathering of the assembled church), provided that their baptism occurred in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, upon repentance and faith, in connection with faithful proclamation of the gospel. Such prospective members would need to affirm and support the church's position that we teach, model, and practice baptism in gatherings of the church under the leadership of our elders.

5. Does Faith Bible Church baptize brothers or sisters who are not becoming members of Faith Bible (i.e., those who wish to be baptized but for miscellaneous reasons are not able to commit to membership at Faith Bible)?

Faith Bible Church sees a clear biblical link between baptism and church membership. Consequently, we are extremely hesitant to baptize any brother or sister who is not becoming a member of Faith Bible. In such instances, we encourage brothers or sisters to be baptized in the local church of which they will be a member. We would only baptize such brothers or sisters if they were somehow unable to join a local church at that time, yet they are committed to joining a local church as soon as possible after their baptism. In most such instances, however, we would encourage such brothers or sisters to join Faith Bible Church and then be sent out from among us to another local church.

6. Does Faith Bible Church recommend and/or establish a particular age for children to be baptized?

Faith Bible Church does not recommend or establish a particular age for children to be baptized. We do not want to discourage a regenerate child from being baptized, yet we also want to be extremely careful to avoid deception in a child's life by baptizing him or her. Therefore, our elders work deliberately with parents to ensure a child is able to understand, and embrace the gospel and bears the fruit of regeneration. A child will not be baptized until his or her

## BAPTISM FAQ

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parents (if they are believers), other church members, and the elders together affirm that the child is ready to be baptized. Then, upon a child's baptism, members of Faith Bible Church will work together with the parents in an intentional discipleship process for such children to grow in Christ as followers of Jesus in the company of his church.

### 7. Should an unbaptized believer participate in the Lord's Supper at Faith Bible Church?

All baptized believers who are following Christ in repentance and faith should participate in the Lord's Supper at Faith Bible Church. Preceding the Lord's Supper in the church, we encourage one another to examine ourselves, prayerfully confessing our sin and willfully repenting in obedience to our Savior. Because baptism is a biblical step of obedience to Christ, and because refusal of baptism reflects disobedience to Christ, we continually exhort every believer who has not yet been baptized to be baptized before partaking of communion.

### 8. Who is permitted to baptize believers at Faith Bible Church?

For prudential reasons the Elders will conduct all baptisms at Faith Bible Church.

Updated August 15, 2018





We're excited for you!

Your decision to turn from sin and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior is the most important decision you will ever make. Following your commitment to submit to Christ, an important next step in your spiritual journey is to be obedient in believer's baptism. This will be a special moment in your life, and the members of Faith Bible Church look forward to worshipping and celebrating with you at your baptism. This document has been prepared to outline the steps to prepare for baptism.

### Understanding the Meaning of Baptism

According to the Bible, baptism:

- publicly demonstrates your identification with Christ (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:4-5; Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:11-12). You are showing the work of Christ--His death, burial, and resurrection--and your participation in that work by God's grace.
- visibly declares your deliverance from the judgment of God (1 Peter 3:18-21).
- displays your union with Christ's body, His Church (Acts 2:26-41; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 4:3-6).
- follows both the example (Matthew 3:13-17) and the command of Christ (Matthew 28:19).

Baptism is a celebration of the grace of Christ in your life that has occurred through salvation. It is an external celebration of an internal transformation. We are celebrating what God has done by his grace.

### Preparing your Testimony

At your baptism, you will have the opportunity to publicly share with your church family and the world how Christ has rescued you. The goal of this time is to share how God's grace was made evident in your life through a response to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Prior to preparing a summary of what you will say, take some time to pray for the Holy Spirit to guide your words so that all those who will be present at your baptism will hear and respond to the gospel. Your recounting of the gospel can actually lead another person to trust in Christ.

## PREPARING FOR BAPTISM

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The questions below will help you write a testimony of God's grace that you will share at your baptism.

What is your understanding of who God is? What is God like?

How did you come to the realization that you were guilty before God and separated from God? What separated you from God?

How has the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ overcome your guilt and separation?

How have you responded to the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection?

What circumstances and people pointed you to the truth of the gospel?

Why do you want to be baptized?

Now that you have thought through your responses, combine them into a couple simple paragraphs.

Make it 1 to 2 pages double spaced (12 pt. font)

- Begin by stating your name and your age
- It's typically best to have an opening paragraph on your life before Christ, another paragraph on when you received Christ, another on how your life has changed since Christ, and finally a closing line on why you want to be baptized.
- Remember to explain the gospel for those that may not know what that entails.

Please complete your testimony and return it to Philip Bates by the Thursday before your scheduled baptism. After any revisions, please practice what you plan to read.

Email a copy of your testimony to Philip Bates ([philip@faithnaples.org](mailto:philip@faithnaples.org))

COPY OF ABSENTEE LETTER

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October 22, 2018

Elliot Chi  
2006 Oakridge Dr.  
Naples, FL 34119

Dear Elliot,

We hope this note finds you well. Be assured that we continually remember you before the Lord in our prayers, and we pray that you are still growing in your knowledge and love of the Lord, even though it seems you are no longer able to worship with us regularly. Having you as a part of Faith Bible Church was a blessing to our body, since your work was produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Since we believe the members of our church have been entrusted to our care by the Lord and we as pastors want to be faithful to that oversight by ministering to you. Furthermore, your fellow members also desire to serve you as they have covenanted to "exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require." However, we're disappointed that we haven't been able to make any contact with you over the last few months.

From our perspective, we find it difficult to fulfill this covenant with you since you can no longer attend weekly. From your side, it is also difficult to fulfill this covenant with us. However, we hope and pray that you are able to fulfill this covenant with a local church in your new community as soon as possible so that your relationship with the Lord will continue to grow in a community of like-minded believers. Have you been able to settle at a [new church home] yet?

As you know, it is our practice to place members on the "care list" if they have not attended a service in the last few months. Typically, We've decided to do this on the second members' meeting from your last attendance or when we last heard from you. In your case, this will be on [November 19, 2015]. In no way do we intend this to show a lack of love for you. In fact, this is our way of being able to love you as you have moved away. By being on the "care list," we are letting the congregation know that you have not yet joined another church and that we should be praying for you as you seek to covenant with a new body of believers.

At the third Members' meeting from your last attendance, on [January 21, 2018], if we have not received a letter of resignation from you, and barring any mitigating circumstances, the elders will likely recommend to the congregation that you be removed from membership for non-attendance. Again, we do this out love for you because we understand that being part of a local church is a benefit to you spiritually and also in obedience to the Lord. We simply can no longer be your local church and can no longer fulfill our covenant with you. In your new community, we pray that you will find a church that can provide spiritual accountability,

## COPY OF ABSENTEE LETTER

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fellowship, examples of godliness, and encouragement so that you may continue to be built up in Christ and grow in righteousness.

Because it gives us so much joy to hear when you are walking in faith, please let us know how you are doing and how we can more specifically pray for you so that you can find a new church. If we can be of any assistance, through recommendations, or just talking options through, don't hesitate to call or email. We know that everyone has unique difficulties in finding another church in a new city and we want to be a help to you if we can.

Sincerely,

Philip Bates  
Faith Bible Church  
239.825.5356 | philip@faithnaples.org

## COVENANT IN QUESTION FORMAT

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Since God's grace has led you to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, to obey him by being baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to give up yourselves to him in a life of obedience, with God's help, I now want to ask you to covenant with us to do the following:

Will you trust and obey the Word of God, acknowledging its supreme and final authority as we work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines? *We will.*

Will you work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, walking together in brotherly love, exercising an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonishing and correcting one another as occasion may require? *We will.*

Will you faithfully assemble with this congregation, regularly praying for yourselves and others? *We will.*

Will you endeavor to bring up those under your care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and seek the salvation of your family and friends? *We will.*

Will you rejoice at each others' happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows? *We will.*

Will you seek to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and seek to lead a holy and Christlike life? *We will.*

Will you contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations? *We will.*

Will you submit to the leaders who have been given to us by Christ, recognizing that they must give an account, praying for them and guarding their reputations? *We will.*

Will you, when we move from this place, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where you can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word? *We will.*

EXISTING CHURCH FAMILY (please stand): Do you also covenant to care for these brothers and sisters in Christ in the ways previously mentioned? *We will.*

Let's pray.

Our new members will remain up front after the service. Please come and welcome them into this body. I'm now going to ask Pastor Andrew to conclude our service with a benediction.



Faith Bible Church Member's Meeting Agenda  
March 17, 2019

| Time    | Event   | Lead   | Prayer  |
|---------|---|--|---|
| 5:30 pm | Covenant, Mission & Values  | Justin Harris                                  |   |
| 5:40 pm | General testimonies<br>Jonah Bueltel<br>April Walker<br>Charlie Rose                      | Philip Bates                                   |   |
| 5:50 pm | Praise and Prayer   | Philip Bates                                   | Various   |
| 5:55 pm | Incoming members:<br>Joseph Darwin<br>Bethany Darwin<br>Matheus Silva                     | Justin Harris<br>Justin Harris<br>Philip Bates | Leland Scott  |
|         | Outgoing members:<br>Drew Ogle<br>Sarah Ogle  | Philip Bates<br>Philip Bates                   | Brian Edman   |
| 6:05 pm | Prayer for Incoming and Outgoing  |  |   |
| 6:10 pm | Prayer: Public Care List<br>George<br>Lula<br>Sally<br>Debbie                             | Bill White                                     | Manny De La Cruz<br>Ann White<br>Cyndy Kendall<br>Holly Eardley |
| 6:20 pm | Discussion / Teaching<br>Benediction<br>Ministry Opportunities<br>Discipling<br>Directory | Philip Bates                                   |   |
| 6:30 pm | Deacon vote   | Mitch Bueltel                                  |   |
| 6:35 pm | Elder vote  | Justin Harris                                  |   |
| 6:40 pm | Financial Update  | Robbin Vandervort                              |   |
| 6:50 pm | Closing Prayer  |  |   |

Next Members Meeting: May 19  
 Security: Jeff Guimont  
 Children: Holly Eardley, Christina Mitzenmacher + teens  
 Nursery: Angie See





## ELDER RECOMMENDATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

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Please use the following template for presenting members in congregational meetings. (goal: 60 - 90 seconds)

I am presenting \_\_\_\_\_ for membership.  
full name

Children's names:

Inform the congregation where they live so members can serve them accordingly:

Share their salvation story in four to five sentences:

Briefly state how they came to Faith Bible and why they want to partner with us:

Inform the members how they can effectively pray for them:

1.

2.

**SAY:**

Any discussion?

Do you (church) agree with the Elders recommendation and accept your responsibility to care for \_\_\_\_\_ as a brother/sister in Christ?

- if yes, raise your hand

- if no, I do not think he is a believer or that we should care for him as a church (but will submit to the majority if necessary), raise your hand



## Elder Recommendation for Membership

Please use the following template for presenting members in congregational meetings. (goal: 60 - 90 seconds)

I am presenting **Lance Collins** for membership.  
full name

Children's names: **Cash (3) and Ella (2)**

Inform the congregation where they live so members can serve them accordingly:  
**They live about 25 minutes down Immokalee Rd, out toward Ave Maria**

Share their salvation story in four to five sentences:

**His salvation is a beautiful picture of what the church does. Lance is the younger brother of Rob Collins. Rob invited them to church and they began attending in August. When he was in our Two Ways to Live seminar he realized he was a sinner and driving home from work he turned from his sins and trusted in Jesus to save Him. Lance is excited to follow the Lord in baptism and join Faith Bible Church.**

Inform the members how they can effectively pray for them:

- 1. Salvation of their two children and other family members**
- 2. His work situation as it has recently changed and he is working a lot of extra hours.**

SAY:

Any discussion?

Do you (church) agree with the Elders recommendation and accept your responsibility to care for **Lance Collins** as a **brother/sister** in Christ? (**pending baptism**)

- if yes, raise your hand

- if no, I do not think he is a believer or that we should care for him as a church (but will submit to the majority if necessary), raise your hand



# *Preaching*





As a preacher, I firmly believe that I have a responsibility to clearly communicate the intent of the Word of God to the flock in full dependence upon the Spirit. Yet, such clear communication to the flock is impossible apart from personal clarity and conviction concerning the meaning and significance of the text. Therefore, generally speaking, my sermon preparation begins with my own personal understanding, appropriation, and appreciation of truth.

At the same time, I must quickly acknowledge that the sermon preparation process isn't just for me. I also have an obligation to share the meaning and significance of this truth with others, which obligates me to be regularly "among" the flock so I can survey their needs and better convey these truths to them when given the opportunity. In light of all this, you'll notice in the outline below a movement from a personal understanding and appropriation of the text to public representation and application of the text, all of which is undergirded by dependence upon the Lord in prayer.

### I. What Does the Text Say

A. **TRANSLATION**: To gain the clearest sense of the text as it was originally written I translate the passage of Scripture to be preached from the original Greek or Hebrew into my own English translation (admittedly, I do not know Aramaic). In longer portions of Hebrew narrative, I do not spend as much time on translation but still try to examine the text in the original.

B. **STRUCTURAL DIAGRAMMING**: I then structurally diagram the text in the original language to acquire a visual summary of the main ideas and their relationship to any supplementary material. Many times, this exercise helps me discern the emphasis of the original text and, ultimately, the emphasis of the contemporary sermon.

C. **OBSERVATIONS**: Before opening a commentary, reading a study Bible, or listening to a sermon, I spend time making observations on the text from my exposure to the text thus far. This step helps guard me against an unhealthy or unhelpful preconceived understanding of the the text and, in most cases, reaffirms for me the clarity of God's Word.

### II. What did and what does the text mean?

A. **INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS**: In this step, I probe the text by asking questions about things that may help me better discern its meaning. Specifically here I am trying to bridge any linguistic, literary, historical, cultural, or theological gaps that stand between me, the 21st century believer, and the original audience. I then answer these questions on the basis of as much original source material as possible, trying to use commentaries as a last resort.

B. **MAIN IDEA:** On the basis of all the research done thus far, I strive to grasp the main idea of the text by summarizing the biblical writer's original argument and then carefully translating this argument into our contemporary context.

III. How can I best communicate this to the congregation?

A. **NEED ELEMENT:** Having identified the core meaning of the text, I then spend time thinking through its original significance and on that basis thinking through the implications of that truth for people today, including myself. After writing down these needs, I spend time in prayer for those to whom I'll be preaching that may be needing this message.

B. **PLANNING SERMON DESIGN:** Next, I try to sketch out the clearest structure for communicating this truth to those who will be listening. Since we live in a culture in which the burden for clarity lies with the speaker, I work hard to make sure that I frame my argument in such a way that it is easy to follow and faithful to the text.

C. **SERMON WRITING:** I then fill in the structure or outline by writing out a clear explanation of each major facet of the text, an illustration of the facet of the text where needed, and contemporary implications or applications for each facet of the text (where appropriate). Also, understanding that we live in Western speaking context where the burden of clarity falls on the speaker, I then develop an introduction to preview the significance of the text and to place it in its proper context then I develop a conclusion to review the major points of the text and an appeal for the hearers to respond appropriately. While I usually do not end up reading all this content in the actual sermon, the writing process helps me clarify everything in my own mind before delivery.

D. **PRAYERFUL REVIEW:** Before preaching, I spend focused time in prayer for the sermon, myself, and those who will be listening as I walk through the text one more time with a pen in hand writing down things I feel may be helpful and deleting things that may not be as helpful.

E. **OTHER:** Throughout the week (after I've made my initial observations, see I. C.), I typically find other sermons to listen to on the same text during my drive to and from the church so I can appropriately steward my time on the road and benefit from the ministry of other gifted preachers.



2 John

Translation and Diagram

1/29/18

1 Ὁ πρεσβύτερος ἐκλεκτῆ κυρία καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτῆς, οὓς ἐγὼ ἀγαπῶ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, καὶ οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντες οἱ ἐγνωκότες τὴν ἀλήθειαν,

The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not I only but also all who know the truth,

2 διὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν τὴν μένουσαν ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ μεθ' ἡμῶν ἔσται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.  
because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever:

3 ἔσται μεθ' ἡμῶν χάρις ἔλεος εἰρήνη παρὰ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ παρὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐν ἀληθείᾳ καὶ ἀγάπῃ.  
Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

4 Ἐχάρην λίαν ὅτι εὔρηκα ἐκ τῶν τέκνων σου περιπατοῦντας ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, καθὼς ἐντολὴν ἐλάβομεν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς.  
I was exceedingly joyful to have found *some* of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father.

5 καὶ νῦν ἐρωτῶ σε, κυρία, οὐχ ὡς ἐντολὴν καινὴν γράφω σοι ἀλλὰ ἣν εἶχομεν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἵνα ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους.  
And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though *I am* writing a new commandment unto you but one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another.

6 καὶ αὕτη ἔστιν ἡ ἀγάπη, ἵνα περιπατῶμεν κατὰ τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ· αὕτη ἡ ἐντολή ἐστιν, καθὼς ἠκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῇ περιπατῆτε.  
And this is the love, that we are walking according to his commandments. This is the commandment, just as you *all* heard from the beginning, that you *all* should walk in it.

7 ὅτι πολλοὶ πλάνοι ἐξηλθοῦν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, οἱ μὴ ὁμολογοῦντες Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐρχόμενον ἐν σαρκί· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ πλάνος καὶ ὁ ἀντίχριστος.  
For many deceivers went out into the world, those not confessing the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh, this is the deceiver and the antichrist.

8 βλέπετε ἑαυτοὺς, ἵνα μὴ ἀπολέσητε τὸ εἰργασάμεθα ἀλλὰ μισθὸν πλήρη ἀπολάβητε.  
Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have worked for, but that you may receive a full reward.

9 πᾶς ὁ προάγων καὶ μὴ μένων ἐν τῇ διδασχῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ θεὸν οὐκ ἔχει· ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ διδασχῇ, οὗτος καὶ τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει.  
All who go on ahead and do not remain in the teaching of Christ do not have God. The one who abides in this teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.

10 εἴ τις ἔρχεται πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ ταύτην τὴν διδασχὴν οὐ φέρει, μὴ λαμβάνετε αὐτὸν εἰς οἰκίαν καὶ χαίρειν αὐτῷ μὴ λέγετε·  
If anyone comes to you *all* and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into *your* house and do not give him a *well-intended* greeting.

11 ὁ λέγων γὰρ αὐτῷ χαίρειν κοινωνεῖ τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ τοῖς πονηροῖς.  
For whoever greets him shares in his good works.

12 Πολλὰ ἔχων ὑμῖν γράφειν οὐκ ἐβουλήθην διὰ χάρτου καὶ μέλανος, ἀλλὰ ἐλπίζω γενέσθαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ στόμα πρὸς στόμα λαλῆσαι, ἵνα ἡ χαρὰ ἡμῶν πεπληρωμένη ᾖ.  
Though I have much to write to you, I do not want to *do so* with paper and ink. But, I hope to be with you *all* and to talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

13 Ασπάζεται σε τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἀδελφῆς σου τῆς ἐκλεκτῆς.  
The children of your elect sister greet you.

1 [καί] οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος  
[καί] τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτῆς,  
from whom *writing letter* to whom  
from whom (cont.)

οὗς ἐγὼ ἀγαπῶ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ,

[καί] οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος

[ἀλλὰ] [καί] πάντες οἱ ἐγνωκότες τὴν ἀλήθειαν,

[διὰ] τὴν ἀλήθειαν τὴν μένουσαν ἐν ἡμῖν

[καί] μεθ' ἡμῶν ἔσται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

3 ἔσται μεθ' ἡμῶν

χάρις

ἔλεος

εἰρήνη

παρὰ θεοῦ πατρὸς

[καί] παρὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς

ἐν ἀληθείᾳ [καί] ἀγάπῃ.

how *writing letter* (divine blessing, truth, and love)

4 Ἐχάρην λίαν [ὅτι] εὐήρηκα ἐκ τῶν τέκνων σου περιπατούντας ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, KEEP WALKING IN LOVE  
[καθὼς] ἐντολήν ἐλάβομεν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς.

5 [καὶ] νῦν ἐρωτῶ σε, κυρία, . . .  
οὐχ ὡς ἐντολήν καινὴν γράφων σοι  
[ἀλλὰ] ἦν εἴχομεν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς,  
. . . [ἵνα] ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους.

6 [καὶ] αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη,  
[ἵνα] περιπατῶμεν κατὰ τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ.  
αὕτη ἡ ἐντολή ἐστίν, . . . [καθὼς] ἠκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς,  
. . . [ἵνα] ἐν αὐτῇ περιπατῆτε.

7 [ὅτι] πολλοὶ πλάνοι ἐξῆλθον εἰς τὸν κόσμον,  
οἱ μὴ ὁμολογούντες Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐρχόμενον ἐν σαρκί·  
οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ πλάνος [καὶ] ὁ ἀντίχριστος.

8 βλέπετε ἑαυτοὺς, [ἵνα] μὴ ἀπολέσητε τὴν εἰρησάμεθα  
[ἀλλὰ] μισθὸν πλήρη ἀπολάβητε.

9 πᾶς ὁ προάγων [καὶ] μὴ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ θεὸν οὐκ ἔχει·  
ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ,  
οὗτος [καὶ] τὸν πατέρα [καὶ] τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει.

10 [εἴ] τις ἐρχεται πρὸς ὑμᾶς [καὶ] ταύτην τὴν διδαχὴν οὐ φέρει,  
μὴ λαμβάνετε αὐτὸν εἰς οἰκίαν  
[καὶ]

χαίρειν αὐτῷ μὴ λέγετε·

11 ὁ λέγων [γάρ] αὐτῷ χαίρειν κοινώνει τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ τοῖς πονηροῖς.

12 Πολλὰ ἔχον ὑμῖν γράφειν  
οὐκ ἐβουλήθη διὰ χάρτου [καὶ] μέλανος,  
[ἀλλὰ] ἐπέλιξεν γενέσθαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς  
[καὶ] στόμα πρὸς στόμα λαλήσαι,  
[ἵνα] ἡ χάρις ἡμῶν πεπληρωμένη ᾖ.

13 Ἀσπάζεται σε τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἀδελφῆς σου τῆς ἐκλεκτῆς.

## GUARD AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS

desire for personal fellowship

expressions of greeting

2 John  
 Observations  
 1/29/18

Look for patterns (main themes emphasized by amount of discussion), supporting material which clarifies the main ideas, cause and effect relationship of ideas, questions and answers focusing on attention, progression of thought toward a climax or conclusion), connectives (comparisons between ideas or persons, contrasts of ideas, character, or behaviors; conditional statements; correlative structure; reasons recited by the writer; purpose statements; results), and features (significant words which carry the weight of the meaning, significance of verb tenses, descriptions used by writer, repetition, figurative language, strong assertions, commands applying to theological truths, promises revealing intentions of God). In summary, look for historical, literary, and theological details.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1 Ὁ πρεσβύτερος ἐκλεκτῇ κυρία καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτῆς, οὓς ἐγὼ ἀγαπῶ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, καὶ οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντες οἱ ἐγνωκότες τὴν ἀλήθειαν,</p>  | <p>- John, like Peter, views himself as an elder (pastor).<br/>       - The elect lady is likely a metonymy for the local church since all of John's second person pronouns are plural (e.g., feminine referents to countries).<br/>       - John conveys pastoral love for this congregation.<br/>       - John writes not only on behalf of himself but also on behalf of the congregation.<br/>       - John's love isn't shallow sentimentality but rooted in truth.</p> |
| <p>The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not I only but also all who know the truth,</p>   | <p>- John conveys pastoral love for this congregation.<br/>       - John writes not only on behalf of himself but also on behalf of the congregation.<br/>       - John's love isn't shallow sentimentality but rooted in truth.</p>   |
| <p>2 διὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν τὴν μένουσαν ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ μεθ' ἡμῶν ἔσται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.<br/>       because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever:</p>  | <p>- The mutual love that <i>all</i> the born again have for one another is rooted in truth. There is no true unity at the expense of doctrine.<br/>       - His love for this other congregation and mutual love for truth (that eternally abides in them both) is what motivates him to write this letter.</p>   |
| <p>3 ἔσται μεθ' ἡμῶν χάρις ἔλεος εἰρήνη παρὰ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ παρὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐν ἀληθείᾳ καὶ ἀγάπῃ.<br/>       Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.</p> | <p>- His tone is warm and confident as he trusts divine grace, mercy, and peace from the Father and Son will be enjoyed by them.<br/>       - He writes in truth and love, which preview his two great concerns for the letter.</p>  |

*Handwritten notes:*  
 - side her  
 - stand beside her

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>4 Ἐχάρην λίαν ὅτι εὑρηκα ἐκ τῶν τέκνων σου περιπατοῦντας ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, καθὼς ἐντολὴν ἐλάβομεν παρὰ τοῦ πατρός.</p> <p>I was exceedingly joyful to have found some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father.</p>   | <p>- He is first concerned to encourage them in their love for one another. The focus here is internal.</p> <p>- John commends this church for having come across some of their members who were "walking in the truth."</p>   |
| <p>5 καὶ νῦν ἐρωτῶ σε, κυρία, οὐχ ὡς ἐντολὴν καινὴν γράφω σοι ἀλλὰ ἦν εἶχομεν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἵνα ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους.</p> <p>And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I am writing a new commandment unto you but one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another.</p>   | <p>- While there certainly is a doctrinal component here, John most notably points to how it works itself out in love (v. 5).</p> <p>- John knew they were walking in truth because they were obeying God's commandment to love (vv. 4b-5).</p> <p>- So he simply encourages/exhorts them to <i>keep</i> loving one another.</p>   |
| <p>6 καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη, ἵνα περιπατῶμεν κατὰ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ· αὕτη ἡ ἐντολή ἐστίν, καθὼς ἠκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῇ περιπατῆτε.</p> <p>And this is the the love, that we are walking according to his commandments. This is the commandment, just as you all heard from the beginning, that you all should walk in it.</p> | <p>- Sometimes they don't need a new commandment but just a new reminder and encouragement.</p> <p>- Again, we remember that "love" isn't mere sentimentality but grounded in obedience to God's command. There is a "moral essential" component of "the love" (God's commanded love).</p> <p>- This is one of the oldest and most fundamental commands in the book (selfless sacrifice for the good of each other based on God's revealed desires).</p> |

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| <p>7 ὅτι πολλοὶ πλάνοι ἐξῆλθον εἰς τὸν κόσμον, οἱ μὴ ὁμολογοῦντες Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐρχόμενον ἐν σαρκί· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ πλάνος καὶ ὁ ἀντίχριστος.</p>  | <p>- He is secondly concerned with them defending truth against false teachers.<br/>- With ὅτι, John connects the defection of the false teachers to disobedience to God's commands.</p>  |
| <p>For many deceivers went out into the world, those not confessing the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh, this is the deceiver and the antichrist.</p>   | <p>- The defection was widespread as "many" deceivers "went out" into the world. The "world" here is the sphere of the evil one.<br/>- John's grammar demands that these "deceivers" are the same as "those not confessing the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh."</p>  |
| <p>8 βλέπετε ἑαυτοὺς, ἵνα μὴ ἀπολέσητε ἃ εἰργασάμεθα ἀλλὰ μισθὸν πλήρη ἀπολάβητε.</p>   | <p>- This category of person is not only "the deceiver" but "the antichrist."</p>   |
| <p>Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have worked for, but that you may receive a full reward.</p>  | <p>- Thus, doctrine is inextricably tied to true love and fellowship.<br/>- John wants to keep them on their guard against these false teachers and eroders of the doctrine of Christ.</p>  |
| <p>9 πᾶς ὁ προάγων καὶ μὴ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ θεὸν οὐκ ἔχει· ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ, οὗτος καὶ τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει. All who go on ahead and do not remain in the teaching of Christ do not have God. The one who abides in this teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.</p> | <p>- Here he emphasizes the human responsibility element. We must look out for one another. We must fight to keep our reward.<br/>- To deter them further from such low views of Christ, he again reminds them of the false teacher's lack of relationship with God. No Christ, no God. Know Christ, know God.</p>                          |
| <p>10 εἴ τις ἔρχεται πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ ταύτην τὴν διδαχὴν οὐ φέρει, μὴ λαμβάνετε αὐτὸν εἰς οἰκίαν καὶ χαίρειν αὐτῷ μὴ λέγετε.</p>   | <p>- We have a responsibility to keep "remaining" in the teaching of Jesus (e.g., branch and vine, continue deriving nourishment from who Jesus is).<br/>- We not only must guard against it personally but we must be careful to not let it advance by encouraging or supporting such false teachers.</p>                                  |
| <p>If anyone comes to you all and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house and do not give him a well-intended greeting.</p>  | <p>- The hospitality culture of that day would have made this a real quandry. It was much different than our own (cf. speaking to someone at the door).<br/>- The forbidding of greeting seems to mean don't wish them well or encourage them along. While we don't have to be rude, they can't just walk away thinking we are neutral.</p> |
| <p>11 ὁ λέγων γὰρ αὐτῷ χαίρειν κοινωνεῖ τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ τοῖς πονηροῖς.</p>  | <p>- The forbidden greeting is not for non-believers but for active propogators of false teaching.</p>  |
| <p>For whoever greets him shares in his good works.</p>   |   |

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| <p>12 Πολλά ἔχων ὑμῖν γράφειν οὐκ ἐβουλήθην διὰ χάρτου καὶ μέλανος, ἀλλὰ ἐλπίζω γενέσθαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ στόμα πρὸς στόμα λαλήσαι, ἵνα ἡ χαρὰ ἡμῶν πεπληρωμένη ᾖ.<br/>Though I have much to write to you, I do not want to do so with paper and ink. But, I hope to be with you all and to talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete.</p> <p>13 Ἀσπάζεται σε τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἀδελφῆς σου τῆς ἐκλεκτῆς.<br/>The children of your elect sister greet you.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Paper and ink were expensive in that day.</li> <li>- John's love comes across in personal ways.</li> <li>- He knows that personal presence leads to the fulfillment of mutual joy.</li> <li>- He is not concerned about them but encouraging.</li> <li>- The churches maintain mutual concern for one another.</li> </ul> |
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2 John

Idea

1/30/18

Follow the steps below to discover and name the textual idea, jotting your possibilities down as you go. Avoid terms that are too general (especially regarding God), on the one hand, or too narrow for the text treatment on the other. The test will be whether the words you choose work throughout the text to name its main idea.

Begin by listing all the theological theme words in the text. These are the Bible themes which are in various texts in different combinations.

|                 |               |             |      |            |          |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------|------|------------|----------|
| behavior (walk) | belief        | Christology | love | fellowship | doctrine |
| commandments    | relationships | truth       |      |            |          |

1. Look at the passage for the “plain and obvious meaning” of the text. Think of telling a child in one word what the text is about. *truth*
2. Focus on the writer’s intended original meaning. The text cannot mean what it never meant. What did the writer seem to have in mind? *relationships in truth*
3. Look at the larger context of the chapter and book. What is the writer’s progression of thought? Where does your text fit into that sequence of ideas? *John has already shown a concern for a right doctrine of Christ and its impact upon relationships with God and his children. It seems he is continuing to reinforce similar concerns.*
4. See if the text seems to have a pivotal verse, a single key verse which captures the point of the whole text. If so, what is the best word to name it? v. 5, *love*

Now write the word that seems best to identify the dominant theme of the text in the most simple and direct way. The *subject* answers the question, “What is the text writer talking about?”  
**Subject of the text in one word:** *truth*

Choose another term to focus and define the subject, either one of the words above, or another that works better. The *complement* answers the question, “How does the writer limit the scope of what he is talking about?”

**Complement to the subject in one word:** *relationships*

Textual Idea: *truth's impact upon relationships*



2 John  
Questions  
1/30/19

Look for patterns (main themes emphasized by amount of discussion), supporting material which clarifies the main ideas, cause and effect relationship of ideas, questions and answers focusing on attention, progression of thought toward a climax or conclusion), connectives (comparisons between ideas or persons, contrasts of ideas, character, or behaviors; conditional statements; correlative structure; reasons recited by the writer; purpose statements; results), and features (significant words which carry the weight of the meaning, significance of verb tenses, descriptions used by writer, repetition, figurative language, strong assertions, commands applying to theological truths, promises revealing intentions of God). In summary, look for historical, literary, and theological details.

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| <p>1 Ὁ πρεσβύτερος ἐκλεκτῇ κυρία καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτῆς, οὓς ἐγὼ ἀγαπῶ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, καὶ οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντες οἱ ἐγνωκότες τὴν ἀλήθειαν,<br/>The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not I only but also all who know the truth,</p> | <p>- What was the apostle's relationship with other churches?<sup>1</sup></p> <p>- Why refer to the church as "the elect lady?"<sup>2</sup></p> <p>- Who were the "all" who knew the truth?<sup>3</sup></p> |
| <p>2 διὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν τὴν μένουσαν ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ μεθ' ἡμῶν ἔσται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.<br/>because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever:</p>  | <p>- Why does he emphasize "truth" here?<sup>4</sup></p>  |
| <p>3 ἔσται μεθ' ἡμῶν χάρις ἔλεος εἰρήνη παρὰ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ παρὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐν ἀληθείᾳ καὶ ἀγάπῃ.<br/>Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.</p>             | <p>- Why does he emphasize the future tense verbs "will be"?<sup>5</sup></p> <p>- How are "truth and love" related to God's "grace, mercy, and peace?" What does this mean?<sup>6</sup></p>                 |

1. The common assumption is that they were written from Ephesus while the Apostle John was formulating plans for a tour through the churches of the province. ~ Hiebert, 284

2. It was the personification of a local church over which the The phrase is, however, more likely to be a personification than a person—not the church at large but some local church over which the elder's jurisdiction was recognized, her children (1, cf. 4, 13) being the church's individual members. John's language is not appropriate to a real person, either in his statement of love (1–2) or in his exhortation to love (5). The elder could hardly refer to his personal love for a lady and her children as a 'command' which 'we have had from the beginning' (see v. 5). The situation envisaged is no more suggestive of an individual than is the language, unless we are to imagine that she was a widow with a large family of children, only some of whom (4) were following the truth, while others had fallen into error, although none is named. The message of verses 7–11 about the treatment of itinerant false teachers may be applicable to every Christian home, but is more likely to have been addressed to a Christian community than to a single home in it. There are no obviously personal references in this letter, as there are in the third, viz. to Gaius, Diotrephes and Demetrius (vv. 1, 9, 12). Moreover, the unconscious transition from the second person singular to the second personal plural (marked in AV by the changes from 'thy' and 'thee' in vv. 4 and 5 to 'ye', 'yourselves' and 'you' in vv. 6, 8 and 10, and again from 'you' in v. 12 back to 'thy' and 'thee' in v. 13) seems to betray the fact that the author is thinking of a community rather than an individual. In the third letter, which is addressed to an individual called Gaius, the second person singular is employed consistently throughout. The contrast between the conclusions to the two letters is also striking. Apart from these internal considerations of language and message, 'the personification of cities, countries and provinces in female form was a well-established convention' (Dodd), like our 'Britannia', and there is good biblical precedent for the use of a female personification to indicate the church, whether universal (Eph. 5:22–23; Rev. 21:9) or local. ~ Stott, 203–04

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In the Old Testament Israel was now a virgin, the 'daughter of Zion' (Isa. 52:2; cf. Isa. 47:1ff.; Ezek. 16:7), now married (Isa. 62:4–5; Jer. 2:2) and a mother (Isa. 54:1ff.; cf. Gal. 4:26), now a widow (Isa. 54:4; Lam. 1:1). The Corinthian church had been betrothed to Christ as a bride to her husband (2 Cor. 11:2), and another church is described by Peter as 'she who is in Babylon, chosen together with you' (1 Pet. 5:13, *syneklektē*). This 'Babylon' is probably Rome. In the light of this evidence, it seems almost certain that the chosen lady was one of the churches of Asia, her children its individual members, her 'chosen sister' (13) the neighbouring church from which John was writing, and her sister's 'children' (13) its members. Indeed, John's letter to this church may be the one mentioned in 3 John 9, since both letters are concerned with the question of hospitality. ~ Stott, 204

What's the evidence for a personal lady?

It seems most natural to take the simple words of the epistle to refer to an actual lady and her children. This view is favored by the simplicity of the letter, the writer's reference to having met some of her children (v. 4), the mention of her sister's children (v. 13), the reference to the elect lady's house (v. 10), as well as the analogy of the third epistle, which certainly is addressed to an individual. It is interesting to notice that the formula of address in both epistles is exactly the same. We conclude that this letter may have been addressed to a church, but we do not think it probable. In the words of Burdick, "The principles of biblical interpretation would seem to direct one to adopt the most natural meaning of the passage, namely that an individual lady and her children were the intended receivers of the letter." ~ Hiebert, 282

3. Nor was he alone in his love for them, for also all who know the truth (literally 'have come to know' it, perfect, *egnōkotes*) shared his love. 'The communion of love is as wide as the communion of faith' (Alford). ~ Stott, 205

4. Why did John and all other Christians love the members of this church? Because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us for ever. If we are Christians, we are to love our neighbours and even our enemies; but we are bound to our fellow Christians by the special bond of truth. Truth is the ground of reciprocal Christian love. John stresses this fact by his four references to the truth in these three opening verses. We love each other not because we are temperamentally compatible, or because we are naturally drawn to one another, but because of the truth which we share. ~ Stott, 205

Not only have we come to know it objectively (1); but it lives in us (2) as a present indwelling force, and with us (emphatic) it will stay for ever. Heretics may leave us and go out into the world (7, cf. 1 John 2:19), but in the Christian society the truth will remain secure. So long as the truth endures, in us and with us, so long shall our reciprocal love also endure. Moreover, since Christian love is founded upon Christian truth, we shall not increase the love which exists between us by diminishing the truth which we hold in common. In contemporary movements towards church unity we must never compromise the very truth on which alone true love and unity depend. ~ Stott, 205

5. John, on the other hand, places first in the sentence an emphatic *estai*, which should be translated not as a prayer, 'be with you' (AV), but as a declaration (RSV, NEB, NIV) 'shall/will be with us' or 'you'. In the second place, mercy is added between grace and peace, as in the three Pastoral Epistles. Grace and mercy are both expressions of God's love, grace to the guilty and

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undeserving, mercy to the needy and helpless. Peace is that restoration of harmony with God, others and self which we call 'salvation'. Put together, peace indicates the character of salvation, mercy our need of it and grace God's free provision of it in Christ. ~ Stott, 206

The formula *χάρις ἔλεος εἰρήνη* ("grace, mercy, peace") appears again in the NT at 1 Tim 1:2, 2 Tim 1:2; (cf. Jude 2). The biblical term "grace" (*χάρις*) denotes the undeserved love of God, freely shown to his creatures (cf. Psa 84:11 = 83:12, LXX; 1 Cor 15:10). See H.-H. Esser, NIDNTT 2 (1976) 115–24. "Mercy" (*ἔλεος*) is similar in meaning; but it includes the idea of God's faithfulness to his covenant relationship with man, and thus (in the case of human infidelity) embraces the notion of divine forgiveness (cf. Deut 7:9, LXX; Luke 1:50). See H.-H. Esser, NIDNTT 2 (1976) 594–98. "Peace" (*εἰρήνη*) is a Jewish concept, signifying well-being (salvation, wholeness) at every level, including the spiritual (cf. Isa 26:3, LXX; John 14:27). See H. Beck and C. Brown, NIDNTT 2 (1976) 776–83. Taken together, the three elements in this blessing may indicate the provision, character and need of man's salvation (Stott, 204). ~ Smalley, 321

6. It was the truth which bound John in love to this church, especially the truth about Christ in opposition to the 'lie' of the heretics (1 John 2:21–23). ~ Stott, 204–05

The salvation we will ultimately experience is established by truth and expressed in love.

The fourth Johannine deviation from Paul's normal epistolary greeting is the addition of in truth and love. This may mean either that we shall experience grace, mercy and peace from Father and Son only if we remain in truth and love, or that grace, mercy and peace from Father and Son will express themselves, work themselves out, in truth and love. Whether truth and love are the conditions or the consequences, or merely the accompaniments, of our receiving grace, mercy and peace, they are clearly essential marks of the Christian life. They have already occurred in combination in verse 1, 'whom I love in the truth'. Contrast Ephesians 4:15. The fellowship of the local church is created by truth and exhibited in love. ~ Stott, 206

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| <p>4 Ἐχάρην λίαν ὅτι εὔρηκα ἐκ τῶν τέκνων σου περιπατοῦντας ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, καθὼς ἐντολὴν ἐλάβομεν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς.</p>  |  |
| <p>I was exceedingly joyful to have found some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father.</p>   | <p>- Is "truth" here general doctrine, Christology in particular, or ethical extension of the gospel? What does he mean by "walking in the truth?"<sup>7</sup></p>         |
| <p>5 καὶ νῦν ἐρωτῶ σε, κυρία, οὐχ ὡς ἐντολὴν καινὴν γράφω σοι ἀλλὰ ἦν εἶχομεν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἵνα ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους.</p>  | <p>- Why use the feminine figure of speech for the church?<sup>8</sup></p>   |
| <p>And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I am writing a new commandment unto you but one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another.</p>                             | <p>- What is the relationship between "truth" and "love?"<sup>9</sup></p>  |
| <p>6 καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη, ἵνα περιπατῶμεν κατὰ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ· αὕτη ἡ ἐντολή ἐστίν, καθὼς ἠκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῇ περιπατῆτε.</p>  | <p>- What is the force of this present tense verb, ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους? Does it imply continuance or does it assume that it is not happening with everyone?<sup>10</sup></p> |
| <p>And this is the the love, that we are walking according to his commandments. This is the commandment, just as you all heard from the beginning, that you all should walk in it.</p> | <p>- In what way is "walking according to his commandments" an expression of love of one another?<sup>11</sup></p>   |
|  | <p>- What is the difference between his "commandments" and his "command?"<sup>12</sup></p>   |
|  | <p>- What is the antecedent of ἐν αὐτῇ?<sup>13</sup></p>   |

7. To 'walk in the truth' ('following the truth', RSV; 'living by the truth', NEB) includes both believing it, especially the central truth of the incarnation, and obeying it, seeking to conform our lives to it. ~ Stott, 209

The phrase "living in truth" (περιπατοῦντας, literally, "walking") means "living the true life," a life which is committed to God's truth revealed in Jesus and expressed in obedience (see the comment on "in truth" in v 1; see also 1 John 1:6–7). . . . The basic idea conveyed by the verb "living" (or "walking") is that of a person's total attitude of mind, which issues in specific actions. Here the writer is describing habitual commitment (περιπατοῦντας is a present participle) on the part of orthodox believers to the Christian gospel and its moral standards; that is, they are living constantly in the light (see 1 John 1:7), rather than in the darkness.

~ Smalley, 323

It means the Christian truth of the gospel [AB, Alf, BAGD, Brd, EGT, Lns, My, NIC, NTC, TH, TNTC, WBC]. They lived in accordance with the instruction found in the gospel [EGT, Lns, NIC, NTC, TH]. They both believed and obeyed God's truth [TNTC, WBC]. ~ Anderson, 204

The divine "command" which Christians have "received" (ἐλάβομεν refers to a particular moment in history; cf. John 13:34) is more than simply the injunction to love (so 1 John 4:21; cf. 2:7; 4:7; 5:2–3). The thought harks back directly to 1 John 3:23, where God's "command" is designated as twofold: to believe in Jesus and to love one another. Once again, truth (the truth



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revealed in Jesus) and love (the love which God commands and inspires; 1 John 4:19) belong together (cf. vv 1, 3). Both are enjoined upon the faithful believer, and both are to characterize his way of life. ~ Smalley, 323

Living out what God has revealed to be true in Christ. Expressions of obedience and affection.

8. At this time Christianity was not favored by the Roman authorities; and if the letter had fallen into hostile hands, its unspecific salutation would have made it appear as “a harmless letter to a friend” (Dodd, 145). Nevertheless, the community addressed is a particular one. ~ Smalley, 318

9. The command is to walk according to the truth, which means belief in Jesus that beahves itself in Christian love.

The association between love and truth, which has already been made in 2 John (see vv 1 and 3, and the comment on v 4), is implicit in the present v. See 1 John 3:23. ~ Smalley, 324

To be a Christian is to believe in Christ and to love one another (1 John 3:23; cf. Col. 1:4; 2 Thess. 1:3). If we deny the Son and do not love, we neither have nor know God (1 John 2:23; 4:8). Faith and love are signs of new birth (1 John 5:1; 4:7). They are also commands. . . . It is when faith is regarded as an intuition and love as an emotion that they appear to lie beyond the sphere of duty. But Christian faith is an obedient response to God’s self-revelation in Christ. This revelation has a moral content. ~ Stott, 209

10. So he saw some walking according to truth and he wants to commend it. At the same time, he wants them to keep doing it. This is a command that can be repeated enough. You get what you expect, inspect, and emphasize. John wants to see this continue as they are devoted to truth.

It recapitulates the thought in v 5 (see the comment) of a fundamental obligation to love which needs frequent repetition and constant realization. . . . The injunction to live in obedience to the demand for love (and truth), as a basic spiritual requirement from the Christian believer, would have been entirely appropriate to a community like John’s which was disintegrating in the face of heresies within and secessionist attacks from outside. ~ Smalley, 327

11. “this is love ... live.” For the fourth time in vv 4–6 the writer employs the term ἐντολή (“command”). In three of these instances, including the present context, the word appears in the singular. The divine “command” to love (see the comment on v 5; also 1 John 4:21) encapsulates the many “commands” (v 6a) of God (Gal 5:14). ~ Smalley, 326

12. The plural form refers to all of God’s commands, while the singular form refers to the command to love one another [Alf, Brd, NIC, NTC, WBC, Ws], a commandment that sums up all the others [Alf]. ~ Stott, 208

13. The reference of “in it” (ἐν αὐτῇ) is naturally to “love,” thus completing the balance of the two parts of this v (see the comment on v 6a). ~ Smalley, 326

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| <p>7 ὅτι πολλοὶ πλάνοι ἐξῆλθον εἰς τὸν κόσμον, οἱ μὴ ὁμολογοῦντες Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐρχόμενον ἐν σαρκί· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ πλάνος καὶ ὁ ἀντίχριστος.</p>                 | <p>- What is the relationship of vv. 7–10 to vv. 5–6 in light of the ὅτι?<sup>14</sup></p>   |
| <p>For many deceivers went out into the world, those not confessing the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh, this is the deceiver and the antichrist.</p>        | <p>- In what way had they "gone out into the world?"<sup>15</sup></p>  |
| <p>8 βλέπετε ἑαυτοὺς, ἵνα μὴ ἀπολέσητε τὰ ἐργασάμεθα ἀλλὰ μισθὸν πλήρη ἀπολάβητε.</p>  | <p>- What was the nature of their heresy?<sup>16</sup></p>   |
| <p>Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have worked for, but that you may receive a full reward.</p>   | <p>- Why use the singular demonstrative pronoun when the antecedents seem to be plural (i.e., many deceivers, those)?<sup>17</sup></p> |
| <p>9 πᾶς ὁ προάγων καὶ μὴ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ θεὸν οὐκ ἔχει· ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ, οὗτος καὶ τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει.</p>                        | <p>- What is it that we can "lose" and what is it that "we have worked for"?<sup>18</sup></p>  |
| <p>All who go on ahead and do not remain in the teaching of Christ do not have God. The one who abides in this teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.</p> | <p>- What does it mean to "go on ahead?"<sup>19</sup></p>  |
|  | <p>- Is this the teaching <i>from</i> Christ or the teaching <i>about</i> Christ?<sup>20</sup></p>                                     |

14. It indicates the grounds for the preceding exhortation to walk in love (vv. 5, 6) [Alf, Brd, EGT, ICC, Lns, My, NIC, TH, WBC]: you must love one another because many false teachers are in the world. Love is a safeguard against error [Ws]. ~ Anderson, 209

Departure from the truth results in a failure of love. Thus the dark description of heretical secession and its consequences (vv 7–11) forms the basis of John's warm appeal for love and unity (vv 4–6). . . . Truth and love are central to all genuinely Christian experience. Therefore, "let us continue to love one another." *For* (ὅτι) if correct belief is corrupted by incorrect (as indicated by the defection of deceivers into the world), a lack of mutual love, as well as of truth, will follow. ~ Smalley, 327

The two are related. John commends the faithful inner nucleus ('some of your children') who are 'walking in the truth' and begs them to keep God's other commands, especially that of mutual love. His reason for wanting to see the church thus strengthened in truth and love is that many deceivers have gone out into the world to spread their wicked lies (7). ~ Stott, 208

15. In both passages, although there the tense is perfect and here aorist, he describes them as having gone out into the world. The verb *exēlthon* may refer to their having left the church, for the same verb occurs in the same tense in 1 John 2:19. But it seems more likely that the language is deliberately reminiscent of the mission of Christ and of his apostles. Christ was being aped by antichrist. The Son had 'gone out' from the Father into the world (John 7:29; 8:42; 13:3), and had sent forth the apostles into the world (John 17:18; 20:21; cf. Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15 and 3 John 7 which also has *exēlthon*). Perhaps the implication is that as the apostles were sent forth into the

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world to preach the truth, so these false teachers had gone forth to teach lies, as emissaries of the devil, the father of lies. At all events, we are to think of them as itinerant false prophets, travelling along the great Roman roads of Asia Minor, seeking to insinuate their error into the churches they visited. 'From their own point of view, they were Christian missionaries. From the standpoint of the Presbyter they were impostors' (Dodd). ~ Stott, 211

These heretically inclined members of John's church had defected "into the world" (εἰς τὸν κόσμον). The term "world" here has a basically neutral meaning: it is primarily the habitation of mankind and a material sphere of operation. But the term may include negative overtones, since the "world" of error (embraced by the heretics) in this case contrasts with the "world" of truth inside the Johannine community (cf 1 John 4:1, 5; and see the comment on 2:15). Note further Wengst, 240. ~ Smalley, 328

16. It wasn't about what they were confessing but about what they weren't confessing.

We are not told that they categorically denied the incarnation, but that they did not confess it. Perhaps they were subtle enough to counterfeit rather than contradict it. Nevertheless, their teaching was tantamount to a contradiction. The central Christian affirmation about Jesus is variously phrased in the Johannine letters. Sometimes it is simply 'that Jesus is the Christ' (1 John 2:22; 5:1), which is taken as being equivalent to an acknowledgment of him as the Son (1 John 2:23; 5:5). The full confession, however, is that he 'has come in the flesh' (1 John 4:2), where the perfect participle ἐλήθητα is used. ~ Stott, 211-12

17. The presbyter identifies the heretical members of his community who have lost faith by denying Jesus Christ, incarnate, with "the deceiver and the antichrist." The use of the article ὁ ("the") in both cases suggests a particular figure or idea which would be well-known to John's readers. The writer is saying that in the manifold proponents of wrong doctrine may be discerned the activity of the antichristian arch-deceiver (Williams, 65; cf. Houlden, 146). The group of heretics was deceiving men, as well as opposing Christ (cf. Did. 16.4). ~ Smalley, 330

18. They are laboring in doctrine.

The thought is not of their winning or losing their salvation (which is a free gift), but rather their reward for faithful service. The metaphor seems to be taken from the payment of labour, since reward (*misthos*) is a workman's wage (as in Matt. 20:8; John 4:36; Jas 5:4). John may be thinking of himself and them as 'fellow labourers in the Lord's vineyard', in which case he is anxious that they should not slack and so receive 'less than a full day's pay' (Smith). ~ Stott, 213

The elder's admonition here implies an equally eschatological dimension. Self-protection is necessary since the end-time (heralded by "the deceiver and the antichrist," v 7) is imminent. . . . positively, so that they may receive their "reward in full." The elder refers first of all to the pastoral and missionary work which has been undertaken and accomplished in the community and beyond, and shared with his orthodox church members (cf. 1 John 4:6; for the idea of "not losing what has been accomplished" see Gal 4:11; Phil 2:16). . . . "reward" received "in full." This image is drawn from the area of employment, since "reward" (μισθόν) is the term for a workman's wage (cf. Matt 20:8; Jas 5:4). The full expression, "receive a reward," is Jewish (cf. Ruth 2:12, LXX; but note the hesitation by Brooke, 176, to find a source in this passage for the present text). In the NT the idea of "rewards" occurs in association with eschatological expectations (cf. Matt 5:12; Mark 9:41; 13:13 = Matt 10:22; 1 Cor 3:8, 14; Rev 11:18; 22:12).



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Here the phrase μισθὸν πλήρη (“reward in full,” or “a reward without anything lacking”) indicates the outcome of a believer’s faithful service. ~ Smalley, 331

19. The term προάγειν (“to go ahead”), used in a metaphorical and disparaging sense, appears only here in the NT. It is not progress in the faith which is being attacked, but progress beyond it (cf. Stott, 211–12). The fact that the article ὁ (translated as “who”) is not repeated before μὴ μένων (literally, “not remaining”) indicates that the thought of “advancing” is linked very closely to the following expression about not “remaining” in Christ’s teaching. To advance in heresy automatically prevents a Church member from continuing in Christian orthodoxy. ~ Smalley, 331–32

John is almost certainly borrowing from the vocabulary of the heretics. They claimed to have ‘go-ahead’ views, a superior gnōsis, which had enabled them to advance beyond the rudiments of the faith in which the common herd were content to ‘continue’. John refers sarcastically to their claim. They had indeed ‘run ahead’. They had advanced so far that they had even left God behind them! For anyone who denies Christ thereby forfeits God. ~ Stott, 213

This is as true today of all non-Christian religions as it was of Cerinthian Gnosticism in the first century. Many today want God without Jesus Christ. They believe in God, they say, but see no necessity for Jesus. Or they regard other religions, whether ancient or modern, as alternative roads to God. Such claims must be strenuously resisted. In this the Christian is conservative, not progressive, seeking to ‘continue’ in the doctrine of Christ, not to ‘advance’ beyond it. . . . To ‘advance’ beyond Christ is ‘not progress but apostasy’ (Plummer), not enlightenment but darkness. ~ Stott, 214

Mormons and more revelation. We know more now of the Enlightenment.

20. More probably, however, the genitive is objective, meaning “the tradition, or teaching, about Christ,” handed down authoritatively by the apostles and embraced by orthodox believers (so Bultmann, 113; Marshall, 72–73 and n.13). For in the Johannine letters the writer is concerned above all about right christology, what has been heard and taught about Jesus “from the very beginning” (1 John 1:1; cf. 2 John 5); and he alludes to this in v 7, where he describes those who have not “acknowledged Christ.” ~ Smalley, 332

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| <p>10 εἴ τις ἔρχεται πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ ταύτην τὴν διδαχὴν οὐ φέρει, μὴ λαμβάνετε αὐτὸν εἰς οἰκίαν καὶ χαίρειν αὐτῷ μὴ λέγετε·<br/>If anyone comes to you <i>all</i> and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house and do not give him a well-intended greeting.</p> | <p>- What's the difference between 8–9 and 10–11?<sup>21</sup><br/><br/>- In what ways were they "receiving" teachers into their homes?<sup>22</sup><br/><br/>- Is this forbidding hospitality?<sup>23</sup></p> |
| <p>11 ὁ λέγων γὰρ αὐτῷ χαίρειν κοινωνεῖ τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ τοῖς πονηροῖς.<br/>For whoever greets him shares in his good works.</p>  | <p>- What does χαίρειν mean in that cultural context?<sup>24</sup></p>   |

21. The presbyter continues to remind his audience of the dangers which face the Church from outside. His first warning (vv 8–9) concerned the threat to the believer's relationship with God through Christ. The second and final admonition has to do with Christians and their association with heretics. ~ Smalley, 332–33

John now introduces his second warning. So grave is the consequence of the deceivers' error (causing its adherents to lose the Father as well as the Son) that he not only exhorts them to take heed to themselves but instructs them how to treat a false prophet who, having 'gone out into the world' (7), now comes to you. ~ Stott, 214

22. The establishment and consolidation of the Roman Empire made travel throughout the inhabited world much easier and safer than it had ever been before. It was facilitated by the great roads which the Romans built and by the pax Romana which their legions maintained, as well as by a commonly understood language. The rapid spread of the gospel in the first century AD owed much to these advantages. But where should travelling Christians stay when they came to some city on a business journey or, more important still, on a missionary journey? 'The comforts of the modern hotel, or even of the village inn, were then unknown' (Findlay). Besides, according to W. M. Ramsay, 'the ancient inns ... were little removed from houses of ill-fame ... The profession of innkeeper was dishonourable, and their infamous character is often noted in Roman laws.' 'Inns were notoriously dirty and flea-infested', while 'innkeepers were notoriously rapacious' (Barclay). As a result, it was natural that Christian people on their travels should be given hospitality by members of local churches. There are many traces in the New Testament of this custom. For example, Paul was entertained by Lydia in Philippi, Jason in Thessalonica, Gaius in Corinth, Philip the evangelist in Caesarea and the Cypriot Mnason in Jerusalem (Acts 16:15; 17:7; Rom. 16:23; Acts 21:8, 16). ~ Stott, 199–200

23. "do not welcome him into the house ... do not (even) pass the time of day." For the use of the verb (μὴ) λαμβάνετε, "(do not) welcome," cf. John 1:12; 6:21; 13:20. Schnackenburg (315–16) also compares 2 Cor 11:4, which speaks of "receiving" (λαμβάνετε) a different spirit or gospel from the one originally accepted by the Christians at Corinth. . . . For such "house" meetings in the NT see Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:19; Col 4:15; Phlm 2. John is not therefore forbidding private hospitality, but rather an official welcome into the congregation, with the widespread opportunities which would then be available for the heretics to promote their cause.  
~ Smalley, 333

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First, John is referring to teachers of false doctrine, not merely to believers in it. . . . This isn't a casual visitor or a confused non-Christian but an official teacher. He or she doesn't just believe a certain message but actually propogates it (Doterra buyers v. Doterra sellers). "In the case of a private individual who denies Jesus Christ, it is enough to watch out (8) lest we embrace his error, and to seek to win him to the truth. But in the case of someone officially commissioned to teach his error to others, we must reject not only it but him" (Stott, 215).

Second, John seems to be concerned with official welcomes and visits. John is addressing a church not just an individual. He could thus be referring to not receiving them into the "house" church into which they belonged. At the same time, it could be the more personal hosting of false teachers in an individual's home. 'It does not mean that (say) one of Jehovah's Witnesses should not be invited into the house for a cup of tea in order to be shown the way of God more perfectly in the sitting-room than would be convenient on the doorstep' (p. 142).

Third, John seems to target teachers of fundamental doctrine like Christology (not every kind of error). "It is the entertainment of antichrist which is forbidden us, the arch-deceiver who in his teaching denies the essential deity and humanity of Jesus. If John's instruction still seems harsh, it is probably because his concern for the glory of the Son and the good of human souls is greater than ours, and because 'the tolerance on which we pride ourselves' is in reality an 'indifference to truth' (Alexander)."

Rather, the presbyter is warning the members of his community against the dangers of entertaining heretics and their views in such a way as to strengthen and develop their erroneous position, and so compromise the truth (cf. v 4). At that point the line must be drawn; for love and truth cannot be separated (v 3). For the contrast in this v between the love of brothers and the rejection of heretics. ~ Stott, 334

24. In v 10 he has spoken of the need to resist the peddlers of doctrinal error who, in their travels, seek a platform from which to spread their false ideas about the person of Jesus. Such are not to be welcomed officially, for this implies a real participation in their "evil deeds.". . . The "greeting" in question here may be regarded as possible either at the start or the conclusion of the encounter. Being "a partner" in the evil deeds of the heretics by thus saluting them (κοινωνεῖ, literally, "shares") implies an active participation in their error (cf. Brooke, 179). Cf. 1 Cor 10:20 (sharing with demons); 1 Tim 5:22 (sharing in the sin of others); 1 Pet 4:13 (sharing in the sufferings of Christ). ~ Stott, 334

It is well known that letters written by friends to each other in the Greek language in the first century AD conformed to an accepted pattern with a stylized beginning and end. Usually the letter opened with the writer's name and the identity of the recipients, followed by the single word *chairein*, 'greeting'. This form may be found at the beginning of the letter of James and in Acts 15:23. Other authors of New Testament letters, while retaining the announcement of writer and readers, Christianized the greeting, replacing *chairein* by *charis*, 'grace'. ~ Stott, 205

This uncompromising order to Christians who are normally to be 'given to hospitality' (e.g. Rom 12:13; 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:3-10; Titus 1:8; Heb. 13:2; 1 Pet. 4:8-10), and who are generously to entertain true missionaries (3 John 5-8), has proved unacceptable to many. ~ Stott, 214-15

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|---|--|
| <p>12 Πολλά ἔχων ὑμῖν γράφειν οὐκ ἐβουλήθην διὰ χάρτου καὶ μέλανος, ἀλλὰ ἐλπίζω γενέσθαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ στόμα πρὸς στόμα λαλήσαι, ἵνα ἡ χαρὰ ἡμῶν πεπληρωμένη ᾖ.</p> <p>Though I have much to write to you, I do not want to do so with paper and ink. But, I hope to be with you all and to talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete.</p> | <p>- What kind of relationship did John have with them?<sup>25</sup></p>                           |
| <p>13 Ἀσπάζεται σε τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἀδελφῆς σου τῆς ἐκλεκτῆς.</p> <p>The children of your elect sister greet you.</p>   | <p>- What is the difference between Ἀσπάζεται and χαίρειν? Does this even matter?<sup>26</sup></p> |

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25. One characterized by complete (filled-to-the-brim) joy in each other's actual presence. This is the relationship between pastor and people, loving brothers and sisters in Christ. There is a huge difference between the way a church relates to the false teacher and the formative elder.

26.

2 John

Text to Sermon/Divisions

1/31/18

Bridging from text to sermon is a vital aspect of sermon preparation. The purpose is to construct an interpretive bridge for bringing the truth of the text to its expression in the sermon. This exercise overlaps the previous one, depending on the work already done to name the textual idea.

1. Identify the text subject in one word. This answers the question, "What is the text writer talking about?" This one word will be carried through the entire exercise for consistency of thought. *truth*
2. Identify the complement to your subject in one word. This answers the question, "How does the text writer limit the scope of his treatment of the subject?" This word completes naming the idea. *love*
3. Using some form of the subject/complement words, write a working title for your emerging sermon. *truth's target of love*
4. Conduct the following bridge exercise:
  - What does this text teach about God the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit? *God the Father and God the Son give us grace, mercy, and peace both now and forevermore. One cannot have a relationship with the Father without receiving the teaching of/concerning his Son. // The Father commands his children to walk in the truth (to live in light of what he has revealed). // God the Son came in human flesh and "the teaching" concerning him is essential for a relationship with God the Father. // The Spirit is the one who anointed Jesus and enabled the mission from his Father.*
  - What does this text teach about fallen humanity? *Some of them have been commissioned or captivated by Satan to promote doctrine that does not confess Jesus Christ in the flesh. These people particularly target Christian communities seeking reception, affirmation, and support.*
  - What does God want my people to know? *love for one another is the ultimate expression of obedience to God; this love for one another rests on the foundation of our teaching about Christ*
  - What does God want my people to love? *one another by means of Christ*
  - What does God want my people to do? *love one another by protecting the truth of Christ*
5. Write the textual idea statement as the first of the four bridging sentences. Use the subject and complement, plus elements of the historical setting and literary context of the text. *John used exhortations concerning love and truth to highlight the urgency of rallying around the person and work of Christ.*

6. Write the sermon idea by adapting the wording of the textual idea. Omit the historical trappings and make it a present tense statement of a universal theological principle.

*God's children rally around the truth of Christ.*

7. Write the interrogative by restating the sermon idea as a question. Choose one of the following questions: who, what, when, where, why, how. This question will seek answers in the text, the predicates. *How do God's children rally around the truth of Christ?*

8. The transition sentence responds to your interrogative by using a KEY WORD to categorize the predicates in the text, which express the subject/complement. Include the KEY WORD with a rewording of the sermon idea. *STEPS*

9. List the predicates in the text, which express what the writer is saying about his subject. These are specific answers to the question raised in you interrogative. They will become the basis for you sermon divisions.

*expressing love*

*protecting truth*



watch out for blogs & in linked social media

2 John  
Need  
1/31/19

I frequently find ~~the~~ in both directions.

\* I don't need "balance" but "wholeness." \*  
*at the expense of the other* *need more or both*

The need element is the human condition which corresponds to the truths that are presented in your text. The need may be described plainly in the text or only implied. The textual concepts can be traced to particular negative experiences, emotions, and circumstances common to human life which call for the message of the text.

*I've looked at empires, emant expressions of success. not building buildings but paths not numbers but names*

1. Identify the needs mentioned directly in the text as they pertained to the original textual setting: threat of Christological attack by means of an infiltration of false teachers; theoretical and practical disconnection between truth and love; confusion regarding how to love one another and when to withhold hospitality

*don't want them to get to know the wrong Jesus*

*not to seek personal, intellectual fulfillment but knowledge of the personal Christ for the benefit of others*

2. Identify the needs suggested in the text by implication as the writer addresses problems of his day: lacking confidence regarding future salvation since faith was under threat; discouragement from a lack of authoritative pastoral presence; forgetting the primacy of love; underestimating the power of the false teacher; forgetting their future reward for labor

*not just them say that there you love*

3. Summarize the concepts from your text which will become the main ideas of the sermon. Use your subject/complement with whatever other explanation is needed to clarify the idea: Great churches move from truth to love. Thus, they express love and protect truth. **ESSENTIALS**

*I don't get sleepy; more Christen enough*

4. Use the following categories to begin describing the likely experience of the person who needs to hear the message of the text as a remedy for his needs.

*I like - church. What do you like about it?*

• His symptoms (presentation problems, external signals) of the trouble he is experiencing: undaunted positivity toward everyone and everything; battle-hardened, eagle-eyed allegiance for doctrinal truth; deer-in-the-headlights orientation to the mission of the church

• His underlying assumptions (faulty thinking) about the issue: Christology and Christian love have little to no relationship with one another; we should be unconditionally kind and supportive of everyone; doctrinal fidelity is the culmination of obedience to the law *big error*

*inside/outside/anti-side*

*with Christian conviction, steel opinion*

• Some of the consequences (practical impacts) of his experience: friends and/or family have been doctrinally decimated and are eternally damned; maligned testimony and muted ministry impact despite doctrinal fidelity and Christological accuracy; missing out on joy and true community that can only come from commonality in Christ

*no more, not or, no one*

*real love identity*

*may they all know this joy of belonging truly joy*

• How a person feels (emotional expressions) who is suffering at this point: unaware and out-of-the-loop regarding the mission of the church; unsettled by lack of clarity regarding the strategy of the church; comfortable with limited expressions of Christian love

*wake them up to their need*

*the need only met in the person of Jesus*

*see the real Jesus as the only sweet Saviour*

*that behaves in love based on truth*

*that is based on truth so it may behave in love*

*Prophets with exposed practices have based on love  
Prophets with exposed in love*

*we love each other on the foundation of truth e.s. to much have, by much foundation*

5. Write a profile of the person needing your message in vivid, concrete terms as you sympathetically identify with his suffering and interest him in the good news you have for him. Truthful Ted loves the doctrines of grace in Christ. Not only does he possess them and proclaim them but he especially loves to protect them. When attack is afoot he's already suited up and ready to go. The only problem is that he's such a hardened warrior that the congregation views him as cold and aloof and thus his ministry has little to no impact. Loving Lisa on the other hand doesn't know that much doctrine but she sure does love people. Hospitality and encouraging words are her specialty. She "loves" church members, friends, and neighbors all the same. After all, aren't we all God's children? The only problem is that she's so tenderhearted that she is virtually impotent in boldly declaring the gospel. In some cases, she has even enabled people in their push back against Christ. *not be balanced but complete*

Specific People Present?

Deb D., Dan M., Robert E., Jeff G., Allison L., Craig B.



tone: affectionate exhortation

## 2 John - From Truth to Love

Intro:

sidekick  
context  
truth  
need  
start  
prop. (1-3)

Doctrinal Dem. Larry Lucy.  
if you had to identify w/ one, who? <sup>1</sup> point at strength or weakness / both present  
have church on its own about to face a fight - affirming / equipping for truth & love  
the truth of Christ culminates in Christian love, being in 2 imperatives

I.  
expe.  
illu.  
arg.  
app.  
exam 1 to 2

Express love from truth (14-6).  
reminds them ultimate expression truth / obedience → love  
longing for clarity on goal & rule / culminates in love  
not just a head religion; not just a heart religion; heart for Christ in love for his people  
learn so you may live in love: affection  
obedience (Did I hear you just instruction) - correct  
So inseparable link between love and truth demands I. But that's just part of it. Also, II.

II.  
expe.  
illu.  
arg.  
app.  
exam 2 to concl.

Protect truth for love (7-13).  
- watch out for one another for good by relational alignment  
- don't unwittingly suggest  
this has come under attack at its Christological root  
love by very nature exclusive - has a center, maintains a boundary  
how do we protect truth w/out putting people off? <sup>1) teachers rejected, not just people</sup>  
steel-spined about the person & work of our Savior / Lord <sup>2) official doctrine, not interpersonal</sup>  
w/ H-1) for self 2) for back over  
3) for other members  
what <sup>4) their</sup> not founded on <sup>accurate</sup> work of Christ

orig.  
red.  
act.  
app.

not balance but wholeness  
pursue truth (<sup>keep it up</sup> <sup>lodge</sup> <sup>out</sup> <sup>live at</sup> concrete ways); practice love (concrete ways)  
keep it up if whole; cultivate an area, if lacking; consummate relationships  
let's behold ultimate connection between truth & love in <sup>through Jesus</sup> communion  
will enable <sup>from</sup> <sup>progressive</sup> wholeness

communion  
fence  
examine  
bread  
serve  
benevolence  
pursue



**From Truth to Love**  
2 John

*1 The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth, 2 because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever: 3 Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love.*

*4 I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father. 5 And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another. 6 And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it. 7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. 8 Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. 9 Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, 11 for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.*

*12 Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete. 13 The children of your elect sister greet you.*

**A Tale of Two Churches: Bible-Believing Baptist and Charity Community Church**

In a small suburb outside a major city in America's heartland, stands two identically sized yet drastically different churches.

**Bible-Believing Baptist**

The website of the first features detailed doctrinal statements and a library of expository sermons averaging over an hour long. A visit to the first church tells quite a bit about the church's values. The songs were doctrinally dense, slow and methodical. The message was long, difficult to understand, but, very accurate. While everyone present seemed to be sure to take notes, no one really speaks to you to take down your name and number.

**Charity Community Church**

The second website is replete with group photos and detailed bios of the pastoral staff. A visit to the second provides quite a different experience. The songs,



were easy to follow, upbeat and encouraging. The preaching, while significantly shorter, was warm and relational. After the service, you receive several invitations to lunch or coffee through the week.

**If moving to this little one-horse town in America's heartland, which one would you join and why? Which one should you join?**

If you had to pick, some of you would settle in at Bible-Believing Baptist. It's not only orthodox but expositional. You have an eagle-eye for doctrinal truth. You love to think hard on the text and biblical background and theological nuance. While the relational coldness of the church is not your preference, you know what's most important. After all, what God is "love" if it's based on a lie.

Some of you would value Charity Community Church. It's not only orthodox but affectionate. You have an eagle-eye for others in need. You love to connect with other brothers and sister in Christ to hear about their spiritual needs. While the lack of depth in the preaching gives you pause, you know that the sermons are Bible-based and rich with practical application. After all, what good is "truth" if it doesn't lead us to obey the greatest commandment to "love."

Some don't really know or care as long as their is a nursery or a group of people your own age. :) Or, you feel this is a set up, and refuse to answer. :)

We all have our preferences about church and what we think it should be...Our members should have goals and desires for this church. How do we know if we are on the right track? Some of you are trying to find a church and need to know what to look for. We've all got opinions but do they align with Jesus? To what kind of church would he belong? What kind of congregation would he commend for our consideration?

**Through our study in 1 John, we learned that the apostle regularly addresses both ends of this supposed spectrum. He would have us concerned with truth. He would have us concerned with love. But, which church would he commend?**

It's a rather cryptic start. "The elder" writes to "the elect lady." At first glance, this letter seems like personal correspondence between an old man and a sister-in-Christ. Yet, the content of the letter leads us to believe there is more going on.

The author: John, who had a penchant for not identifying himself by name, here describes himself as a pastor and/or sage with seniority. He's clearly writing from a position of affectionate authority.

The recipient: The “elect lady” is simply a personification of a local church with which John was familiar. In the NT, the church is often figuratively portrayed in the feminine entity (e.g., “bride of Christ,” 2 Cor. 11:2; 1 Pet. 5:13, etc.). “God bless America . . . stand beside her and guide her through the night with a light from above.” This is further evidenced by the fact that John often uses 2nd person plural pronouns throughout the letter (vv. 6, 8, 10).

So we have an older, wiser pastor figure writing to a church and its members. It seems some time had passed between John's first letter and this one. He has crossed paths with some church members from this particular congregation and celebrated their steadfast walk in truth. They were living according to the gospel of Christ. Their learning of Jesus had affected their living for Jesus.

But, at the same time, some things needed to be re-emphasized and trouble was on the horizon. So many had “gone out” from the churches teaching idolatrous views of God the Son. Thus, they needed to “stay together”—keep loving one another—and they needed to “stand firm”—protect the truth.

Not one or the other, but both. “Truth” (of the gospel) mentioned five times. “Teaching” (about Christ) mentioned three times. John mentions “love” four times.

So his concern for that church and churches just like ours is that we keep loving each other and protecting the truth. . . . But, he will not allow us to believe that these are somehow separate. They belong to one another.

John “loves [them] in truth” and God saves us “in truth and love.” The section on love in vv. 4–6 is integrally connected to the section on truth in vv. 7–11. Notice the transitional “for” between the two. Truth and love are connected; they are not two separate topics.

So the text calls for a church characterized by truth in love thereby demonstrating two values of the church that Jesus would choose. *If evaluating a church . . . If participating in a church . . .*



I. Jesus would commend a church that expresses love based on truth (1–6).

**TONE of Confident Expectation & Encouragement**

*1 The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth, 2 because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever: 3 Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love.*

John loves this church and its members in truth (i.e., “the elect lady” and “her children”). The apostle knows that, in fact, all who also “know the truth” love these brothers and sisters as well. There is a warmth of relationship between “the elder” and the church.

There is also a profound awareness that “the truth” forever abiding in him and them is the basis for this love. Herein lies the key to the entire letter. Their strong love for one another is grounded in the steadfast truth that they share. Whatever this “truth” is it is in them both and “will be” with them “forever.” *So, what is this “truth” that establishes such profound “love?”*

What “truth” forever cements a relationship of love between people who otherwise enjoy not relationship with one another? It is the truth of the gospel. The truth of Jesus Christ saving sinners. The truth that while we all once *rebelled* against God we have been *rescued* from sin and *reconciled* to God and thereby are now spiritually *related* to one another.

This truth enables him to proclaim, “grace, mercy, and peace . . . from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son” will continue to be with them all “in truth and love.” These are benefits of the salvation planned by God the Father and provided by God the Son. Grace - unearned favor and kindness of God. Mercy - the undeserved withholding of God's judgment. Peace - not only the cessation of hostility, but also the wholeness and health of our relationship with God. They know these blessings by means of truth. They experience these blessings by means of love. *Do you see the inseparable connection?*

*4 I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father.*

John is confident that they will together experience God's saving blessings forever. Practically, John affirms that they are already experiencing God's grace at this very moment. His heart "greatly rejoiced" as he discovered some of the members of this church "walking in the truth." The "truth" of the gospel was already impacting them via their obedience. They were doing the things God had commanded in His Word.

POINT: John is confident of this church's reception of truth and experience of love. He's confident in the power of gospel truth in establishing their relationship. He's confident of the power of gospel truth enabling their obedience. *Yet, he would still command them show love to one another.*

#### APPEAL for continued love expressed from truth

*5 And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another.*

Despite the confidence and love, John determined they would still benefit from a reminder to keep loving one another. This command was nothing new. Followers of Jesus knew this from the very beginning. Love for other believers was their most basic responsibility (e.g., If all else fails . . .).

Jesus summed up all God's commands with loving God and loving one another. The focus is still on followers of Jesus. Love begins here. So keep on loving one another. *In what way do we love? What does this love look like?*

*6 And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.*

"This" points forward. Here's what this "loving one another" looks like: "we walk according to his commandments." Love for other Christians looks like obedience to God. The more I love God the more I love his people. His commands for us are good and beautiful expressions of love. God's commands do not hinder our relationships but help them.



### The Pyramid of Love - vertical obedience leads to horizontal closeness

“Stealing (large or small), coveting (envy for others, an obstacle to what you desire), adultery (lust that objectifies), murder (hatred that harms), lying (undependable, unfaithful) does not show love to another.

Working hard and receiving an honest wage, staying sexually pure for your future spouse or sexually faithful to your current spouse, showing kindness instead of anger, being trustworthy and dependable are beautiful expressions of love.

Thus he adds, “this is the commandment.” This is old news but needs frequent reminders. It’s been around forever so that you would keep walking in it. Don’t forget the basic command to love one another.

Stay focused. Keep it simple.

### Don’t you love the refreshing simplicity and clarity of loving one another?

Some: just give me the big idea. LOVE

Others: tell me exactly what is expected. This is why Scripture spells it out..

Last week we said our church covenant together, which is essentially a commitment to live together in the way the Bible prescribes. When you read it in our bylaws, it is chock full of Scriptural footnotes.

*The point is that Scripture clearly points us to what it looks like to love. Our love for one another is anchored in God’s truth.*

So are God’s commands really what “loving one another” looks like? We don’t mind the positive, right? But, the saying hard things, confronting someone in sin? Is *this* really love?

The claim to love must be objectively defined. Everyone’s trying to give their own definition of “love.” The musician who defines it in terms of emotional impulse. The sociologist who defines it in terms of sexual arousal. The boyfriend who defines it in terms of sexual gratification. The authoritarian who defines it in terms of compliance to his own rules. The spiritualist defines it in terms of warm feelings and invisible connection. The pacifist defines it in terms of “not upsetting” another.

One scene in Lewis Carol's *Through the Looking Glass* speaks to this very dilemma. Alice meets Humpty Dumpty and engages him in a rather tense dialogue. At one point, Alice and Humpty disagree over the meaning of the word "glory." The egg says the word means "a nice, knock-down argument." Alice objects.

*"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."*

*"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."*

*"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."*

Who then gets to define "love?" Who is master?

God has defined this love for us (1 John 3:16).

God showed us his love by Jesus sacrificing himself for our eternal spiritual good.

We show love by sacrificing ourselves for the eternal spiritual good of others.

Sometimes this is a pat on the back and expression of prayer. Other times it may be a careful word of spiritual concern. But, it is always a sacrifice of self for the eternal good of others.

So maybe you'd be well-served by this simple reminder? It's been a few weeks.

It's one thing to know the truth. But, it hasn't reached its intended end until expressed in love for other believers in the fellowship. Earnest praying, generous giving, careful listening, tender helping, faithful serving.

This common truth has put us into a new relationship with each other.

So for those of you who lean toward Bible-Believing Baptist . . . don't forget this clearest command.

For those who lean toward Charity Community . . . don't forget that God defines the love.

So Jesus would commend a church that expresses love based on truth. But that's just part of it. Jesus would also commend a church that protects truth that undergirds love.



II. Jesus would commend a church that protects the truth that undergirds love, 7ff.

*7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.*

**The Problem (v. 7):** As they continue to live out the truth in love, they must also be aware that —the foundation of their love—is under spiritual attack.

As an apostolic and pastoral veteran, John knew the movements of the enemy.

“Many deceivers” have already gone out into the world. This could mean that they left the fellowship of the church and are now in the sphere of the enemy or that they have been commissioned by Satan himself to impact the world. Either way, they are not simply “deceived” (passive) but “deceivers” (active).

There is world of difference between a customer and a salesman (e.g., my own victimization at the hands of pyramid scheme).

*So what are they selling? In what way would they be a threat to the ongoing practice of love in this local church?*

By not confessing the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Their deception would not be marked by the blatant advertising of error but by the omission of essential truth. They are not deceivers on account of what they do confess but on what they don’t confess.

In this case, the heart of the matter is the person and work of Jesus Christ. While Jesus Christ (truly God, truly man, sent from God to save and reign) is the swan song of God’s people, the deceiver conveniently leaves this out. Here’s a hallmark of a deceiver—his confession, her pledge or allegiance, the bedrock of his/her belief is something/someone other than “Jesus Christ in the flesh.”

In fact, such a one is not just confused but they have been commissioned. Whether they know it or not, they are ultimately a tool in the hand of “the deceiver” and “the antichrist.” Church family, the distortion of the gospel is the primary work of our enemy. If he can keep us from a clear understanding and appreciate of Jesus Christ, it’s checkmate.

*There is nothing that Satan so much endeavors to accomplish as to bring on mists with the view of obscuring Christ, because he knows, that by this means the way is opened up for every kind of falsehood. This, therefore, is the only means of retaining, as well as restoring pure doctrine—to place Christ before the view such as he is with all his blessings, that his excellence may be truly perceived.*

**The Practice:** Proactively protect one another and do not unwittingly promote damnable doctrine.

*8 Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward.*

Look out for yourself and each other. Being on guard is an emotionally exhausting exercise, one that we all too easily give up, especially in our age of distraction-based technology.

If you don't keep looking out for these subtle erosions of doctrine, you won't have a ministry. It won't always be in what they say the teach or believe but in what they leave out.

John envisions these church members working together to accomplish a particular goal. He likens our ministry of the gospel to a collaborative construction project. We are "building up the body of Christ."

As members of Faith Bible Church, we've partnered together to build up the body of Christ. We add to it as people are saved, baptized, and join the church. We edify it as people are sanctified and grow up to become more like Jesus. There is a day of reward.

"the judgment seat of Christ," when each true child of God will "give an account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:12). . . . When we stand before our Savior and Lord, Christ will not judge believers to determine innocence or guilt—heaven or hell. That judgment of "not guilty" was already rendered when God declared us righteous at our conversion based on the saving death of Christ (2 Cor. 5:21). Because of the finished work of Christ, received as our own by faith in Him, our resurrection is guaranteed and our place in the kingdom of heaven is permanently assured.

However, at the judgment seat of Christ, our future reward in the kingdom of God will be determined by the quality of our deeds and the motives behind them (see 1 Cor. 3:10-15). So we must be careful to protect each other's commitment to Christ alone. The "deceivers" may know better than to enter this fellowship but they don't mind entering your home, joining you for lunch, or sharing with you online, in a podcast, through a TV/radio program.



*9 Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.*

They may even seem really advanced thinkers, progressive in their views. They may speak of “*another* revelation of Jesus Christ.” They may try to sell you on “*a new perspective*” of Jesus. They may affirm the authority of the Scriptures but also point out another authority such as the Pope or the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church. They literally “go on ahead” (run out in front) by not “abiding” (remaining) in the “teaching of Christ.”

This is the teaching concerning Christ throughout the Bible, that he is the Son of God robed in human flesh singularly reconciling us to God through his life, death, and resurrection. This is the teaching from Christ regarding himself, his work, and the way of salvation.

The result of all their “progress?” They do “not have God.” They’ve overshot. They’ve missed. They advanced right past Jesus. Therefore, they have no relationship with God. It is not merely a confused, weak, or well-intended-but-struggling relationship with God; rather, “they do not have God.”

BUT “whoever abides in the teaching [concerning Jesus] has both the Father and the Son.” *Isn’t this beautifully stated? Do you see what’s at stake in our teaching concerning Jesus?* No Jesus. No God. Know Jesus. Know God.

So protect the pants off of each other. Take on a spiritual interest in the Christological clarity, craving, and conviction of your brothers and sisters in Christ. We’re in a building project here and we better not let anyone build on a sinkhole. Only rarely will be targeted by blatantly heretical hit-men.

But the deceivers who will infiltrate our midst will most likely undermine us in more subtle ways. It may be a book by a Christian on an extremely interesting topic but one that overshadows the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ. It may be a “Bible study” in which good morals are promoted but Christ-centered truth regarding the person and work of Jesus stands on the periphery.

## HOW?

Ask one another: How’s your love for Christ? What have you been learning lately? (Then, listen for Jesus). How are things going for you spiritually? (Then, listen for Jesus). Ask a loved one about their hope for heaven or tell you about

their relationship with God. (Then, listen out for Jesus Christ come in the flesh).

Ironically, there is an awful lot of “Christian” stuff out there which has nothing to do with Christ thereby undermining our labor together in the gospel.

*So practically speaking . . . look out for one another. But, John also gives another practical piece of advice. Don't just proactively 'look out' for Christ-less teaching but also don't accidentally 'lift up' Christ-less teaching.*

*10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, 11 for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.*

The original grammar here presents this as a situation assumed to be true for the sake of argument. Ultimately, what John posits here is a very likely scenario for these first-century believers. Someone (anyone) may come to “ya’ll” who does not “bring this teaching”—the teaching about the person and work of Jesus Christ. When this happens, “do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting . . .”

**Does this mean we cannot have non-Christians in our house or tell them “hello?” Why does the Bible contradict itself by promoting hospitality but at the same time prohibiting it?**

Some background: Hospitality was an impressive feat in the time of the early church. Believe it or not, when people traveled, they would actually rely on the kindness of strangers to make their journey or do their business. “Inns,” as we typically think of them, were little better than brothels. So a these wolves in sheep’s clothing would find a group of believers meeting in a house church and naturally seek their hospitality. In residing with the several members of the church, he would have fertile ground by which to disseminate his diseased doctrine. John then seeks to nip this in the bud.

The church and its families were not to extend such hospitality to these false teachers who undermined the person and work of Christ. Again, John is speaking to the church as a whole, therefore he is specifically forbidding the unwitting, well-intended kindness of the Christian community.



Not only was the house church not supposed to feed and lodge these charlatans, they were not even supposed to greet them favorably or wish them well.

In the NT, especially one's greeting was often an opportunity to express the favor of God. The Jewish Christians greeted one another with "peace" (shalom). The Greco-Roman Christians modified the popular greeting *karein* and would often greet one another with *karis* (grace). Far from our anemic and bland "hello" or "hi" their world even leveraged introductory interchanges to express favor from God or the gods.

In this case, the church is not even supposed to give off any favorable or encouraging impression to the false teacher trying to penetrate their midst. No "God bless" or "All the Best" or "Godspeed." John would not have us accidentally support their damnable labors in any way, shape, or form. This may sound harsh but Jesus reserves a special category of hatred and judgment for those who actively obscure the truth (Rom 16:17; Titus 3:10).

Thanks for all the background but I'm just wondering what to do next Saturday when someone from the local JW Kingdom Hall knocks on my door or if I can actually say hello to the Roman Catholic priest that lives in my neighborhood?

Need to be aware of the differences:

First, John is speaking of "deceivers," not the "deceived." John addresses the voices of false teaching, not the victims of false teaching. So can you "greet" your non-Christian neighbor or family member who holds to an errant view of Jesus? Of course! Jesus was a friend of sinners and so should you be. Let your light shine before the unbelieving world. Be hospitable ("a lover of strangers").

Second, John seems to be forbidding an official welcome into the house church, not an interpersonal discussion concerning their doctrinal error. Whether or not you actually invite the occult member into your home is a conscience issue. I would generally not recommend it because most of you are quite frankly too kind or too unaware to condemn their heresy. Additionally, it will look bad to the other neighbors.

However, if you do decide to do it, you must make sure that your actions don't implicit support of their ministry. So you can rest assured we won't be officially welcoming or commending any false teachers to you here at Faith Bible. Your ministry to them through your own home will largely depend on your own confidence in the Word and conscience before the Lord.

Admittedly, it's hard to tell if the cult member is the voice or the victim. Church members should typically avoid the "voice" (Rom 16:15) but try to share with the "victim." Also, if someone has been disciplined out of the church for false teaching, they should be "rejected."

Jenny giving me a pamphlet yesterday.

*12 Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete. 13 The children of your elect sister greet you.*

John ends on another strong note of affection. He wants to continue his investment and ministry to them in person. It seems a future trip was on the horizon (or at least in his heart).

He valued "face to face" communication with them so they could enjoy one another's company. This is the true heart of an elder, enjoying the company of his people, protecting them from spiritual error, practicing the command to love one another.

Such care and affection, by the way, isn't limited to any single church but simply begins there. In other words, while our love for one another and protection of Christian truth begins here at Faith Bible it looks outward to encourage other local churches as was one here in v. 13 —"The children of your elect sister greet you." We are right care for the spiritual well-being and care of other local churches as well.

And so the inextricable connection between love and truth is lived out, not only as we show love, but also as we protect truth for love.



In light of John's letter it would seem that both Bible-Believing Baptist and Charity Church both have something to commend. But which one are we more like? Which one ought we to be? Think about it carefully.

Truth? . . . Love? . . . Or just "balance?"

Some don't want to be prickly, ivory-towered theologians. Some don't want to be spineless social jellyfish. We want to be balanced.

I see the logic there. Some of need to stand more firmly on truth. Some of us need to sacrifice more selflessly for others. All of us need to ensure we aren't mere truth-snobs or kumbaya-Christians.

But, may I propose a more biblical paradigm of success? Maybe instead of balance we want wholeness. Balance implies we may have too much of one in light of the other (e.g., Goldilocks) Wholeness demands we need much more of both.

Some things can be too hot or too cold, too hard or too soft, too big or too small.\

But, a church cannot be too truthful or too loving.

Foundation too strong. House too comfortable.  
Roots too big. Fruit too abundant.

We therefore must prize the truth and, on that foundation, practice love. We must practice love, but continually ensure, that our love is grounded in truth.

No matter which church you would have chosen, I pray your understanding of 2 John would lead it to be more whole, not more balanced.

For those who gravitate toward truth, be sure to live out the love.

For those who gravitate toward love, be sure to ground it in truth.

Keep it up. Encourage the many.

Cultivate an area, if lacking.

Consummate a relationship with God the Father through God the Son.

Appeal: What makes such truth-in-love wholeness possible is a clear picture—  
communion.

1 Corinthians 11 solemnly charges to examine ourselves before partaking of this meal, this memorial of Jesus Christ. Particularly, we examine ourselves looking for two things.

- 1) Am I a follower of Jesus? Have I repented of my sin and placed my faith in Christ? Have I obeyed him in baptism and am I walking in the fellowship of his church? For those of you who are a baptized member of an evangelical church in good standing, let's prepare to eat and drink together. That would include members of this church and members of other churches where the same Gospel you've heard here is also preached. If you're encouraged to partake there, then you're encouraged to participate with us here.

If you're visiting today or not yet sure if you should partake, then you needn't feel any embarrassment. It's not our custom to come forward, but for the elements to be brought to you. As the plate is passed along, simply let it pass by and use the time for prayer and reflection.

*So the first question is have I received the truth in love? Is my confidence for relationship with God in Christ alone? The next question is an implication of the first.*

- 2) Every partaking of this meal, reminds us to analyze our relationship with Christ by analyzing our relationship with one another. We cannot be right with God whom we have not seen if we are not right with our brother or sister whom we have seen (1 John 4:20). Paul's greatest concern in partaking of the meal "unworthily" is divisions and factions in the body (1 Cor 11:17ff).

If you are harboring some unrepentant sin toward another, you are not showing true evidence of conversion. Do not "drink judgment upon yourself."

As I dismiss our ushers to prepare to serve us the bread and cup, let us now prepare our hearts, confessing any known sin to the Lord—selfishness, pride, disunity, etc.. I will give you a few moments to pray silently or to reconcile with a brother or sister in Christ and then I will close our time of preparation in prayer, thanking God for his pardon and for the meal to come.

[silent prayer]



Prayer of Confession: Almighty and most merciful Father; We have erred and strayed from Your ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against Your holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and apart from your gracious work in Christ, there is no health in us.

Have mercy upon us, O Lord. Forgive all, O God, who confess their faults. Restore all who truly repent; according to Your promises declared in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Prayer of Pardon: Also, we rejoice in your promise from 1 John 1:9. We indeed have been forgiven as you have endured the righteous wrath that we deserved for our sin.

Prayer of Thanksgiving: Thank you for forgiving us and for uniting us into your one body in the unity of the faith. Thank you for the kindness in which you have delivered your only-begotten Son to death for our sins. Allow us to fulfill your command to partake of this meal in remembrance of you in such a way that we may not by any false pretense offend or provoke you. Amen.

*At this time I would like the men to distribute the bread. Please hold until we have all received it and we'll partake together. As we continue our time together all who would like to may sing "Behold the Lamb" as we consider how the Son saved the world through his broken body and shed blood. I'll lead us to partake together when we are finished singing. You may remain seated.*

[Bread Distributed]

*The body of our Saviour Jesus Christ, was torn for us . . . Thus, Words of Institution: 1 Cor. 11:23-24: "For I received from the LORD what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.'"*

[Eat Bread]

Now, the men will come forward and distribute the cup. Please hold it until everyone has been served and then we'll take it together as a symbol of our unity as a body of Christ. While the men distribute the cup, again, we invite you to sing with us "His Robes for Mine" together. You may remain seated.

[Cup Distributed]

Instead of us paying the blood sacrifice for sin. Jesus did it.

*Words of Institution: After he took the cup he said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."*

[Drink Cup]

BEFORE PHIL CLOSES US IN PRAYER, we just wanted to let you know that we have special offering boxes available on your way out for our "Benevolence Fund." This fund is used to help church members and certain individuals who may be struggling financially within our church body. If you would like to show Christian love in this way, please take advantage.

Close in Prayer: Phil



start timer

tone: affectionate exhortation

# 2 John [1025] - From Truth to Love

READ

vv. 1-3, will cover the rest thru the sermon

ATTN

A Tale of Two Churches... In a small suburb outside a major city in America's heartland stands two identically sized yet dramatically different churches.

Bible-Believing Baptist - web (detailed doctrinal statements, library of 1.5k. e-books); visit (dense hymns, heavy + healthy sermon); people (note-takers, not name-takers) / not mood but not the emphasis

Charity Community Church - web (group photos, event calendar); visit (upbeat singing, shorter, applicable sermon); people (not note-takers, but name + number takers) / not unbiological ~~but~~ <sup>strong</sup> on the relational ~~the emphasis~~

NEED

If moving to this one-horse town, which one would you join? Why? Which should you join?

- Some BBB. you have doctrine, theology, depth / less visit other w/ suspicion
  - Some CCC. you have people, practice, warmth / less visit other w/ suspicion
- then don't care as long as there is a bible program / people your age ☺  
x suspicious of a set of x

We all have preferences re: church... Two members strive for ideals here... Quarta trying to find a church... Non-Christian criticizes a church. What about John? Which would be commend?

TEXT

Study of 1 Jn. emphasized both truth/love. 2 Jn. clarifies further.

situation: author (recipient / circumstances)  
fig. for church, yo'll (w. 6, 8)

stand firm - "truth" 5 times, "teaching" 3 times → welded together  
stay together - "love" 4 times

PROP

Just calls for church <sup>established</sup> built on truth <sup>behaving</sup> expressed in love  
+ what John values in a church + what we value  
visitor - evaluate  
member - pursue  
non-Christian - understand



I. Jesus would commend a church that practices love established in truth (1-6)

exp: tone of confident expectation & encouragement  
truth has established special love relationships, 1-2  
announced truth with power established from what Jesus did, though not the Son, 3  
pleasure in discussing them practicing (living out) gospel truth, 4  
no guilt but grace, excited about the impact of the gospel

exp: still must remember obedience = love, v. 5, "if all else fails..."  
love looks like "his commandments", love pursuit for love

illos: pyramid of love - vertical obedience → horizontal closeness  
consider broken law impact on each other // consider obeyed law impact on each other  
why we summarize & explain and covenant (footnote) ⊕ and ⊖

arg: love subjective vs. love objective  
less like music more like math  
less like contemporary art more like classical art  
1 Jn. 3:16 → Jesus sacrifice → eternal well-being  
→ we sacrifice → eternal well-being

app: all our knowledge of truth must lead to practice of love  
- constant praying  
- gospel singing  
- faithful listening  
- tender helping  
- faithful serving

term 1 to 2: 1 Jn 3:16 note Jesus values practice love CCC note this love established in & expressed in truth

Additionally II. Jesus would commend a church that protects truth expressed in love (7-13)

exp: the problem, v. 7, gospel truth - foundation of love - under spiritual attack  
- deceiving (active) "gone out", not deceived (passive), e.g. diff between customer & salesman  
- selling? "not confessing" Christ in the flesh  
- Calvin: nothing Satan so much endeavors to accomplish as to bring on minds w/ views of obscuring Christ, b/c this opens up every kind of falsehood

exp: the practice, vv. 8-9, 10-11, protect one another, protect bad doctrine

PROTECT  
illos v. 8: protect together the building (community); co-laborer who will be rewarded  
1 Cor. 3:9-15 keeps everyone focused on Christ for reward

v. 9: judgment of reward for faithful service (1 Cor 14:12), not judgment of righteousness (2 Cor 5:21)  
v. 10: protect by helping people treasure Christ, not going beyond & losing it all

illos: crown of church secure & protection at PC

app: How to protect? Investigate Christ more - reading, ruminating, prayer

Inquire of others: How is love for Christ? How things spiritually? (listen for Jesus)

Done? Plans? necessary v. 15-11

arg: Don't speak to non-Christians?

app: Don't support false teachers. Note differences: you'll have church

personally, be careful - don't give wrong impression with a picture



~~trans~~: vv. 12-13 loving partners in truth, affectionate relations

trans: So you would commend a church that protects truth expressed in love<sup>2-13</sup>  
practices love established in truth<sup>6</sup>

VIZ In light of John's letter it would seem BBB and CCC  
both have something to commend. Which one are we like?  
Which one ought we be like? Think carefully.

Truth?... Love?... Or "balance?"

x pitiful, ivory tower theologians x spineless, social jelly fish + "balance"

I see the logic. Some should stand more firmly on truth. Some  
should sacrifice more selflessly for others. x truth=rob x kindness=Christian

May I propose a better way? x "balance" ✓ wholeness

x Balance implies we would have too much of the one in  
light of the other (eg. Siddhartha). <sup>too hard, cold</sup> but <sup>big, small</sup> let a church  
can't be too truthful or too loving.

✓ Wholeness demand we need much more of both. We want  
a strong foundation AND a comfortable home. Strong roots  
AND abundant fruit.

REIT We must, therefore, graze the truth, and on that  
foundation / from those roots, practice love. We must  
~~practice love but continually savor that love in~~

ACT No matter which church you would have chosen, I pray you  
understanding of 2 John would lead you to make  
that church more whole, not more balanced.

graduate to truth - live it out in love / keep up the study, sharing  
graduate to love - ground it in the truth / keep up the living & caring

no truth or <sup>good</sup> love → come to God the Father thru God the Son

APPEAL To help us in our wholeness let us now see <sup>truth</sup> the  
ultimate expression of truth in love - Communion





# *Service Planning*





# Service

Philippians: Fellowship of the Gospel

October 18, 2020

Philippians: Fellowship of the Gospel

| Length in mins |  | Audio/<br>Visual | Person           | Song<br>Verses |
|----------------|--|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 3:00           | <i>Come Praise And Glorify</i> [ Default in Bb ]   | HH5              | Noah<br>Coleman  | 1,c,2,c,b,c    |
| 0:00           | <b>Welcome and Announcements</b><br>- Good morning, my name is Justin Harris, and I would like to welcome you to this gathering of Faith Bible Church.<br><br>- If you are a guest with us we welcome you and thank you for visiting. Please fill out a connect card that is available in a pew pocket near you. We would love to reach out this week to find out how we can pray for you and make ourselves available to answer any questions about our church or what it means to follow Jesus. You can drop that card in one of the offering boxes that are located at all of the exits.<br><br>- There are many opportunities to be equipped and encouraged for ministry throughout this week. Seminar on Conscience, Wednesday there is a seminar specifically for men and another on Resolving Everyday Conflict. Both of those start at 6:30pm. And a special prayer event for Missions will take place in Room 202 at 6:00.<br><br>-Lastly for our members, there is a Member's Meeting tonight. Please join us right at 5pm as we will have Communion - our first Historical Communion - which will include a meal together.<br><br>- Now, let's take a few moments to quiet our hearts before the Lord and Noah will end that silence with a scriptural call to worship. |                  | Justin<br>Harris |                |
| 0:00           | <b>Silence</b>   |                  |                  |                |
| 0:00           | <b>Scriptural Call to Worship</b><br>Therefore, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.<br><br>Hebrews 10:19-24  |                  | Noah<br>Coleman  |                |
| 3:00           | <i>Before The Throne Of God</i> [ Getty in C ]   |                  | Noah<br>Coleman  |                |
| 0:00           | <b>Scripture Reading</b><br>Romans 12:3-13   |                  | Sal<br>Bazaz     |                |
| 0:00           | <b>Pastoral Prayer</b><br>Suggestions: a spirit of unity in the bonds of peace, members' meeting and Communion, Jeramie Rinne in Sannibel or Brent Line at Iglesia Baptista Reformanda   |                  | Philip<br>Bates  |                |
| 3:00           | <i>Jesus Thank You</i> [ Default Arrangement in G ]  |                  | Noah<br>Coleman  |                |
| 3:00           | <i>Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me</i> [ Default Arrangement in C ]   |                  | Noah<br>Coleman  |                |

| Length<br>in mins |   | Audio/<br>Visual | Person           | Song<br>Verses |
|-------------------|---|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 0:00              | <b>Message</b><br>Philippians 2:1-4   |                  | Justin<br>Harris |                |
| 3:00              | <i>Jesus Is Better</i> [ Austin Stone piano in C ]  |                  | Noah<br>Coleman  |                |
| 0:00              | <b>Benediction</b><br>The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit<br>be with you all.<br><br>2 Corinthians 13:14 |                  | Noah<br>Coleman  |                |
| 15:00             |   |                  |                  |                |

## Rehearsal Times

### Wednesday Music Rehearsal

10/14 5:30P

### Sunday Music Rehearsal

10/18 8:00A

## Other Times

### A/V Setup

10/18 7:30A

### Security

10/18 8:50A

## Participant

### Announcement

Justin Harris

### Preaching

Justin Harris

## Band

### A/V for Music Practice

John Plunkett

### Percussion

Chris Johnson

### Violin

Savannah Holmes

### Pastoral Prayer

Philip Bates

### Scripture Reading

Sal Bazaz

### Acoustic Guitar

Noah Coleman

### Piano

Mark Mincy

### Vocals

Kristen Edman

Noah Coleman

Tonya Harris


## Connections

### Backdoor watchers

Christian Bazaz

### Lobby Greeters

Greg Wisz

Oli Wisz 

### Door Greeter

Guillermo Tersy

## Nursery

### Assistant 3/4

Kaylen See

### Check-in

Dottie Taylor

### Lead Toddler

Victoria Barrow 

### Assistant Toddler

Kailee Edwards

### Lead 3/4

Ceceli Johnson

## Security

### North Doors (Foyer)

Dennis Taylor

### South Doors (Classrooms)

Noel Nielson

## Audio/Visual

### Audio

John Plunkett

### Proclaim Production

John Plunkett

### Lead

John Plunkett

### Video Switcher

Ranita Seaman

## Faith Kids

### Faith Kids Lobby Greeter

Jodi Bates

### Jr. Church Teacher

Matthew Bueltel

### Jr. Church Assistant

Brooke Bueltel



## SAMPLE SERVICE REVIEW

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### What?

a regular and focused, in-person gathering of staff pastors, elders (if available and willing), and invited church members (if available and willing)

### Why?

- to evaluate the effectiveness of the previous corporate gathering
- to improve the effectiveness of future corporate gatherings
- to practice giving godly encouragement
- to practice receiving godly encouragement

### How?

I. Seminars - *Equip saints for ministry*

II. Morning Worship - *to exalt our Triune God as his gathered people*

A. Singing

B. Service Leading & Speaking (Scripture Reading, Prayers) - 1 key learning

C. Sermon - 1 key learning

D. Visitors

III. Special Meetings

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6/24/19

I. Seminars: Freedom of the Will

- + theologically lighter but this was not a bad thing and provided for much discussion
- could have sat on a couple of passages longer
- + Phil thinks it should be part of the rotation
- + variety helpful for the classes
- + great summary of the class
- + connects well with everyone and very down to earth (appropriate laid back feel)
- Question on "What it does it look like to not be a slave to sin" would have been helpful

II. Corporate Gathering

Service: Singing/Speaking

*New stage*

- + could hear and see every instrument with the new set up
- + people in balcony in sound quality
- musicians didn't feel comfortable on stage
- enjoyed the show
- + looked nice
- + good to be behind the stage
- + instrumentalists could hear one another well, especially in the monitors
- + fixed sound quality issues

- + music blended well through the speakers
- + liked baptism first
- + easier for pianist
- + helped instrumentalists

- +++ loved baptism at the beginning (don't have to do two different songs)
- + in general, one a week
- + Mitch felt comfortable doing baptism
- + waited longer
- + Phil tying together each song

Sermon:

- + liked specific signs of a faltering faith
- could have been wrong
- + no notes
- + helped bridge the cultural gap
- + kept stretching the passage into the climax/conclusion
- + kept asking "What stubborn facts . . ."
- + corporate application
- + felt more like a narrative and made it different
- + interesting the juxtaposition of the matronly v. patriarchal
- + great introduction on "the impossible"

Visitors:

- + James and Karen Purvis Family from First Baptist
- + Grant, Jennifer, and Walter
- + Mark and Tricia Mency (pastor in baptist church in BJU circles, newly reformed)

III. Membership Meeting

- - was hot and long
- + food was amazing
- people sitting in hallway
- + 90 in attendance (10 off the max)
- + content was great
- + announcements at beginning were helpful and exciting
- longest portion of meeting was membership must be tighter on times
- announcements is to have a visual to back up
- need to figure out mic situation (buy mic that works)
- + pics for carelist was good
- give a specific thing to mobilize membership for care list & pairing people up
- should have had number ready for the next phases
- + more affirmation was a positive touch

# Tools for Every Ministry

Planning Center is a set of seven online applications you can subscribe to individually or use together as a full Church Management System.

## people

Find the information you need to follow up with your congregation and gain insight into your church members, all in one place.

[Learn more](#) →

## check-ins

Quickly and safely check families in and out, using a flexible setup you can customize.

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## giving

Accept and process all donations securely, track giving trends, and issue statements.

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## groups

Create an online group directory, take signups, track attendance, and share resources.

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## registrations

Organize event details, receive registrations, accept payments, and manage attendees.

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Track and approve how and when facilities and resources are used for events.

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## services

Schedule volunteers in any ministry, plan services, and equip your worship team.

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## PASTORAL PRAYER PROCESS

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Each week our Sunday morning gathering will include a pastoral prayer by an elder of our body. The prayer is to be characterized as formal, worshipful, planned, and personal to our church.

The Elder Responsible for the Pastoral Prayer will rotate as follows:

Randy Barrow, Mitch Bueltel, Justin Harris

The Elder will be notified of his responsibility via the Service Planning System

All documentation regarding the Pastoral Prayer will be maintained in the "Pastoral Prayer" Folder within the "Elder" Drive on Google.

All Pastoral Prayers shall be Outlined in the "Pastoral Prayer Outline History" file and shall follow the following guide:

Adoration - We will worship our God in this section with several adorations regarding God's Character and his many works among His people.

Confession - We will include several confessions that are general weaknesses of our Christian culture or general observances across our body. We are NOT pinpointing individual sin but areas where we tend to fall short of God's holy standard.

Petition:

Principle - We will open our Petitioning with a transition by praying over the area/s which were just confessed.

Members - Our goal is to be praying through the membership giving freedom to prayer for pressing matters when they arise.

Church Ministry - We will work through the Organizational Chart, praying each week over a specific area of ministry

Another Church - We will pray for a local church each week. Justin can assist with a name and prayer request if needed.

Missionary - We will pray through our missionary list, one missionary each week.

Government Leaders - We will rotate through various Federal State and Local leaders.

Closing Idea - This is a closing transition statement to assist the body to move forward in though toward the next section of the service.

All pastoral prayers will be written out and stored in a separate file within the "Pastoral Prayer" folder. The file name will be the "date" only.



11/1/20 - Mitch Bueltel

*Praise - Numbers 11:1-35*

Father, we pray to you and worship you this morning praise and honor for you alone are worthy to be glorified. You are sovereign over the affairs of men. You are not surprised or overwhelmed by circumstances. You control the narrative of history, you controlled yesterday, today, and tomorrow. You have a plan and you bring purpose to the lives you have created, that is to glorify you with those very lives. You also give us the means to do it, through the salvation you have graciously offered.

You, in your holiness have called US to holiness and you have enabled us to become Christ like... to become sanctified..... to be Holy.

Principle -

Father, we are capable of understanding these principles of sovereignty and Lordship over the affairs of men. We can, with our words and in this gathering, worship you for who you have revealed yourself to be. But we confess that in the circumstances that come our way, we can easily lose sight of your loving hand that guides us toward Christlikeness and the world toward glorifying you as Lord.

The result of that often affects our hearts and that comes out in our attitudes and in our words. Help us not to grumble, not to complain, not to have attitudes that are short-sided w selfishness and temporal goals that can easily become more important than the eternal goals that you have established.

As individuals, help each of us to live out our lives with the eternal purposes you have established set deeply in our being. In your established plan, help us not to shy away resent our roles in your heavenly plan.

We pray, that as a church, we will be an encouragement to one another in these attitudes and in their outward expressions. Help us to be united around your precious promises and to be a light to the world around us.

Together, as the body of Christ let us be a testimony of your power in our lives and in the church and a testimony and encouragement to one another.

So help us to be mindful and act with THE responsibility you have given us to each other and to the world around us in these areas.

## PASTORAL PRAYER OUTLINE HISTORY SAMPLE

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### *People -*

As we consider individuals in our membership this morning, we pray for the families our pastoral staff. Father, they too are members of our church and though they have directed their vocational lives in service to the body of Christ, they too need the expressions of a local body of Christ that encourage them. So Father we pray for Justin and Tanya, for Mark and Trisha, a for Philip and Jody. We pray that as they too walk through the circumstances of life, whether it be finances, or marriage or raising and guiding their children or their own attitudes as they too work toward spiritual maturity, that they would be encouraged by the ministry of this body. I pray that they are not just pastor's and pastor's wives, but that they are members of this body and that they could as much as possible live a life of normalcy as members of this church.

Father these are potentially difficult days for us. That sounds almost wrong to say as we consider the difficulties of local churches around the globe. We however have never been faced with the pressures to alter our ministry due to a virus. A virus that carries with it varied opinions on its severity and the right responses to it. So we pray this morning that this body's focus will be centered on loving one another. Let each live out a patience and a forgiving spirit to each other and let us be centered on your word and the ministry of your church.

### *Program -*

As we turn our thoughts to the collective ministry of this Church, we lift up to you our seminar ministry to you. As our Sunday morning Conscience Seminar winds down, we pray that it was effective time for this church and we pray as we consider the new seminars, that they will be a blessing to this body. we lift up the parenting seminar to you and pray that it will be impactful to this important responsibility to many in our body.

### *Partners -*

As we think about our extended ministry partnerships, we lift up Lance Roberts and his family to you this morning as they continue their transition from the foreign field to the United States. We pray that the work of their ministry in \_\_\_\_\_ will continue to grow and that you will give them obvious opportunities to minister here. We thank you for their example in serving you and we pray for their family as they transition to this culture.

### *Government -*

Father we also lift up to you the elections that are now underway and will be drawing to a close this week. We know that you are sovereign and that our hope is in you. Help us to display that to a world around us that some days seems to be in chaos.

## PASTORAL PRAYER OUTLINE HISTORY SAMPLE

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So now we pray for the remainder of our time together. That each of us would be about those things which bring us together. We specifically pray for Justin, as he shares the word with us. Give him confidence and clarity to share those things he has studied and open our ears to listen.

We pray these things in Jesus Name

Amen

10/25/20 - Justin Harris

### ADORATION

Lord Jesus, words fail to reflect the heights from which you came, the depths to which you've descended, and the exalted position you enjoy forevermore. As Sovereign Ruler and Lord you poured out your soul to death and were numbered with the transgressors. You the Holy One from eternity bore the sin of many and made intercession for transgressors like us. On account of our sin, you were oppressed, afflicted, slaughtered, stricken, smitten, and shamed—not by accident—but in accordance with and obedience to the eternal plan of the Father. And so, you as the Lamb of God, the Suffering Servant, the Only Begotten Son, rose again from the dead so as to receive the reward of your suffering. Unfathomable humiliation and inevitable exaltation. You are our Lord and you are our example...

### CONFESSION

If this be the way you operate, give us hearts to do the same. May we so willingly embrace the suffering and humility inherent to following Jesus. Crucify our pride and selfishness. Mortify our impulse to see our name advance and our own kingdoms expand. Forgive us for subtle (and not so subtle) displays of vanity and conceit even when we come to church. Purge us of this contaminant of pride. Steel us against the subtle expressions of selfishness. Thereby...

### PETITION

Keep us united as we advance the truth in love. New members. Old members. Those who still do not feel comfortable gathering in our current format. So many opportunities to love. Keep us focused on the gospel as a church and as individuals. May the good news of Christ regularly be on our lips.

Sal and Christina Bazaz – wrestling through their own family trials as Sal's Mom suffers in these final days, open door for the gospel, what has already been proclaimed will take root, grace amid this trial

George Maheu – our hearts grieve to have lost him but we pray that in his death the Lord that he loved will be heralded as good news to his family grieving during this time

Dan and Jacque Soltan – through physical trials and continued ministry opportunities we pray they be fruitful

## PASTORAL PRAYER OUTLINE HISTORY SAMPLE

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Iglesia Bautista Reformanda, Brent Linne

PRC, front lines of physical and spiritual life

Burt Saunders and the Collier County Board of Commissioners, tough decision which some like and others loathe, yet we are called to submit for them and pray their decisions would enable us to live peaceful and quiet lives unto all godliness, we pray for their salvation

10/18/20 - Philip Bates

### ADORATION

Father, all good things come from you. There is nothing good or pleasant apart from your hand. What grace we have experienced this morning if we have responded with faith to Jesus. He has provided rescue in our greatest need. While that is certainly beyond what we deserve you have also given us an inheritance beyond imagination, you have brought us together in one body and you have provided diverse gifts to serve beyond our capability because you are compassionate and generous. So we praise you this morning.

CONFESSION: While you have accomplished these great things and given us everything that we need to thrive, we must confess that we are often arrogant. Pride from our own hearts causes us to be divided. We want notoriety and power. We orchestrate relationships to accomplish our own purposes. We use others for our own advancement. We disregard the gifts you give and covet the gifts of others. Our faith in your goodness is weak. This causes factions within our church and prevents us from being unified around the gospel. Forgive us and cleanse our hearts.

### PETITION

-principle: Oh God, help us to have spirit of unity in the bond of peace. Let our love be genuine and help us to honor those that you have made brothers and sisters. May we be energized to serve and give us a heart of generosity so that we show hospitality and give to others and the church for the advance of Jesus' name. May this church body be one and rejoice in the hope that you have given.

-people:

Give Brian and Tracy Leeber this kind of understanding of their own giftedness so that they can serve each other, their family and this church in love. May their relationships here grow and flourish to cause further spiritual maturity. May this unity in the gospel protect their marriage and be seen Sean and Drew and Luke and Claire. Thank you for their service in Junior Church, on security, with the financial team and in small group. Give them gospel fruit in their community relationships whether it be at Brian's work, Village School, community baseball or their neighbors in Indigo Lakes.

## PASTORAL PRAYER OUTLINE HISTORY SAMPLE

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Robbin and Cathy Vandervort are such a great model of the text we read for Scripture reading. Mature examples of using the gifts you have provided for the good of the church. Quiet but faithful service out of pure motives for your glory. Give them long life, clear minds, and continued health so that they can serve you and our church family for many years. Give Robbin a quick recovery from his surgery this past week. As they minister to family spread out across the eastern United States please give them compassion, endurance and patience. And for their work here on the finance team and working with children give them wisdom and grace for the good of the body of Christ.

-program: We pray for our member's meeting tonight. We are excited about celebrating the death and resurrection of our Savior around a family meal. Give us unity and encouragement that only only you can accomplish. And as we seek to glorify you in this church, lead us to pray for one another and care for one another and outdo one another in showing honor.

-other church: We pray these same things for our brothers and sisters at Fellowship Church. May they shine as lights in the community of Ave Maria. For their pastor, Tim Pigg, we ask that you give him clarity in preaching the truth of the gospel.

-missionaries: If we think only a few more miles to the east, our brothers and sisters at Grace Church are also meeting today. Give them unity and focus on what matters. May Eric and Danelle Bancroft be encouraged today. Give them energy and endurance to continue sowing gospel seed. May they have wisdom on the best steps forward in their relationships to area churches and community involvement.

-nation: And as we pray for community involvement, we think of our own city and mayor Teresa Heitman. May her work bring order and excellence and opportunity for the gospel.

We also pray for the remainder of our service. As we hear from your Word this morning we ask that love may abound among us, that Jesus would be promoted above all and that you would receive the glory and praise that you are infinitely worthy of.





CALL TO WORSHIP

1 Chronicles 29:10–13

[10] Therefore David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: “Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. [11] Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. [12] Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. [13] And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name. (ESV)

Psalm 16:7–8

[7] I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;  
in the night also my heart instructs me.  
[8] I have set the LORD always before me;  
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. (ESV)

Psalm 19:14

[14] Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable in your sight,  
O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. (ESV)

Psalm 27:14

[14] Wait for the LORD;  
be strong, and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the LORD! (ESV)

Psalm 29:2

[2] Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;  
worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness. (ESV)

Psalm 34:1–3

- [1] I will bless the LORD at all times;  
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.  
[2] My soul makes its boast in the LORD;  
let the humble hear and be glad.  
[3] Oh, magnify the LORD with me,  
and let us exalt his name together! (ESV)

Psalm 43:3

- [3] Send out your light and your truth;  
let them lead me;  
let them bring me to your holy hill  
and to your dwelling! (ESV)

Psalm 46:10

- [10] "Be still, and know that I am God.  
I will be exalted among the nations,  
I will be exalted in the earth!" (ESV)

Psalm 51:15

- [15] O Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth will declare your praise. (ESV)

Psalm 84:2

- [2] My soul longs, yes, faints  
for the courts of the LORD;  
my heart and flesh sing for joy  
to the living God. (ESV)

Psalm 89:1–2, 8, 11, 13-15, 52

- [1] I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD, forever;  
with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all generations.  
[2] For I said, "Steadfast love will be built up forever;

CALL TO WORSHIP & BENEDICTION SELECTIONS

---

in the heavens you will establish your faithfulness." (ESV)

[8] O LORD God of hosts,

who is mighty as you are, O LORD,

with your faithfulness all around you? (ESV)

[11] The heavens are yours; the earth also is yours;

the world and all that is in it, you have founded them. (ESV)

[13] You have a mighty arm;

strong is your hand, high your right hand.

[14] Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne;

steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.

[15] Blessed are the people who know the festal shout,

who walk, O LORD, in the light of your face, (ESV)

[52] Blessed be the LORD forever!

Amen and Amen. (ESV)

Psalm 94:14

[14] For the LORD will not forsake his people;

he will not abandon his heritage; (ESV)

Psalm 95:1–4

[1] Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;

let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

[2] Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

[3] For the LORD is a great God,

and a great King above all gods.

[4] In his hand are the depths of the earth;

the heights of the mountains are his also. (ESV)

[6] Oh come, let us worship and bow down;

let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!

[7] For he is our God,

and we are the people of his pasture,

and the sheep of his hand.

Today, if you hear his voice, (ESV)

Psalm 96:9

[9] Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness;

tremble before him, all the earth! (ESV)

Psalm 99:9

[9] Exalt the LORD our God,  
and worship at his holy mountain;  
for the LORD our God is holy! (ESV)

Psalm 100:2-5

[2] Serve the LORD with gladness!  
Come into his presence with singing!

[3] Know that the LORD, he is God!  
It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

[4] Enter his gates with thanksgiving,  
and his courts with praise!  
Give thanks to him; bless his name!

[5] For the LORD is good;  
his steadfast love endures forever,  
and his faithfulness to all generations. (ESV)

Psalm 105:1-3

[1] Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name;  
make known his deeds among the peoples!  
[2] Sing to him, sing praises to him;  
tell of all his wondrous works!  
[3] Glory in his holy name;  
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice! (ESV)

Psalm 111:1-3

## CALL TO WORSHIP & BENEDICTION SELECTIONS

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[1] Praise the LORD!

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,  
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

[2] Great are the works of the LORD,  
studied by all who delight in them.

[3] Full of splendor and majesty is his work,  
and his righteousness endures forever. (ESV)

Psalm 118:24

[24] This is the day that the LORD has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it. (ESV)

Psalm 121:1–2

[1] I lift up my eyes to the hills.  
From where does my help come?

[2] My help comes from the LORD,  
who made heaven and earth. (ESV)

Psalm 122:1

[1] I was glad when they said to me,  
"Let us go to the house of the LORD!" (ESV)

Psalm 124:8

[8] Our help is in the name of the LORD,  
who made heaven and earth. (ESV)

Psalm 145:18

[18] The LORD is near to all who call on him,  
to all who call on him in truth. (ESV)

Isaiah 40:3

[3] A voice cries:  
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (ESV)

[5] And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." (ESV)

[31] but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;  
they shall run and not be weary;  
they shall walk and not faint. (ESV)

Isaiah 49:6

[6] he says:  
"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant  
to raise up the tribes of Jacob  
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;  
I will make you as a light for the nations,  
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." (ESV)

Isaiah 53:6

[6] All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have turned—every one—to his own way;  
and the LORD has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all. (ESV)

Isaiah 55:6–7

[6] "Seek the LORD while he may be found;  
call upon him while he is near;  
[7] let the wicked forsake his way,  
and the unrighteous man his thoughts;  
let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him,  
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (ESV)

Isaiah 57:15

[15] For thus says the One who is high and lifted up,  
who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:  
"I dwell in the high and holy place,  
and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit,

## CALL TO WORSHIP & BENEDICTION SELECTIONS

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to revive the spirit of the lowly,  
and to revive the heart of the contrite. (ESV)  
Isaiah 60:1–3

[1] Arise, shine, for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.  
[2] For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,  
and thick darkness the peoples;  
but the LORD will arise upon you,  
and his glory will be seen upon you.  
[3] And nations shall come to your light,  
and kings to the brightness of your rising. (ESV)

Jeremiah 14:9

[9] Why should you be like a man confused,  
like a mighty warrior who cannot save?  
Yet you, O LORD, are in the midst of us,  
and we are called by your name;  
do not leave us." (ESV)

Lamentations 3:22–23

[22] The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases;  
his mercies never come to an end;  
[23] they are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness. (ESV)

Daniel 9:9–10

[9] To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him [10]  
and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by walking in his laws, which he set  
before us by his servants the prophets. (ESV)

Joel 2:13

[13] and rend your hearts and not your garments."  
Return to the LORD your God,  
for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love;  
and he relents over disaster. (ESV)

Habakkuk 2:20

[20] ...the LORD is in his holy temple;  
let all the earth keep silence before him." (ESV)

Malachi 1:11

[11] For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts. (ESV)

Matthew 6:33

[33] ...seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (ESV)

Matthew 7:7

[7] "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. (ESV)

Matthew 11:28–29

[28] Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. [29] Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (ESV)

Mark 8:34

[34] And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. (ESV)

Mark 13:32–37

[32] "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. [33] Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. [34] It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. [35] Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the



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evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—[36] lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. [37] And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake.” (ESV)

Luke 15:11–24

[17] “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! [18] I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. [19] I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.”’ [20] And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. [21] And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ [22] But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. [23] And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. [24] For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate. (ESV)

John 1:14

[14] And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (ESV)

John 4:22–25

[23] But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. [24] God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” (ESV)

John 8:12

[12] Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” (ESV)

Acts 1:6–8

[8] But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (ESV)

1 Corinthians 15:57

[57] But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (ESV)

2 Corinthians 4:5–6

[5] For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. [6] For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (ESV)

Ephesians 2:19

[19] So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, (ESV)

Ephesians 5:18–19

[18] And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, [19] addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, (ESV)

Philippians 1:2

[2] Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (ESV)

Colossians 1:12

[12] giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. (ESV)

Colossians 3:1

[1] If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. (ESV)

Hebrews 9:24

[24] For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. (ESV)

James 4:8–10

[8] Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. [9] Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. [10] Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. (ESV)

1 John 1:8–9

[8] If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [9] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (ESV)

Revelation 4:8

[8] And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say,

“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty,  
who was and is and is to come!” (ESV)

Revelation 5:12–13

[12] saying with a loud voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,  
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might  
and honor and glory and blessing!”

[13] And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying,

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“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb  
be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” (ESV)

Revelation 21:3

[3] And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. (ESV)

Psalm 18:1–3

[2] The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer,  
my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,  
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

[3] I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised...(ESV)

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24–26

[24] The LORD bless you and keep you;  
[25] the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
[26] the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. (ESV)

Romans 11:33, 36

[33] Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!  
[36] For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. (ESV)

Romans 15:5–6

[5] May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, [6] that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (ESV)

Romans 15:13

[13] May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. (ESV)

1 Corinthians 15:58

[58] Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. (ESV)

2 Corinthians 13:11

[11] Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. (ESV)

2 Corinthians 13:14

[14] The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (ESV)

Galatians 6:18

<sup>24</sup> Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, <sup>25</sup> to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Galatians 6:18

[18] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen. (ESV)

Ephesians 3:17–19

[17] so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, [18] may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, [19] and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (ESV)

Ephesians 3:20–21

[20] Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, [21] to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (ESV)

Ephesians 6:23–24

[23] Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. [24] Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible. (ESV)

Philippians 4:7

[7] And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (ESV)

Colossians 3:15

[15] And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. (ESV)

Colossians 3:16–17

## CALL TO WORSHIP & BENEDICTION SELECTIONS

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[16] Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.  
[17] And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (ESV)

1 Thessalonians 3:12–13

[12] and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, [13] so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. (ESV)

1 Thessalonians 5:23–24

[23] Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. [24] He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it. (ESV)

2 Thessalonians 2:16–17

[16] Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, [17] comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word. (ESV)

1 Timothy 1:17

[17] To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. (ESV)

1 Timothy 6:15–16

[15] he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, [16] who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen. (ESV)

Philemon 25

[25] The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. (ESV)

## CALL TO WORSHIP & BENEDICTION SELECTIONS

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Hebrews 13:20–21

[20] Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, [21] equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. (ESV)

2 Peter 3:18

[18] But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (ESV)

2 Peter 1:2

[2] May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. (ESV)

2 John 3

[3] Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love. (ESV)

Jude 24–25

Doxology

[24] Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, [25] to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (ESV)

Revelation 1:5–6

[5] To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood [6] and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (ESV)



Revelation 5:12–13

[12] saying with a loud voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,  
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might  
and honor and glory and blessing!”

[13] And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying,

“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb  
be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” (ESV)

Revelation 7:12

[12] saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.” (ESV)

Revelation 22:20–21

[20] He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

[21] The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen. (ESV)



## I. Foundational Understanding of Worship

### A. Words Used for Worship

There are three pairs of words which underscore the three primary elements of worship:

**Humility**           The most frequent word in the Old and New Testament is the one that means to make obeisance, to bow down, to prostrate. The Hebrew word is *shaha*, and the Greek word is *proskuneo*. Both words denote the act of bowing or prostrating oneself in submissiveness and reverence. The outward posture reflects an inner attitude of humility and respect. As the word relates to worship, it denotes a high view of God and a condescending opinion of self. Thus, true worship views God in His perfection and man in his imperfection.

**Reverence**           Another pair of terms underscores the attitude of reverence: the Hebrew word is *yare* and the Greek term is *sebomai*. The idea in both the Greek and Hebrew is that of fearing God. It is not so much the fear of terror and dread as much as it is the fear of wonder and awe at the majesty and greatness of the infinite God. It has been suggested that the difference between humility and reverence is that the first focuses on the inward (man's finiteness and sinfulness as compared to God's infinity and perfection) while the second focuses upon the outward (the awesome majesty of God).

**Service**           The third pair of terms employed for worship emphasizes service. Both the Hebrew term *abad* and the Greek counterpart *latreui* denote the idea "to work, to labor, or to serve."

### B. Essential Facets of Worship

The context in which these words were previously examined will add to our understanding of worship.

**Response**           Worship from man's perspective is primarily a matter of response. Fallen man can never approach a righteous and Holy God, so God in the person of Jesus Christ makes us just and righteous by His work on the cross for us (Romans 3:21-24). The Holy Spirit works within us to enable us to worship (Philippians 3:3). Worship is directed to the Father (John 4:23). So, apart from God's revelation of Himself and how man can approach Him in worship, man can never worship God in a way pleasing to Him.

**Adoration**           Since worship is fundamentally a response; the nature of that response is adoration and praise which God rightfully expects of His creatures. No book in the Bible

gives a better pattern for praise and adoration than the book of Psalms: "Bless (praise) the Lord, O my soul and all that is within me" (Psalm 103:1).

**Sacrifice** Central to the worship of Israel in the Tabernacle and in the Temple was the practice of sacrifice. When Abraham worshipped God in Genesis 22, the offering was termed worship. The presentation of the first fruits was also regarded as an act of worship (Dt. 26:10). When the wise men came to worship the Babe, who was the Savior of the world, they came with gifts to give. In the NT the idea of sacrifice is still prominent in worship, but rather than the sacrifice of offerings, it is the sacrifice of self which is essential (Romans 12:1-2). The book of Hebrews adds to this the sacrifice of praise, of doing good, and of sharing (13:15-16).

**Proclamation** This, of the four, admittedly is the most subjective essential to include, but it seems to be a vital part of worship. The nation Israel was not to worship God in secret, but was to be a "light to the Gentiles" (Isaiah 19:6). When Abraham worshiped, he built an altar and "called on the name of the Lord" (Genesis 12:8; 21:33). In the NT, we are told that the church has been created by God "in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10). Whenever the saints partake of the Lord's Table they "proclaim the Lord's death until He comes" (I Corinthians 11:26). Believers are commanded to speak to one another "in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19-20; Colossians 3:16). Those who are "in Christ" are not spectators but participants, who are being observed by both those in heaven as well as those on the earth.

## II. Definition of Worship

Worship is the humble response of regenerate man to the self-disclosure of the Most High God. It is based upon the work of God. It is achieved through the activity of God. It is directed to God. It is expressed by the lips in praise and by the life in service to God.

The short-hand definition of worship is to focus on God because of Christ.

## III. Guiding Principles for Worship and the Music Ministry

Upholding these principles for corporate worship is a good safeguard against inappropriate content and/or instrumentation.

A. Promote content-driven music.

1. Colossians 3:16 sets two functions for music: "teaching and admonishing one another." Teaching is the systematic instruction of "line upon line and precept upon precept," while admonishing is practical and intentional instruction to "the need of the moment." Both are predicated on the crucial priority of the believer being "Spirit-filled" (Eph. 5:18) and being indwelt by the "word of Christ" (Col. 3:16). Thus, the greatest value of music used in worship should be found in what it says.

2. Also, Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 indicate that music of differing content should be used in communicating the Word of God in the body. While "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" may be difficult to distinguish with technical definitions, they are none-the-less different. Psalms are primarily OT Psalms of personal experience directed to the work and nature of God; Hymns are songs directed to the majesty and greatness of God; Spiritual Songs are the varied and broad category of songs that express the spiritual truth of God's power, help, and comfort.

B. Do everything for edification and in an orderly manner.

In the context of spiritual gifts, I Corinthians 14 speaks to several issues concerning corporate worship. Two of these principles have significant implications for music:

1. Verse 26, 'let all things be done for edification.' When this principle is applied to the area of music, personal preferences about music style fall below the greater priority of what builds up the Body, while at the same time inferring that some kinds of music may be more desirable than others if it more readily helps to edify. Practically speaking, the emphasis in corporate worship should not be on individual musical preferences, nor upon what someone desires to get from the experience (emotions, sensations, what they like to hear, etc.). Rather, corporate worship should focus on what a person comes to give (exaltation of Christ, praise to a Holy God and spiritual service).

2. In verse 40, the believers were instruction to do "everything decently and in order," which can have implications about everything from the substance of a service to the demeanor and logistics. Anything that is disorderly or connotes an element of chaos in corporate worship is inappropriate. God is not a God of confusion (v. 33), nor are visitors and the unsaved to think that the church body is lacking in sound judgment or is outright senseless (v. 23).

C. Do all to the "glory of God!"

I Corinthians 10:31 establishes that the focus of our song/music, as with all aspects of our Christian walk, must be done to glorify (respect, honor, worship) the Lord.

#### IV. Statement of Music Philosophy

At Faith Bible Church we are not bound to the oldest hymns of the last century, nor are we slaves to music written in the past few decades. Our focus is not to be entertainment driven but God-focused and Christ-centered!

This means that in corporate worship, we will use doctrinally-sound songs of praise to God. The corresponding tunes will reinforce and enhance the text. We then supplement singing with a variety of instrumentation that fits within our church's vision.

We desire to instill a love for musically-vibrant and theologically-rich historic and contemporary music in ourselves and in our children. Because music ought to teach accurate and noble truths about God, we cultivate depth by singing doctrinally-sound and meaningful songs. From the youngest to the oldest, we sing enthusiastically as we seek to grow in our knowledge of the Lord.

Furthermore, we try to be intentional in our planning, from the order of the service to the songs we sing. We intend for the whole worship service to have a unity and focus that directs the attention of the participant to God and a readiness to hear the Word of God.

Planning Center Services - Songs Export 2019-10-09

| Title                                    | Last Scheduled Date |
|--|---------------------|
| Praise To The Lord The Almighty          | July 28, 2019       |
| Across The Lands                         | July 28, 2019       |
| Come Thou Fount                          | May 19, 2019        |
| In Christ Alone                          | August 11, 2019     |
| Praise Him Praise Him                    | May 27, 2018        |
| All Hail The Power Of Jesus Name         | October 06, 2019    |
| Grace Unmeasured                         | April 07, 2019      |
| God Of Grace                             | March 17, 2019      |
| My Hope Is In The Lord                   | January 27, 2019    |
| O Great God                              | September 15, 2019  |
| He Will Hold Me Fast                     | May 26, 2019        |
| Rock Of Ages Cleft For Me                | March 03, 2019      |
| Come Behold The Wondrous Mystery         | September 29, 2019  |
| And Can It Be                            | June 30, 2019       |
| Alas and Did my Savior Bleed             | March 03, 2019      |
| Behold The Lamb                          | July 07, 2019       |
| Cornerstone                              | July 02, 2017       |
| By Faith                                 | August 18, 2019     |
| Crown Him With Many Crowns               | April 21, 2019      |
| Great Is The Lord                        | August 04, 2019     |
| Jesus Thank You                          | August 04, 2019     |
| Rejoice The Lord Is King                 | July 21, 2019       |
| Come Praise And Glorify                  | September 22, 2019  |
| O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing (Azmon) | June 16, 2019       |
| Behold Our God                           | September 08, 2019  |
| Holy Holy Holy (Nicaea)                  | February 17, 2019   |
| O Church Arise                           | March 18, 2018      |
| Speak O Lord                             | September 29, 2019  |
| Day By Day                               | March 31, 2019      |

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| The Power Of The Cross                       | August 04, 2019    |
| Before The Throne Of God                     | August 11, 2019    |
| To God Be The Glory                          | March 04, 2018     |
| Amazing Grace                                | October 29, 2017   |
| Come Thou Almighty King                      | August 12, 2018    |
| I Will Glory In My Redeemer                  | August 11, 2019    |
| Resurrection Hymn                            | April 21, 2019     |
| Brethren We Have Met To Worship (Holy Manna) | October 06, 2019   |
| 10,000 Reasons (Bless The Lord)              | January 14, 2018   |
| I Sing The Mighty Power Of God               | June 23, 2019      |
| Come Christians Join To Sing                 | October 13, 2019   |
| Glorious Things Of Thee Are Spoken           | October 29, 2017   |
| O The Deep Deep Love Of Jesus (Ebenezer)     | March 18, 2018     |
| Joyful Joyful We Adore Thee                  | March 10, 2019     |
| We Will Glorify                              | March 10, 2019     |
| All Creatures Of Our God And King            | May 12, 2019       |
| Come People Of The Risen King                | September 22, 2019 |
| Lead On O King Eternal                       | August 06, 2017    |
| A Mighty Fortress Is Our God                 | October 28, 2018   |
| The Solid Rock                               | December 02, 2018  |
| How Firm A Foundation                        | February 25, 2018  |
| Christ Is Risen                              | April 01, 2018     |
| It Is Not Death To Die                       | January 14, 2018   |
| Doxology                                     | July 08, 2018      |
| Immortal Invisible (God Only Wise)           | August 04, 2019    |
| You Alone Can Rescue                         | February 24, 2019  |
| All I Have Is Christ                         | October 06, 2019   |
| My Faith Has Found A Resting Place           | November 11, 2018  |
| He Is Exalted                                | July 14, 2019      |
| He Who Is Mighty                             | December 18, 2016  |
| Jesus Paid It All                            | May 05, 2019       |
| 'Tis So Sweet To Trust In Jesus              | April 15, 2018     |



|                                     |                    |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| O Come All Ye Faithful              | December 24, 2018  |
| Angels From The Realms Of Glory     | December 23, 2018  |
| Hark The Herald Angels Sing         | December 16, 2018  |
| It Came Upon The Midnight Clear     | December 10, 2017  |
| Joy To The World                    | December 24, 2018  |
| O Come O Come Emmanuel              | December 10, 2017  |
| The First Noel                      | December 24, 2018  |
| Nothing But The Blood (Plainfield)  | November 04, 2018  |
| Angels We Have Heard On High        | December 24, 2018  |
| What Child Is This                  | December 04, 2016  |
| Good Christian Men Rejoice          | December 09, 2018  |
| Be Thou My Vision                   | January 20, 2019   |
| Come Ye Sinners Poor And Needy      | April 07, 2019     |
| This Is My Father's World           | March 03, 2019     |
| Christ The Lord Is Risen Today      | April 21, 2019     |
| Savior Like A Shepherd Lead Us      | January 21, 2018   |
| Because He Lives (Amen)             | March 24, 2019     |
| As Long As You Are Glorified        | August 12, 2018    |
| How Rich A Treasure We Possess      |                    |
| Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)  | March 04, 2018     |
| Oh How He Loves You And Me          | April 29, 2018     |
| Love Divine All Loves Excelling     | September 09, 2018 |
| Jesus What A Friend For Sinners     | April 22, 2018     |
| I Stand Amazed                      | August 07, 2016    |
| Our Great God                       | August 04, 2019    |
| Stricken Smitten And Afflicted      | April 19, 2019     |
| All Glory Be To Christ              | February 03, 2019  |
| Complete In Thee                    | October 13, 2019   |
| There Is A Higher Throne            | July 21, 2019      |
| Take My Life And Let It Be (Hendon) | August 20, 2017    |
| Jesus Is Better                     | July 14, 2019      |
| It Is Well With My Soul             | November 11, 2018  |

|                                  |                    |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| O Worship The King               | July 21, 2019      |
| Great Is Thy Faithfulness        | September 01, 2019 |
| Fairest Lord Jesus               | October 07, 2018   |
| The Church's One Foundation      | October 13, 2019   |
| Dear Refuge Of My Weary Soul     | July 14, 2019      |
| See the Destined Day Arise       | April 19, 2019     |
| O God Our Help In Ages Past      | January 29, 2017   |
| Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus    | December 16, 2018  |
| O Little Town Of Bethlehem       | December 25, 2016  |
| My Soul Finds Rest               | February 10, 2019  |
| Lord I Need You                  | March 31, 2019     |
| You Are My Vision                | January 21, 2018   |
| Show Us Christ                   | September 08, 2019 |
| In The Cross Alone I Glory       | September 03, 2017 |
| What Wondrous Love Is This       |                    |
| Here Is Love                     | April 09, 2017     |
| Man Of Sorrows                   | February 10, 2019  |
| I'd Rather Have Jesus            | April 23, 2017     |
| The Lord Is My Salvation         | July 28, 2019      |
| Build Your Kingdom Here          | June 02, 2019      |
| The Wonderful Cross              | October 08, 2017   |
| When I Survey The Wondrous Cross | April 19, 2019     |
| Firm Foundation                  | September 15, 2019 |
| Ancient Words                    | November 18, 2018  |
| His Robes for Mine               | August 11, 2019    |
| Alas And Did My Savior Bleed     | April 19, 2019     |
| Trust In You                     |                    |
| Hear The Call Of The Kingdom     | March 18, 2018     |
| Let the Earth Resound            | August 25, 2019    |
| Let All Mortal Flesh             | December 16, 2018  |
| Shine On Us                      | September 16, 2018 |
| His Forever                      | April 28, 2019     |

|                                   |                    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| O Lord My Rock And My Redeemer    | July 28, 2019      |
| The Gospel Song                   | February 04, 2018  |
| All Praise To Him                 | October 06, 2019   |
| The Compassion Hymn               |                    |
| Not What My Hands Have Done       | April 07, 2019     |
| Let Your Kingdom Come             |                    |
| Forgiven                          | October 21, 2018   |
| O Church Arise (Arise Shine)      | October 13, 2019   |
| Christ Is Risen He's Risen Indeed | April 21, 2019     |
| O Love That Will Not Let Me Go    |                    |
| A Christian's Daily Prayer        | August 25, 2019    |
| Christ The Sure And Steady Anchor |                    |
| Depth Of Mercy                    |                    |
| His Mercy Is More                 | July 14, 2019      |
| Not In Me                         |                    |
| Reformation Song                  | September 29, 2019 |
| Facing A Task Unfinished          | August 05, 2018    |
| Jesus Shall Reign                 | August 18, 2019    |
| Upon A Life                       |                    |
| There Is A Redeemer               |                    |
| Christ Is Mine Forevermore        | August 18, 2019    |
| This is Our God                   |                    |
| My God My Father                  |                    |
| More Than Conquerors              | March 24, 2019     |
| May The Peoples Praise You        | October 13, 2019   |
| Psalm 24 (The King Of Glory)      | September 08, 2019 |
| For The Cause                     |                    |
| I Have A Peace                    |                    |
| The Love Of God                   | November 25, 2018  |
| Christ Is Enough                  | March 10, 2019     |
| It Is Finished                    | September 16, 2018 |
| Happy Day                         | September 16, 2018 |

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| Wonderful Merciful Savior                       | October 13, 2019   |
| Only A Holy God                                 | June 23, 2019      |
| Grace Greater Than Our Sin                      | October 21, 2018   |
| God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen                     | December 24, 2018  |
| My Worth Is Not In What I Own                   | June 02, 2019      |
| Glorious And Mighty                             | September 01, 2019 |
| How Deep The Father's Love For Us               | September 01, 2019 |
| Shout To The Lord                               | December 30, 2018  |
| How Great Thou Art                              |                    |
| For The Beauty Of The Earth (St. Athanasius)    |                    |
| Is He Worthy                                    |                    |
| Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me              | October 06, 2019   |
| The Goodness Of Jesus                           |                    |
| I Will Trust My Saviour Jesus                   |                    |
| Grace   | June 02, 2019      |
| Here I Am To Worship                            | April 07, 2019     |
| O Sacred Head Now Wounded                       | April 19, 2019     |
| God Is For Us                                   | September 22, 2019 |
| He Leadeth Me O Blessed Thought (He Leadeth Me) |                    |
| Be Still My Soul                                | May 26, 2019       |
| O Praise The Name (Anástasis)                   | June 02, 2019      |
| The Solid Rock                                  | September 29, 2019 |
| Death Was Arrested                              | July 14, 2019      |
| Love Come Down                                  |                    |
| I Will Wait For You (Psalm 130)                 |                    |
| All Glory Be Forever                            |                    |
| Oh Love That Will Not Let Me Go                 |                    |
| All The Way My Savior Leads Me                  | August 25, 2019    |
| Beneath The Cross                               | September 22, 2019 |
| Oh The Lord Our Strength And Song               |                    |
| We Believe (Apostle's Creed)                    |                    |



# *Missions*





## MISSIONS: WHAT, WHY, HOW

### Missions

#### What:

- A plan for supporting and sending missionaries abroad

#### Why:

- To lead the church in obedience to the fullest extent of the great commission
- To protect the church's stewardship in the great commission
- To enlist some for missionary service abroad

#### How:

- Prayer in corporate gatherings and individually (membership directory, membership meetings, corporate gatherings)
- Meaningful and consistent communication
- Giving
- Encouraging missionaries through personal visits from pastor and people (vision trips and missions emphasis weekends)
- Exposing membership to potential fields of service





## DEACON(ESS) OF MISSIONS

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### Deacon(ess) of Missions Ministry Description

The Elders of Faith Bible Church are responsible for the oversight and shepherding of the body and ministry of the church. One of the primary responsibilities of the church is the advance of the gospel around the world by means of sending and serving missionaries. In that this responsibility is large in both time and scope, and the Elders are to be devoted to prayer and the ministry of the Word, Faith Bible Church shall elect a Deacon(ess) of Missions to organize and oversee the facilitation of our missions strategy.

#### Responsibilities:

1. Communication with Missionaries
2. Coordination of Ministry Trips
3. Facilitation of Missions Emphasis Weekend
4. Initiation of Missions Awareness

#### Accountability:

The Deacon of Missions will be accountable to the Elder responsible for Global Advance and broadly accountable to the Elder Board.

#### Qualifications:

- They will be a member of Faith Bible Church.
- They will possess the qualities as given in Acts 6:3 and in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- They will be able to articulate a biblical philosophy of missions.
- They will be able to maintain communication with missionaries so as to assess important needs and opportunities.
- They will be able to coordinate visits from and to our missionaries.
- They will be available to offer consistent time to ministry responsibilities.

## DEACON(ESS) OF MISSIONS

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### Nomination Process

1. Upon request from the elders, the congregation will privately nominate a servant on the basis of his/her character and competence.
2. The elders will then recommend a deacon candidate for office to the members at a regular congregational meeting. Affirmation by the membership is completed by not less than a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of those present and voting.
3. Upon recognition, they will serve for a three-year term during which they will
  1. manage a specific responsibility on behalf of a particular elder
  2. and report to the elders and/or congregation as requested by the elders
4. They shall exercise their role with a special concern for the unity of the local church.

FAITH BIBLE CHURCH ELDERS' MEETING  
10.17.18

What is a missions portfolio assessment?

an exercise in which the elders at Faith Bible Church contrast their current external ministry investments with their current internal ministry values

Why conduct a missions portfolio assessment?

- To refresh ourselves on our mission and values
- To align our current external ministry investments with our stated mission and values
- To explore new, viable ministry investments
- To redirect resources from ineffective or unaligned ministry investments

How do we conduct a missions portfolio assessment?

Review and clarify current Faith Bible Church mission and distinctives.

- Vision: to display God's glory by making disciples through the gospel of Jesus Christ
- Values: high view of God (theocentric worship; teaching on holiness and sovereignty of God); sufficient view of Scripture (expository preaching; sound doctrine in all teaching ministries; biblical counseling); humble view of man (non-attractional ministry and services; presentation of gospel as man's only hope for life); strong view of the local church (elder leadership; congregational affirmation and ministry expectation; church membership and discipline)

Missionaries Aligned with our Vision and Values

- Clarks (Asia) Green
- Kanes (Cambodia, Asia) Green
- Mittens (Honduras, South America) Green
- Roberts (GMI, Czech Republic) Green
- Smiths (Zambia, Africa) Green
- Warners (Romania, Europe) Yellow
- Selfs (Argentina, South America) Green
- Facioli (Brazil, South America) Green
- Bancroft (North America, Miami) Green
- Moore (Africa) Green
- SBC International Missions Board Green

Other Missionaries currently supporting

- Eckhoffs (Spain) Green
- Gatlyns (US) Green

Assess diversity of investment, particularly noting opportunities that can capitalize upon current relationships or will most likely gain momentum with our church in the future.

MISSIONS PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT GUIDE

|               | Short Term<br>(Next Few Years)        | Medium Term<br>(Our Lifetime)                           | Long Term<br>(Next Generation) |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Naples        | PRC<br>Naples Pastoral Network        | FBC Internship<br>SBC IMB<br>Naples Pastoral<br>Network | FBC Internship                 |
| North America | FBC Internship<br>Gatlyns<br>Bancroft | SBC IMB<br>Bancroft                                     | SBC IMB<br>Bancroft            |
| South America | Selfs<br>Facioli                      | Selfs<br>Facioli  | Mittens<br>Facioli             |
| Aisa          | Kanes<br>Clarks                       | Kanes<br>Clarks   | Kanes<br>Clarks                |
| Africa        | Smiths<br>Moore                       | Smiths<br>Moore   | Smiths<br>Moore                |
| Europe        | Warners                               | Roberts   | Roberts                        |

Discussion:

Raising Support:

Cutting Support:

Warner - Romania (\$250)

Eckhoffs - Spain (\$250) (wait until we meet with him to find out more details of their ministry and what they do)

Gatlyns - US (\$400) (wait to gauge the congregation)

Smith -

Roberts -

Total per month:

Total per year:

Potential Missionaries:

- John Pentecost (UAE)
- Lyle Weatherston (Australia)
- David Burchard (Scotland)

FAITH BIBLE CHURCH ELDERS' MEETING  
12.11.19

What is a missions portfolio assessment?

an exercise in which the elders at Faith Bible Church contrast their current external ministry investments with their current internal ministry values

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Missionaries Aligned with our Vision and Values

- Clarks (Asia) Green
- Kanes (Cambodia, Asia) Green
- Mittens (Honduras, South America) Green
- Roberts (GMI, Czech Republic) Green
- Smiths (Zambia, Africa) Green
- Warners (Romania, Europe) Yellow
- Selfs (Argentina, South America) Green
- Facioli (Brazil, South America) Green
- Bancroft (North America, Miami) Green
- Moore (Africa) Green - coming off in February
- SBC International Missions Board Green

Assess diversity of investment, particularly noting opportunities that can capitalize upon current relationships or will most likely gain momentum with our church in the future.

|  | Short Term<br>(Next Few Years) | Medium Term<br>(Our Lifetime) | Long Term<br>(Next Generation) |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|

MISSIONS PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT GUIDE

|               |                                       |   |                     |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Naples        | PRC<br>Naples Pastoral Network        | FBC Internship<br>SBC IMB<br>Naples Pastoral<br>Network | FBC Internship      |
| North America | FBC Internship<br>Gatlyns<br>Bancroft | SBC IMB<br>Bancroft                                     | SBC IMB<br>Bancroft |
| South America | Selfs<br>Facioli                      | Selfs<br>Facioli  | Mittens<br>Facioli  |
| Aisa          | Kanes<br>Clarks                       | Kanes<br>Clarks   | Kanes<br>Clarks     |
| Africa        | Smiths<br>Moore                       | Smiths<br>Moore   | Smiths<br>Moore     |
| Europe        | Warners                               | Roberts   | Roberts             |

Discussion:

Raising Support:

Cutting Support:

Warner - Romania (\$250)

Eckhoffs - Spain (\$250) (wait until we meet with him to find out more details of their ministry and what they do)

Gatlyns - US (\$400) (wait to gauge the congregation)

Smith -

Roberts -

Total per month:

Total per year:

Potential Missionaries:

- Johnny Lithell

## MISSIONS EMPHASIS WEEKEND

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### Missions Emphasis Weekend

#### What:

- A weekend event when we host a supported missionary

#### Why:

- To connect personally with the missionary and his family / To deepen the relationship with the missionary and his family
- To encourage the missionary
- To share their passion for their ministry
- To train believers in missions philosophy
- To entice believers toward vocational missions

#### How:

- Through sessions of teaching and sharing
  - Personal Story (salvation-call of mission)
  - Preaching
  - Personal ministry endeavors
  - Training (unique strengths)
  - Q & A (after each session)
- Meals with staff and church members
- Refreshment for the missionary
  - Restaurant Gift cards
  - Give the missionary the option of staying with a family or a hotel
  - Ask the missionary what is refreshing to them
  - Pay for an activity for them and their family
  - Provide preaching and sessions honorariums (\$1,000 for the weekend)





# MINISTRY TRIP INTEREST FORM

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Purpose of the trip

Destination, Dates and Details

Commitment

MINISTRY TRIP INTEREST FORM

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Please answer the following as detailed and accurately as possible:

Personal Details:

- Full legal name (as appears on passport): \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_
- Email address: \_\_\_\_\_
- Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_
- Passport number: (if none, please indicate): \_\_\_\_\_
- Expiration date of passport: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you a member of FBC? A regular Seminar attendee? If so, where and with which group?
2. Have you ever traveled outside of the country? If so, where?
3. Have you ever participated in a missions/ministry trip? If so, where and with what group?
4. How interested are you on a scale of 1-10? (1 = not so much, 10 = very much)  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Which location are you most interested in?
6. Please list any practical and/or teaching gifts that you have that could be used on a ministry trip (e.g. construction skills, Bible and/or other teaching ability and experience, IT skills, ESL teaching interest or experience, etc.).
7. Are you able to afford the cost of the trip without incurring debt? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Do you have any legal issues that would hinder you from leaving the country?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## MINISTRY TRIP INTEREST FORM

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9. Do you have any medical concerns that would hinder a busy travel schedule? If so, please explain.
  
10. Please briefly describe why you want to go on a ministry trip and why you have chosen the location above (attach your answer on another sheet of paper if necessary).

Once I turn in this form and \$100.00 deposit I realize that I am committing to going on the trip and, if selected, will be responsible to pay the full amount for the airline ticket and any other non-refundable expenses.



### Purpose of Ministry Trips

*Encourage. Learn. Report.*

The purpose of FBC's ministry trips is to encourage our missionaries, and to learn about their mission first hand, so that we can report what we have learned back to the body at Faith Bible.

### Guidelines for Ministry Trips

*Encourage*

- Plan specific ways the team can encourage and serve the missionaries and/or nationals. It is the team leader's responsibility to coordinate this with the missionary. Some ideas include: bring supplies or gifts to them (check with the missionary about what type of items would be helpful); take them out to meals (ask the missionary for ideas); spend time listening to their story (please help the team focus on building their relationship with the missionaries); get to know their children (maybe ask if you can babysit so that the couple can have some time apart for a date); spend extended seasons of prayer with them, ask them how they are doing and what their struggles are; and fill them in on what is going on in the life of the members of Faith Bible Church.
- Ask the missionaries if there are any special skill-related tasks that the team can do: fix things at their house or ministry related buildings; teach/preach at a venue that would help them (let them ask you); help with a VBS or other outreach event that would further their ministry goals; etc. Find out what the different gifts are of the team members who are part of the trip. The goal is to help the missionaries not just to give the team something to do.
- Focus on relationship both before, during and after the trip: by actively listening; faithfully praying; practically serving; positively communicating; etc. Encourage someone to become the missionaries advocate here in the states.

*Learn*

- Design the trip to lead to a deeper understanding of God: His character; His Mission; His Call of Discipleship; etc. Learn together what the implications of the gospel are both for "foreign" and "domestic" fields alike, and what our role is at Faith Bible as a disciple-making hub.
- Plan a daily team meeting where the leader or missionary leads in a devotional (Bible series or individual texts), and the team can share lessons learned, insights from the passage, and pray as a group. Work with the missionary to set up the best time for this each day.
- Create opportunities to reflect on our tendency to view our culture as superior to other cultures and how we might develop a more biblical worldview. This can be done in small group informal chats or as a whole team meeting together on purpose.
- Set up deliberate times with our missionaries on issues such as the local culture, status of the local ministry and church planting, ways that our church can engage in helpful

forms of support, and prayer requests from the missionaries regarding ministry and personal/family life. Some type of Q&A with the missionaries is really valuable; it would be helpful if the team leader led the Q&A, asking questions from the team and moderating the discussion.

- Ask the missionary about opportunities for the team members to experience a taste of the local culture. Ideas include: stay with a national family for part or their entire time there; spend an afternoon with a national family who are members of the local church (meal in their home; activity with them; etc.); plan an activity with several local believers where the team can interact with them in "everyday" settings; etc. Be creative and work with the missionary on some ideas.
- Plan the ministry trip to be both helpful to the missionary as well as to allow the team members to use their spiritual gifts to encourage and serve, keeping in mind cultural and language barriers.

### *Report*

- Each ministry team member will select two prayer partners to pray with them before and after the trip. The goal is accountability and a vested interest in the ministry trip by other church members. This is an essential element in the spiritual success of the ministry trip.
- The team will report to the church body at Faith during a member's meeting. Carefully selected points of encouragement regarding the missionaries, the team and what this means to our church body will be presented through a PPT/Video presentation, team member testimonies, and an overview message by the team leader.
- The team leader is responsible for the following preparation for the overview video:
- The 3-4 minute video will offer an overview of the trip along with testimonies of team members about what they learned.
- Plan to capture the main moments of the trip with pictures and videos including: team members with the missionary, his family and local believers; church services; the missionaries home, church building, around town, etc. Find out who has a quality camera/video and ask if they would take the needed footage.
- Assign a couple team members to collect the top 100 pictures and videos from the trip and get them to the media team who will be creating the video.
- Select team members to fill out the following items for the video toward the end of the trip:
  - I appreciate (the missionary family's) \_\_\_\_\_.
  - God taught me \_\_\_\_\_ while on the trip.
  - I learned \_\_\_\_\_ about the church/believers in (location visited).
  - One thing we can pray for (missionary family and/or church in \_\_\_\_\_) is \_\_\_\_\_.
- Record the selected team members answering these sentences. Ideally, you should record them on location near the end of the trip.
- The team leader will prepare a 5-minute overview of the trip to present to the church. Include what you did, what you learned, and how you'll use what you learned moving

forward. Make sure that you do not repeat the comments from the team members in the video.

- If possible, plan a final “team activity” at your home, a home of a team member, or at the church. This is a nice way to recap lessons learned on the trip, show pics and swap stories from the trip, and talk about the ways you can be “advocates” for the missionary you just visited.
- Some of the key goals under the “report” purpose is to promote faithful prayer support, heartfelt encouragement and meaningful communication between our church body and their missionaries.

### Tasks

#### *5 months before*

- Contact finalized group(s) with the following info:
- *Prayer partners:* Inform them to select two prayer partners; they should meet together (or pray over the phone) one time a month before the trip; pray for team member during the trip; and follow-up with prayer partners after the trip.
- *Reading:* Provide list of required reading books/materials and questions with dates for completion.
- *Missionary info:* Give brief introduction of missionary family/team; include recent news from prayer letter(s).
- *Passport and Visa:* Confirm that everyone has an up-to-date passport; advise those who don't to start working on it; If necessary communicate process for obtaining visa.
- *Tickets:* remind group that tickets will be purchased soon and they will be responsible for paying their part of the trip regardless of whether they go or not (e.g. plane tickets and other non-refundable costs).
- *Pre-Trip Meeting:* remind them that they must attend the (date) pre-trip meeting (time/place) and must complete the reading and assignment before the meeting.

#### *3 months before*

- Hold initial meeting with the final group (date and time):
- The first two hours will be spent on general information about the trip. The last hour will be reserved for specifics about the trip.
- Take a few minutes for everyone to get to know each other, maybe plan an icebreaker activity. It is important to begin to develop a “team” mindset.
- Go over basic information about where you're going, background information on the missionaries (family info, sending church, mission board, other interesting info, etc.), overview of the ministry there (church(es), nature of training ministries, missionary's goal in being there, etc.), and the specific purposes of this trip.
- Inform members to select two prayer partners that are not on the team, preferably not a family member (members of their weekly small group/seminar would be great). Team members need to give you the names of their prayer partners in one week from this meeting. They should meet one time a month before the trip; pray for team member during the trip; and follow-up with prayer partner after the trip.

- Confirm that everyone has an up-to-date passport in their possession.
- If visa is required for entry, make plans to start the process with the group.
- Give out dates for future team meetings, if applicable. The purpose of the future meetings is to prepare specific materials and any other preparations before the trip.
- Make copies of important documents (passport and driver's license) for team leader and travel insurance; also make a copy of both for members to keep in their luggage. Make sure team members bring these documents with them to the meeting.
- Ask someone to be the coordinator for items the team will take over to the missionary: things the missionary requests; gifts for their family (ask the wife for ideas); items their family members send to FBC to take over. The team member coordinating it should contact the missionary (wife is usually best) and ask for things they (1) need (medicine, children's supplies, etc.) and (2) like (spoil items like chocolate, chocolate chips, spice packets, books, etc.).
- Pray together as a team. Include prayer requests from the most recent missionary update.
- Contact missionary(ies) about planning a schedule for the trip:
- Inform the missionary about the 3 goals for the trip – encourage, learn, and report – and create the schedule to accomplish those goals.
- Let the missionary know that you'd like a daily meeting time with the team.
- Based on their previous correspondence, work out the objectives of your team during your stay and how you'll accomplish them. Let them know your intention to encourage and help them however possible (see "Guidelines" section above).
- Ask about specific prayer items to pass on to the team.
- Ask them about things they'd like the team to bring over. Depending on your airline, each team member might have an extra bag that can be used to bring supplies over (books, seasoning packets, favorite candy, etc.). If you're going to select a team member to gather these things, let the missionary know and give him that person's email address.

### *1 – 3 months before*

- Regularly update the team and encourage them to pray for the trip:
- go over information regarding the trip.
- pass on any details or instructions from the missionary(ies) to the team; also pass on prayer requests from missionary update letters/posts.
- Schedule meetings if necessary to continue planning for your trip.
- Follow-up on vaccines if needed; make sure the team gets them on schedule.



### *1 month before*

- Update the group with final details as needed:
  - Finalize a group gift for the missionary family and for hosts: select a team member to coordinate this. We suggest team members contribute \$10-15 each to select some nice gifts for the missionary family. The team member coordinating it should contact the missionary (wife is usually best) and ask for things they (1) need (medicine, children's supplies, etc.) and (2) like (spoil items like chocolate, chocolate chips, spice packets, books, etc.).
  - Establish a meeting time/place for departure.
  - Line up transportation to and from the airport.
  - Finalize details for devotional materials/notebook for ministry team.
  - Send request for cash from business office: work with Treasurer to finalize how much cash you'll need before and during trip.
  - Collect balance for trip expenses: talk to Treasurer about deadline.
  - Compile a list of items the team leader needs to take with him.

### *1 week before*

- Final meeting with the team:
  - Go over the final details.
  - Confirm the meeting time/place for departure.
  - Ensure all documents are in proper order.
  - Notify the team about checking in early and about using a frequent flyer #.
  - Make sure team member coordinating items for missionary(ies) is set; create a plan to gather and pack the items; give yourselves enough time to pack and weigh items before leaving (it's ideal to do this a few days before leaving).
  - Secure cash from business office for expenses.

### *During trip*

- Keep all receipts and a detailed log of expenses; keep personal cash separate from team cash.
- Jot down notes during the trip for future use: observations from the missionary, thoughts from the team, etc.

### *1 week after trip*

- Plan post-trip meeting with team members:
- Encourage them to write out their thoughts from the trip.
- Encourage them to meet with prayer partners and share with their small groups.
- Complete expense report; send the Excel sheet to Treasurer (he'll compare this to the budget and create a final report).
- Turn unused cash over to Treasurer.
- Write down observations about the trip as team leader; include observations from the missionaries and ministry team members. Also include suggestions for future trips.

### *Presentation*

Make sure media team has all pictures and videos from the trip (100 best pics/videos). Also make sure he has the final recording files from the team member interviews.

- Prepare 5 minute overview (see above under "Report").
- Talk to an elder about member's meeting date for presentation.

### REMINDER: Realities for Ministry Trips

*Ministry trips ought to consider the following realities:*

- Financial Stewardship: As stewards we are responsible for how we use our own resources as well as those of our local church.
- Multi-Generational Participation: Whenever possible the makeup of our trip should include a variety of age, life stage, and socio-economic levels reflecting our local church body.
- Intentional Ministry: Selecting the missionary, field we visit and purpose of the trip must be done with intentionality.
- Relational Integrity: Ministry by nature is others oriented. Our ministry team trips are first and foremost *service to* our missionaries and *service for* our local church to be accomplished for the praise and glory of our God.

### Purpose of Ministry Trips

*Encourage. Learn. Report.*

The purpose of FBC's ministry trips is to encourage our missionaries, and to learn about their mission first hand, so that we can minister to them and report what we have learned back to the body at Faith Bible.

*"Ministry Trips"*

We at Faith Bible intentionally call our trips abroad "ministry trips" in an effort to avoid confusion over the role of church members on these trips. We will be traveling as a team of "ministers" (i.e., encouragers, learners and reporters). Our focus will be on building and encouraging the relationship between our missionaries on the field and our local church body. We will go as those who are seeking to serve and learn more about the context in which our missionaries minister. As our relationship with both our missionaries and their mission field deepens, the ministry team, and ultimately the local church at Faith, will grow in its ability to more effectively serve alongside them. After returning, our ministry team will have the opportunity to report to the church what has been learned from their experience with our missionaries.

### Guidelines for Ministry Trips

*Encourage*

- Plan specific ways to encourage and serve the missionaries and/or nationals: bring supplies or gifts to them; take them out to meals; spend time listening to their story; get to know their children; spend extended seasons of prayer with them; etc.
- Ask the missionaries if there are any special-skill related tasks that the team can do: fix things at their house; teach/preach at a venue that would help them; help with a VBS or other outreach event that would further their ministry goals; assist in a building project; etc.
- Focus on relationship both before, during and after the trip: by actively listening; faithfully praying; practically serving; positively communicating; etc.

*Learn*

- Design the trip to lead to a deeper understanding of God: His character; His mission; His call of discipleship; etc.
- Create opportunities to reflect on our tendency to view our culture as superior to other cultures and how we might develop a more biblical worldview.
- Set up deliberate times with our missionaries on issues such as the local culture, status of the local ministry and church planting, ways that our church can engage in helpful forms of support, and prayer requests from the missionaries regarding ministry and personal/family life.

- Plan the ministry trip to be both helpful to the missionary as well as to allow the team members to use their spiritual gifts to encourage and serve.

### *Report*

- Each ministry team member must select two prayer partners to pray with them before and after the trip. The goal is accountability and a vested interest in the ministry trip by other church members.
- The team will report to the church body at Faith. Carefully selected points of encouragement regarding the missionaries, the team and what this means to our church body will be presented through a PPT/Video presentation, team member testimonies, and an overview message by the team leader.
- Some of the key goals under the “report” purpose is to promote more faithful prayer support, heartfelt encouragement and meaningful communication between our church body and their missionaries.

### Realities for Ministry Trips

*Ministry trips ought to consider the following realities:*

- Financial Stewardship: As stewards we are responsible for how we use our own resources as well as those of our local church.
- Multi-Generational Participation: Whenever possible the makeup of our ministry team should include a variety of age, life stage, and socio-economic levels reflecting our local church body.
- Intentional Ministry: Selecting the missionary, field we visit and purpose of the trip should be done with intentionality.
- Relational Integrity: Ministry by nature is others oriented. Our ministry team trips are first and foremost *service to* our missionaries and *service for* our local church to be accomplished for the praise and glory of our God.

## MINISTRY TRIP REQUEST FORM

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Brief request to send to a missionary:

We are looking at how we can best serve our FBC missionaries in 20\_\_ through short-term ministry teams and would like some feedback from you. Would it be helpful to you if anyone from our church came to be of service to you in 20\_\_? If a group would benefit you, what would be the best way they could do that? What time of the year is best? How many people is an optimal number?

*Note: Adapt the wording and detail to the specific field and missionary.*

Fuller background on this approach to requesting:

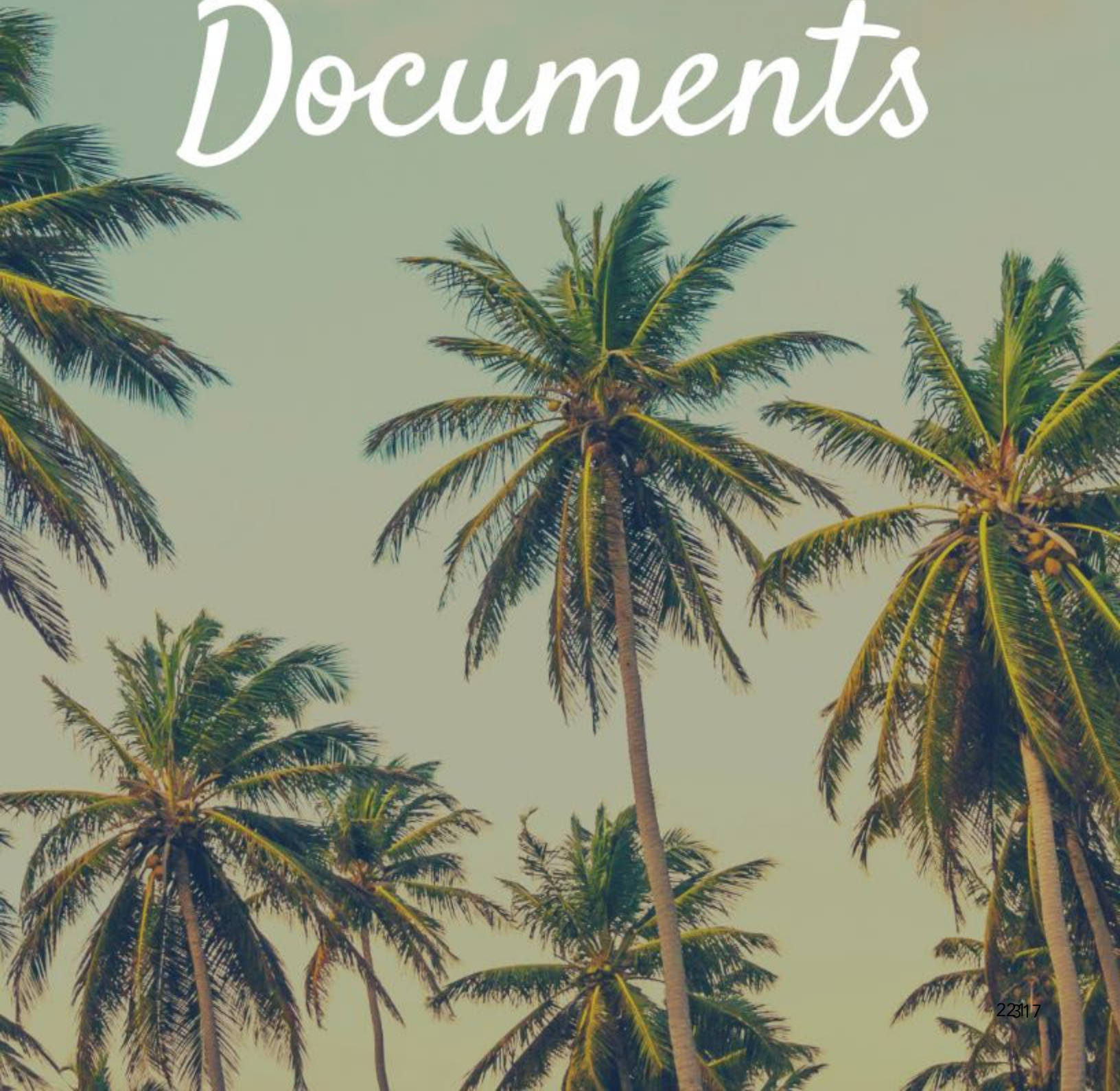
We are in the process of developing a new approach to short-term ministry trips to better serve our missionaries. Our goal is to send out small teams to serve our missionaries in ways that would minimize the burden and maximize the effect. Our goal is to serve the missionary, not to simply make a trip for the sake of seeing another part of the world. We would like to be more flexible and adaptable in how we approach serving in this way, including the size of the team, the purpose of the trip, and the date of the trip.

The main questions for our missionaries:

1. Would it be helpful to you if anyone from our church came to be of service to you in 20\_\_?
2. If a group would benefit you, what would be the best way they could do that?
3. What time of the year is best?
4. How many people is an optimal number?



# *Foundational Documents*







## FAITH BIBLE CHURCH

Updated: March 30, 2020

### VISION – who we are

Faith Bible Church exists to raise up generations of God-glorifying Christ followers.

### MISSION – what we do

Live a life that delights in Christ, serves His people and advances the truth in love.

### VALUES – what we emphasize

As Faith Bible Church works to accomplish its mission, we will do so emphasizing the following core values:

OBEDIENCE: submission to the sufficient Word

POLITY: allegiance to Biblical church structure

MATURITY: personal and passionate Christ-likeness

MULTIPLICATION: every member a disciple maker

COMMUNITY: interdependent and affectionate growth of the body



## COVENANT

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Having been brought by divine grace <sup>1</sup> to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ <sup>2</sup> and to give up ourselves to him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit <sup>3</sup> and received into the membership of his church we do now, relying on His gracious aid <sup>4</sup>, solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with each other.

- ❖ We will trust and obey the Word of God, acknowledging its supreme and final authority as we work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship <sup>5</sup>, ordinances <sup>6</sup>, discipline <sup>7</sup>, and doctrines <sup>8</sup>.
- ❖ We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,<sup>9</sup> walking together in brotherly love <sup>10</sup>, exercising an affectionate care <sup>11</sup> and watchfulness over each other <sup>12</sup> and faithfully admonishing <sup>13</sup> and correcting one another as occasion may require.
- ❖ We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others <sup>14</sup>.
- ❖ We will endeavor to bring up such as may at any time be under our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord <sup>15</sup>, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family and friends <sup>16</sup>.
- ❖ We will rejoice at each others' happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows <sup>17</sup>.
- ❖ We will seek to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation now to lead a new and holy life <sup>18</sup>.
- ❖ We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations <sup>19</sup>.
- ❖ We will submit to the leaders who have been given to us by Christ, recognizing that they must give an account, praying for them and guarding their reputations <sup>20</sup>.
- ❖ We will, when we move from this place, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word <sup>21</sup>.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen <sup>22</sup>.

1. Galatians 1:3-4; Ephesians 1:5-6. 2. Acts 11:18; John 3:1-8; John 6:44. 3. Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:38-41. 4. Galatians 3:3. 5. Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:23-25. 6. Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34. 7. Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 John 7-11. 8. Romans 16:17; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 6:3-5. 9. John 17:20-21; Philippians 2:1-2. 10. John 13:34; Ephesians 5:2; 1 John 4:7-8. 11. Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7; 14:12; Galatians 6:10. 12. 2 Corinthians 12:20; Ephesians 4:25, 29; 5:4. 13. 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:9; Hebrews 3:13. 14. Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:23-25. 15. Proverbs 2:1-5; Ephesians 6:4; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15. 16. Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:20. 17. Romans 12:15; Galatians 6:2. 18. 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12; Titus 2:11-14. 19. Acts 2:44-45; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; 9:6-15. 20. Hebrews 13:17. 21. Hebrews 10:23-25. 22. II Corinthians 13:14



AN INTRODUCTION:

- I. Before reading, consider why we chose to go with a shorter confession versus a longer one.

This is not just what the elders' teach but what we expect incoming members and new converts to confess (at least substantively) to the best of their understanding. The driving question behind the thickness or thinness of a statement of faith is, how much do Christians need to agree upon to be a church? Longer confessions imply more; shorter confessions imply less.

Either way, the underlying assumption is that a church's existence depends upon nothing if not its confession. Jesus said he would build his church on confessors confessing the right confession (Matt. 16:16-18). So what must be included in that confession for us to be a church? Of course, all followers of Christ would agree with the essential Christian confession that "Jesus is Lord." But, what else, if anything, should be included? It's the "what else" that concerns us here. The following document operates on the following principles: the principle of importance (see I. A.), and the principle of implementation (see I. B.).

- A. The Principle of Importance – Our confession of faith should address that which is essential and that which is important. In other words, it should strive to build a doctrinal house around a salvific minimum. After all, the church is not just the possessor of the gospel but it is to be its protector as well. In this spirit, Paul admonished Timothy to teach the members of his church how to behave themselves in the "household of God," which is the "pillar and buttress of the truth" (1 Tim 3:15). Some doctrines are essential to the gospel itself and others are very important for its long-term protection. So we do well to consider, "What must the church confess to possess and protect the gospel?" Practically speaking, it would seem then that our confession of faith should include—in addition to the gospel itself (i.e., that which is essential)—important doctrinal issues (i.e., the space between "essential" and "preferential;" see I. A. 1.) and the identity of the church (I. A. 2.).

1. As that to that which is either essential and/or important, the following doctrines comes to mind: the nature of God and the Trinity, the doctrine of humanity and the fall, Christ's person, Christ's work (substitution, justification), the Spirit's person and work, repentance and faith, sanctification and perseverance, Christ's return, final judgment, and a statement on Scripture, by which we know all these other things to be true.
2. Insofar as Scripture specifically authorizes churches to guard not just the gospel but the people of the gospel (e.g. Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5), churches need to be able to agree on what the church is and how the

identity of the church is affirmed. Is the church, by design, a mixed community, consisting of believers and their children? Or is it, by design, an unmixed community, consisting only of believers? A group of Christians' answer to that question will dictate how they view baptism and the Lord's Supper. As such, it seems wise that our confession include some type of clarification on the church and the ordinances.

3. What about other theological issues that have surged to the forefront in recent days? For example, more and more Western churches, feeling the pressure of changing sexual mores, have begun to include statements on biblical sexuality. In light of this, it may be best to include some type of statement on how the Lordship of Christ and the call to repentance governs the entirety of a Christian's life, including a Christian's sexuality, finances, work, and so forth. A further word could then be spoken in this context about sexuality belonging to marriage, marriage belonging to a man and a woman, and so forth. Framing the matter in this way places the ethical requirements inside of gospel beliefs, rather than privileging this one ethical claim to a place where it sits alongside of the gospel. Additionally, further clarity on these matters could be provided via a doctrinal statement that clarifies the collective conscience of the elders on matters not addressed as tangibly in the confession of faith.
- B. The Principle of Implementation – Second, our confession of faith should consider the principle of implementation. In other words, this document should be adopted with an awareness of who is responsible for it (i.e., “Who in the church is finally responsible for maintaining the church’s confessional faithfulness?”) Is it a denomination, the elders, the deacons, a board of trustees, or the members? Once we determine who is responsible for upholding this confession, then we can determine how exhaustive or detailed it can or should be.
1. Who is Responsible? – While the elders exercise leadership over the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:3; Heb 13:17), the NT seems to convey that the congregation bears a significant measure of authority and responsibility (Mt 16:18; 18:15–20; 28:19–20; 1 Cor 5; Gal 1:6–9; Eph 4:11–12, 17; 2 Cor 2:6). Thus, the following confession would operate from the principle that the members of the church are ultimately responsible for upholding the confession of faith.
  2. How Exhaustive Then Can it Be? – Therefore, the confession must be simple enough for the whole congregation to understand, defend, and advance—not just the elders. Simply stated, the confession of faith shouldn't require an accredited seminary degree. At the same time, it should be robust enough to differentiate this church from the abundance

of counterfeit churches that abound in our area. Thus, this will require some “goldilocksing.” Our confession of faith should equip the saints for the work of the ministry in the building up the body of Christ, until we all reach unity in the faith, not tossed to and fro by the wind of every false doctrine and the waves of human cunning (Eph. 4:11-16). As such, it seems a more concise confession will best help us shepherd, unify, protect, and guide.

- II. Before reading, consider why we chose to go with a historic confession over a self-written one.
  - A. The Principles Favoring a Historical Confession – Though it may seem that just writing our own confession may be the simplest way forward, several other factors lead us to adopt something more historical.
    - 1. Focus – First, historical confessions, by virtue of the fact that they have stood the test of time and have been used by so many other churches, encourage us to “keep the main thing the main thing.” Historical confessions tend to center around the theological issues that have been important to God’s people through various ages and cultures thereby reminding us what really matters (e.g., the difference between learning from history versus learning from the newspaper). In other words, if topics X, Y, and Z were important to so many of the faithful who have gone before, they should probably be important to us too.
    - 2. More Concrete Interpretation – Second, historical confessions, despite some anachronisms, benefit from the clarity of historical interpretation. We must remember that words are frustratingly malleable things (e.g., “gay” in 1950 versus 2020; “conversation” in the 17th century versus the 21st century). Etymologists call this well-documented phenomenon “semantic shift.” As counter-intuitive as it may seem, by using a historic document, the meaning of what is being conveyed can actually be more clear insofar as the words used (or not used) can be clarified with an awareness of what was happening in or to the Church at that time. To use a crude analogy, the semantic concrete has already hardened. Practically, then, a historical confession can appeal to history itself as something of a commentary anytime a word or phrase is unclear. Any unclear wording within modern confessions, on the other hand, can only be interpreted by the few individuals that drafted the document.
    - 3. Multitude of Counselors – Third, historic confessions leverage the advantage of a “multitude of counselors” (Prov 11:14; 15:22; 24:6). Most historic statements of faith are the product of many church leaders pushing and pulling and pruning and polishing until they found language

that satisfied all parties. Therefore, historic confessions usually guard against multiple errors on multiple fronts. Additionally, these historical documents are dense and tight because many minds have subjected them to scrutiny. Compare this approach with that of a single pastor or group of elders drafting their own confession (i.e., a few guys with moderate training versus several guys with lots of training; those with an untested theological and ethical track-record versus those with a well-tested theological and ethical track-record). The smaller and more localized the group, the greater the tendency for blind spots to go unnoticed and inherent weaknesses to be perpetuated.

Thus, many historic statements of faith have roots in statements yet even more historic. In other words, Christians down through the centuries have also recognized the advantages of trying to work from the collective wisdom of those who have gone before. So, the 1925 Baptist Faith and Message had its roots in the 1833 New Hampshire Confession. The 1858 Abstract of Principles had roots in the 1767 Charleston Confession of Faith which traced its history back to the 1689 Second London Confession. The 1833 New Hampshire confession has roots in the 1742 Philadelphia Confession, which revised the 1689 Second London confession, which revised the 1658 Savoy Declaration, which revised the 1646 Westminster Confession, and so on. So within these historical documents lies a treasure trove of theological wisdom that should not be lightly neglected.

4. **Sign of Unity** – Fourth, historic confessions are a sign of unity with the church throughout time. They represent an attempt to resist “chronological snobbery.” Alternatively, these documents allow history to have a vote (a.k.a., the democracy of the dead). In these days in which churches seem fascinated with “reinventing themselves” or setting out to craft their own mission, vision, and value statements, we would do well to remind our generation that they did not invent Christianity. In a culture obsessed with self-publication and self-expression (e.g., social media in all its forms), confessing our faith in the same old way lots of Christians before us have can make an important point about the unchanging faith we confess.
5. **Speed Bumps** – Fifth, historic confessions contain rough edges or speed bumps and this can be a good thing. These rough edges can encourage both humility and unity.
  - a) When historic confessions make claims that seem to us, at best, marginal and, at worst, flat-out wrong, it is worth slowing down to ponder the friction. Instead of automatically assuming we could



have written something better, maybe we should consider whether or not we have actually drifted away from key commitments that virtually all Christians throughout the ages have affirmed? In other words, maybe instead of cleaning up all the language to everyone's satisfaction, we should encourage everyone to investigate further what other brothers and sisters in Christ have historically believed and why they believed it. Even after this investigation, we still could land on a different side of the respective issue. But, at least we would have better understood that the way the statement is worded is actually orthodox.

- b) At the end of the day, anyone with an opinion could posit that a particular theological statement could "read better" or "sound clearer" in this way or that way. It is easy to be a critic. But, how sure can we be that our preferred wording would be the most helpful way to say it for the rest of the congregation? How sure can we be that the way we want to say it today will be the best way to say it for the future congregation that will one day join? Thus, it seems that historical confession will encourage us to express humility by extending the benefit of the doubt to history. To be clear, this approach does not advocate blindness to historical error; rather it promotes gracious interpretations in areas unclear.
- c) The other advantage to these "rough edges" of historic confessions is that they can promote true unity *versus faux* unanimity. After all, how could hundreds of people from various theological and cultural backgrounds truly agree to every word of a document other than Scripture. So, to protect against unnecessarily binding people's consciences, a historic confession can more readily promote the practice of substantive agreement. Of course, some will push for more clarity or precision on some doctrines that are more clear or compelling to them than they are to others (e.g., the Tribulation, Infralapsarianism, Christian Sabbath, etc.). But, once again, we must ask ourselves if more explicit interpretations of these issues are truly essential to the advance of the gospel and the unity of the local church

B. Practical Considerations Regarding a Historical Confession – How should we review the following proposed confession?

Because of the advantages listed above, it seems we should read a historic confession, not scouring for where we can disagree; rather, we should read: 1)

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looking for agreement, 2) noting areas of confusion, concern or disagreement, and then, 3) contemplating whether or not we can uphold the spirit of this confession in partnership with the brothers and sisters of this local congregation. After all, it is not a personal confession of faith but a local church's confession of faith.

### AN OVERVIEW OF POPULAR HISTORIC OPTIONS:

#### The [Second London Baptist Confession](#) (1689)

The 1689 Confession is characterized by a basically Reformed understanding of salvation and worship, a Baptist ecclesiology, a modified version of covenant theology and a "Puritan-ish" understanding of the Lord's Day as a "Christian Sabbath." It includes a stronger statement about the universal church than most Baptist confessions and it argues the pope is the antichrist. It is the only major Baptist confession of faith that is neutral on the question of open versus closed communion (a minority of Particular Baptist churches were open communion and even open membership—most famously, the Bedford Church pastored by John Bunyan). Despite a few of these peculiarities, it is exhaustive and robust.

Personally, I substantively agree with it. But, I do not know that I would expect all our church members to do the same (it literally takes 30 minutes to read). At this stage in our church's development, I think it is too much for them to chew upon, much less digest.

#### The [New Hampshire Confession](#) (1833)

Though it's not as nearly as old, this confession stands out on account of its nice, warm, baptistic Calvinism. The language is a little clunky; but it can be (and has been) updated. The only issue we may have with the New Hampshire is its language on "the Christian Sabbath." Personally, I also do not like that its language on the Lord's Supper is so largely individualistic. Finally, as is the case with most historic confessions, it lacks any explicit statements on complementarianism or gender.

With updated language and a couple of small edits, this may be the most viable way forward.

#### The [Abstract of Principles](#) (1858)

The strength of this confession seems to be its simplicity. Its Reformed roots are also stronger than The New Hampshire as it uses the headings "election" and "providence" explicitly. Along these lines, it also excludes any heading such as "The Freeness of Salvation." Additionally, many of us would also appreciate its use of the language of "the Lord's Day" over that of the

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"Christian Sabbath" (but there are still problems here). One of my favorite features of this confession is addressing the interpersonal implications of Communion. It also adds a helpful line on "Liberty of Conscience."

However, I'm concerned about it on two accounts. One, it is not as old as The New Hampshire. Second, I don't like that it does not include any mention of "Law and Gospel."

### A RECOMMENDATION:

That we adopt an updated form of The New Hampshire supplementing or updating as needed from the Abstract of Principles (Communion, the Lord's Day, Liberty of Conscience) and the Baptist Faith and Message (Family). Thus, we would say that our confession of faith has been "adapted from The New Hampshire Confession of Faith." In the table below, I've left my homework for how I came to land on the organization of this confession. You'll note that The New Hampshire is compared with the confessional statements at 3rd Avenue in Louisville and Cheverly Baptist in Maryland. Since Tom Schreiner and Jonathan Leeman sit on these respective elder boards I thought that their updates to The New Hampshire could provide some wisdom. In the draft below, I've used the updated language provided by Cheverly Baptist.

CONFESSION UPDATE PROPOSAL

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| NH:<br>Scriptures<br>True God<br><br>Fall of Man<br><br>Way of Salvation<br>Justification<br>Freeness of Salvation<br>Grace in Regeneration<br>Repentance and Faith<br>God's Purpose of Grace<br>Sanctification<br>Perseverance of the Saints<br>Harmony of the Law and Gospel<br>Gospel Church<br>Baptism and the Lord's Supper<br><br>Christian Sabbath<br><br>Civil Government<br>Righteous and the Wicked<br>The World to Come | 3rdAve:<br>Scriptures<br>True God<br>*Divine Providence [AofP]<br>Fall of Man<br>*Election [AofP]<br>*Mediator [AofP]<br><br>Justification (after r&f)<br>Freeness of Salvation<br>Regeneration<br>Repentance and Faith<br><br>Sanctification<br>Perseverance<br><br>Church<br>Baptism<br>Lord's Supper<br>Lord's Day<br>Liberty of Conscience<br><br>Righteous and the Wicked<br>Resurrection and the World to Come | Chev:<br>Scriptures<br>True God<br><br>Humanity and the Fall<br><br>Way of Salvation<br>Justification<br>Freeness of Salvation<br>Grace in Regeneration<br>Repentance and Faith<br>God's Purpose of Grace<br>Sanctification<br>Perseverance of the Saints<br>Harmony of the Law and Gospel<br>A Gospel Church<br>Baptism and the Lord's Supper<br><br>Lord's Day<br><br>Civil Government<br>Righteous and the Wicked<br>World to Come |
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As a church we believe in ...

I. The Scriptures

We believe the Holy Bible was written by people who were divinely inspired, and that it is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction. God is its author, salvation is its purpose, and truth, without any mixture of error, is its content. Scripture reveals the principles by which God will judge us. Therefore, it is now, and will be to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union and the only sufficient, certain, and authoritative standard for evaluating all human conduct, creeds, and opinions.

II. The True God

We believe there is one and only one living and true God—an infinite, intelligent Spirit. His name is Yahweh, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth. He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness and is worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love. In the unity of the

Godhead there are three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are equal in every divine perfection, and without division of nature, essence, or being; yet each having distinct personal attributes and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

### III. Humanity and the Fall (added statement on complementarianism and gender)

We believe humanity is the special creation of God, made in his own image. God 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. The gift of marriage consists of the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime, and this gift models the way God relates to His people. God created the human race in holiness under his law. By voluntary transgression, however, humanity fell from that holy and happy state. As a result, all people are now sinners, not by external compulsion but by choice. They by nature entirely lack the holiness that is required by the law of God and are actively inclined to evil. Therefore, they are under just condemnation to a sentence of eternal ruin, without defense or excuse.

### IV. God's Purpose of Grace (moved up from New Hampshire)

We believe election is the eternal purpose of God according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners. Election is perfectly consistent with human free agency and includes all the means necessary to achieve God's purpose. It is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, which is infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable. Election completely rules out boasting and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and the active imitation of his free mercy. It encourages the greatest possible exercise of human responsibility. The election of individuals to life may be confirmed by its effects in everyone who truly believes the gospel. Election is the foundation of Christian assurance, and confirming our election deserves our greatest diligence.

### V. The Way of Salvation

We believe the salvation of God's people is completely by grace, through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God. By the appointment of the Father, he freely took to himself our nature but without sin. He honored the divine law by his personal obedience and made a full atonement for our sins by his substitutionary death, satisfying God's wrath. He rose from the dead and is now enthroned in heaven. Jesus, the Son, unites in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections and, as such, is qualified in every way to be a suitable, compassionate, and all-sufficient Savior.

### VI. Justification

We believe the great gospel blessing that Christ secures to those who believe in him is justification. Justification includes the pardon of sin, righteous standing before God and his people, and the promise of eternal life founded on principles of righteousness. It is not given because of any works of righteousness we have done but only through faith in the Redeemer's blood. By virtue of this faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us by God.

Justification immediately brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God and secures every other blessing we need for time and eternity.

#### VII. Freeness of Salvation

We believe the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel. It is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a heartfelt, penitent, and obedient faith. Preventing this salvation is every sinner's inherent depravity and rejection of the gospel, a rejection that aggravates a sinner's condemnation.

#### VIII. Grace in Regeneration

We believe sinners must be regenerated, or born again, in order to be saved. Regeneration consists of God's gift of a holy inclination to the mind. It is accomplished in a way that is beyond our comprehension. It is carried out by the power of the Holy Spirit using divine truth to obtain our voluntary obedience to the gospel. The proper evidence of regeneration appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith, and newness of life.

#### IX. Repentance and Faith

We believe repentance and faith are sacred duties as well as inseparable graces. They are produced in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God, who convinces us of our guilt, danger, helplessness, and the way of salvation by Christ. And they consist of turning to God with genuine sorrow, confession, and a petition for mercy; receiving heartily the Lord Jesus Christ as Prophet, Priest and King; and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior.

#### X. Sanctification

We believe sanctification is the process by which we are made partakers of God's holiness, according to his purpose. Sanctification is a progressive work. It begins in regeneration and continues in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and by God's appointed means. These means include the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, prayer, and the oversight and fellowship of the visible church.

#### XI. Perseverance of the Saints

We believe all genuine believers endure to the end. Their persevering obedience to Christ and attachment to his people are the primary mark distinguishing them from superficial professors. A special providence watches over their welfare, and they are kept by the power of God through faith to salvation.

#### XII. Harmony of the Law and Gospel

We believe the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral governance. It is holy, just, and good. Fallen human beings are unable to fulfill the precepts of the law, which the Scriptures attribute entirely to their love of sin. A chief purpose of the gospel is to deliver people from this love and to restore them through a mediator to a sincere obedience to the holy law. The visible church's means of grace share this great purpose.

XIII. Church (used language from Abstract)

We believe Lord Jesus is the head of the Church, which is composed of all His true disciples, and in Him is invested supremely all power for its government. According to His commandment, Christians are to associate themselves into particular societies or churches; and to each of these churches He has given needful authority for administering that order, discipline and worship which He has appointed. The regular officers of a Church are Bishops or Elders, and Deacons.

XIV. Baptism (split out from New Hampshire)

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is a solemn and beautiful emblem that declares our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior as well as our union with him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life. Baptism is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and the Lord's Supper.

XV. Lord's Supper (split out from New Hampshire and used language from Abstract)

We believe that the Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be observed by his churches until the end of the world; that it is to be observed by the eating of bread and the drinking of the cup; and that it is in no sense a sacrifice, but is designed to commemorate His death, to confirm the faith and other graces of Christians, and to be a bond, pledge, and renewal of their communion with Him, and of their church fellowship.

XVI. Lord's Day (replaced a line on cessation of "work and amusements" with Christian conscience allowing for other activities and updated language from "Sabbath")

We believe 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 points to the rest that awaits the people of God. It 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.

XVII. Liberty of Conscience and Civil Government (added from Abstract)

We believe that God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in anything contrary to His word, or not contained in it. We also believe that Civil Government is of Divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed, except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Prince of the kings of the earth.

XIX. Righteous and the Wicked

We believe there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked. Only those who are justified by faith in the name of the Lord Jesus and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in his judgment. In contrast, all those who continue in

impenitence and unbelief are wicked in his sight and under the curse. This distinction among people holds both at death and afterward.

#### XX. Resurrection and the World to Come

We believe the end of the world is approaching. At the last day Christ will descend from heaven and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution. A public separation will then take place, in which the wicked will be justly assigned to endless punishment and the righteous to endless joy. This judgment will determine forever on principles of righteousness the final state of people in heaven or hell.

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIONS:

- Consider adding words on public church discipline to Covenant.
- Discern difference between the purpose and role of foundational documents (covenant, confession, constitution) versus progressive documents (playbook, doctrinal statements [collective conscience of the elders]).
- Determine what needs to be included in a “doctrinal statement” or “what we teach” document that reflects the collective conscience of the elders (and not just the congregation), if we even need this.



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Preamble

We, the members of Faith Bible Church, desiring to honor the Lord Jesus Christ, do hereby establish the following biblical principle of government and order and adopt these By-Laws as a declaration of our commitment to carry out the work of the Lord in a proper and biblical fashion.

Article I - Name

The name of our fellowship shall be Faith Bible Church.

Article II - Purpose

This church is organized to glorify God in reverent and orderly worship, systematic teaching and practice of the principles embodied in His Holy Word, growth in Christian unity and in the grace and knowledge of His Son, and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

Article III - Membership

Section 1 - Eligibility for Membership

Membership shall be limited to those who profess faith in Jesus Christ, a believer who has been baptized by immersion and is willing to subscribe to the Statement of Faith and By-Laws of Faith Bible Church (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 2:41).

Section 2 - Procedure for Membership All individuals desiring membership shall:

1. Indicate their desire to become a member by filling out an application form for membership.
2. Confess personal faith in Jesus Christ before two elders and if not already baptized, be willing to undergo believer's baptism by immersion.
3. Attend and complete the new membership class.
4. Be in agreement with the By-Laws of this church.
5. Be at least eighteen (18) years of age.
6. Be actively involved in the ministry of Faith Bible Church.
7. Be presented for membership and receive a simple majority vote of the membership present.

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The present membership of Faith Bible Church Naples and those hereafter admitted to membership shall constitute the membership of this corporation. Children of members may make application for membership at the age of eighteen, at which time they must go through the process for membership.

## Section 3 – Responsibilities of Membership

See Church Covenant

## Section 4 - Privileges of Membership

Faith Bible Church functions as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:23) and the leadership of the elders who are duly elected to conduct the spiritual and business affairs of the church. Membership in this church does not afford those individuals any rights to property, contract or civil rights based on the principles of democratic government. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own constitution consisting of The Articles of Incorporation and the By-Laws. The final authority in all matters is the Holy Bible (II Timothy 3:16-17).

Church members shall have the use of the church facilities for weddings, funerals and fellowship activities when approved by the elders. Members are entitled to vote upon the call of the senior pastor, assistant pastors and the admission of new members; purchase and sale of real church property; elections; approval of amendments to, or changes of, the By-Laws. Any member may appeal to an elder on an issue for consideration by the elder board.

## Section 5 - Discipline and Restoration of a Member:

The elder board shall have sole authority in determining the need for church discipline and shall base those determinations on Scripture and the Statement of Faith. Once the process of discipline has begun of any member, resignation of membership will not end the process. Church members realize that their natural human response to correction often is to hide or run away from accountability (Genesis 3:8-10). To avoid falling into this age-old trap and to strengthen our church's ability to rescue a member caught in sin, a church member agrees not to run away from this church to avoid corrective discipline and waives their right to withdraw from membership or accountability if discipline is pending against him or her. Although a church member is free to stop attending the church at any time, he or she agrees that a withdrawal while discipline is pending will not be given effect until the church has fulfilled its God-given responsibilities to encourage our repentance and restoration, and to bring the

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disciplinary process to an orderly conclusion (Matthew 18:12-14; Galatians 6:1; Hebrews 13:17).

The spirit of discipline must always be that of restoration through repentance, with the objective of maintaining the purity and unity of Christ's Church (I Corinthians 5:1-7, Titus 3:9-11).

If a pastor, elder, or deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a board member. He shall be entitled to the same biblical process of discipline and restoration as other church members. Two or more witnesses must substantiate an accusation brought against an elder (I Timothy 5:19).

Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty to God, with love and concern for one another. Scripture outlines the biblical process of discipline and restoration as follows:

1. When a member becomes aware of another member engaged in persistent sin, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have in mind the goal of restoration (Matthew 18:15; James 5:19-20; Galatians 6:1-2).
2. If restoration is not reached, then "By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established." These witnesses are to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination, and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration (Matthew 18:16, Deuteronomy 19:15-20, II Corinthians 12:20-13:6).
3. If there is no repentance after taking these steps, the matter shall be brought before the elder board. If the elder board determines there is an offense with no confession of sin and repentance, the elders will "tell it to the church." At that point subsequent contact should focus on admonishment and calling the person to repentance (Matthew 18:17-20; II Thessalonians 3:14-15).
4. If the person refuses to hear the church an announcement will be made to the church of their refusal to repent, the member's name will be removed from the church roll and they shall be to the church "as an unbeliever." If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the church membership, contact with the person from that point forward should be for the sake of salvation or restoration.

In the case of a substantiated accusation against a member in leadership, that person shall step down until such a time that the elder board deems the accusation false or the

matter to be closed. The elder board must then review the accusation and seek restoration of all parties.

In the instance of a divisive person who comes into the church the elders may act quickly to reject them so as to protect the unity and purity of the church as instructed in Titus 3: 9-11.

Should the restoration process be successful, an announcement will be made to the membership.

Removal from Membership - A member who is physically able and fails to show a willingness to meet the responsibilities of membership shall be contacted by the elders. Based upon the person's response and approval by the elder board, the person's membership may be revoked. In addition, members who have not responded to church discipline shall have their names removed from the roll. The removed members shall be advised of the action by letter. Upon request for removal of membership, the elders will be advised and a letter of confirmation sent. Members who permanently move from the area will be removed from the membership after six months unless they notify the church office.

#### Section 6 - Membership Classification

Active: A member who is regularly in attendance (unless hindered by infirmities) and active in exercising the privileges and responsibilities of a member. This would include persons on the mission field, serving in the military or temporarily assigned to distant places in their occupation.

Associate: A person who meets all the requirements of membership, and are members of a Bible believing church of like mind, and are temporarily located in the Naples area due to occupation or education. Associate members have all the privileges and responsibilities of active members, but would not have the right to vote or serve in elected leadership.

#### ARTICLE IV - Meetings and Elections

##### Section 1 – Annual Membership Meeting

The church shall hold an annual meeting of the membership in the month of January of each year. Notice of the annual meeting must be published in the churches

announcement system and disclosed from the pulpit two (2) consecutive Sundays prior to the date of the meeting. The meeting shall be led by the chairman of the elders.

The meeting agenda shall include:

1. Submission of the previous annual meeting as well as all special meetings.
2. A written report and comments from the chairman of the elders on the activity from the past year and vision for the future.
3. A written report from all pastors regarding their past year's ministry and vision for the future.
4. Submission of prior year financial statements and current year budget with comments from the church treasurer along with a report from the audit committee.
5. Written reports from all standing committees.
6. Other information deemed important to the body.

#### Section 2 – Special Membership Meeting

Special meetings of the membership shall be held upon the call of, and at the time and place designated by the board of elders. Notice of the special meeting shall state the purpose of such a meeting and must be published in the churches announcement system and disclosed from the pulpit two (2) consecutive Sundays prior to the date of the meeting.

#### Section 3 - Voting Members

Active members who have been absent from the church for eight consecutive weeks forfeit their right to vote.

#### Section 4 - Taking a Vote

At any duly called annual or special meeting, a quorum shall consist of twenty percent (20%) of the membership eligible to vote.

#### Section 5 - Rules of Order

Except where it is contrary to these Bylaws, Roberts Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of meetings.

## Section 6 - Services

Faith Bible Church will:

1. Endeavor to offer regular educational and discipleship opportunities for every member of the church.
2. Conduct regular worship services on Sunday (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:1-2).
3. Have Bible study and prayer meetings on Wednesdays and/or at other times.
4. Develop other ministries and services as the need arises.

## ARTICLE V - Leadership and Organizational Structure Section 1 - Overview

While Scripture does not provide a precise leadership or organizational structure, it does provide two official offices of leadership, the elder and the deacon. Scripture also provides many principles that are to be honored within a leadership and organizational structure. These principles include: authority, accountability, work ethic, biblical qualification, service, order, unity, and love.

### Section 2 - Elders

**Responsibility** – The elders shall have full authority and responsibility over care and oversight of the body and ministry of Faith Bible Church. A secondary responsibility is the interpretation of the language used in these By-Laws.

**Qualification** - Elders shall be men who are members of Faith Bible Church, of high Christian character and shall maintain an exemplary reputation in all aspects of their lives both in the church and in the world. They shall be the spiritual leaders of the church and shall meet the qualifications and fulfill the responsibilities as set forth in Titus 1:5-9, 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 1 Peter 5:1-3. Each elder shall understand, fully support and affirm the By-Laws of Faith Bible Church.

**Election and Tenure** – Elders shall seek, observe, test, and thoroughly prove potential candidates for elder. Elders, by unanimous consent, will present new candidates for elder to the members at the annual meeting or at a special meeting. Affirmation by the membership is completed by not less than a two-thirds (2/3) majority of those present and voting. Elders shall be elected for a term of three years with their terms being

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arranged on a rotating basis so that as nearly as possible, the terms of one-third (1/3) of the elders shall expire each year. There shall be a minimum of three lay elders plus the senior pastor. Lay elders will maintain a one- vote majority over vocational elders. The senior pastor will be given a vote with other vocational elder votes based on majority and tenure. Any elder serving as a paid staff member shall abstain from voting on employee compensation.

### Section 3 - Deacons

Responsibility - The deacons are responsible to the elders in the fulfillment of their office. They shall specifically assist the elders in:

1. The administration of the approved annual budget.
2. The protection of all church cash and investments.
3. Oversight over all church property and equipment.
4. Administration of all church benevolence.
5. Administration of the care and concern of our supported missionaries.
6. Other tasks as requested by the elders to assist them in the work of ministry.

Qualification - Deacons shall be men who are members of Faith Bible Church, of high Christian character and shall maintain an exemplary reputation in all aspects of their lives both in the church and in the world. They shall meet the qualifications and fulfill the responsibilities set forth in Acts 6:3 and in I Timothy 3:8-13. Each deacon shall understand, fully support and affirm the By-Laws of Faith Bible Church.

Election and Tenure - Elders shall seek, observe, test, and thoroughly prove potential candidates for deacon. Elders, by unanimous consent, will present new candidates for deacon to the members at the annual meeting or at a special meeting. Affirmation by the membership is completed by not less than a two-thirds (2/3) majority of those present and voting. Deacons shall be elected for a term of three years with their terms being arranged on a rotating basis so that as nearly as possible, the terms of one-third (1/3) of the deacons shall expire each year. There shall be a minimum of three deacons. Any deacon serving as a paid staff member shall be a non-voting on employee compensation.

### Section 4 - Staff Senior Pastor

Responsibility – The senior pastor shall be an elder for his entire tenure. As such, he shall, along with the other elders, have full authority and responsibility over care and oversight of the body and ministry of Faith Bible Church. As an elder who has devoted

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both his vocation and ministry to the body at Faith Bible Church, he shall demonstrate a significant work ethic in ministry and act as a leader and visionary among the elders, deacons, and staff drawing them toward unity in purpose and ministry. He shall take a prominent role in services, ordinances, ceremonies, and formal teaching of the church body.

Qualification – Upon the acceptance of a call, the senior pastor shall become a member of Faith Bible Church, of high Christian character and shall maintain an exemplary reputation in all aspects of their lives both in the church and in the world. He shall be a spiritual leader of the church and shall meet the qualifications and fulfill the responsibilities as set forth in Titus 1:5-9, 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 1 Peter 5:1-3. He shall exhibit spiritual giftedness in both teaching and preaching. He shall understand, fully support and affirm the By-Laws of Faith Bible Church.

Election and Tenure – The elders shall oversee the selection process of a senior pastor. Whereas the other elders come to office from amongst the body of Faith Bible Church, the senior pastor, prior to coming to the church, will typically not have any history or understanding of the church or its members. Therefore when the need for a senior pastor arises, the church should take extreme caution, proceeding with great purpose in measuring the qualifications and heart of the man. The process should lead to significant assurance that the candidate has a spirit of unity with the elders, the mission and methods of ministry, and the purposed direction of the church. Once the elders are unanimously in agreement to issue a call to the candidate, a special congregational meeting for the purpose of extending a call to the candidate will be announced. Only active members, as outlined in these By-Laws, are eligible to vote. A minimum of 90% majority vote is necessary to extend a call to a candidate to become senior pastor. The pastor shall serve until such time as he resigns or has disqualified himself from ministry (gross moral failure) at which time the elders will release him from His responsibilities and the congregation will be informed. Additionally, the senior pastor can be removed if, through the process of accountability, he is unwilling to fulfill the responsibilities of the senior pastor set forth in these By-Laws. The pastor will be removed from office based on a recommendation of the elders and a majority vote of the members.

### Other Staff

The elders of the church may determine the need for additional staff. Assistant pastors shall have specific responsibilities per a formal written job description, shall meet the qualifications of the elders, and shall be called in a similar fashion as the senior pastor. Other staff may be added by unanimous approval of the elders and hold qualifications both spiritually and vocationally that are appropriate to their formal job description. All



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staff serve at the will of the elders but may also be under an additional authority structure as designated by the elders.

## Section 5 - Boards and Committees

The church shall maintain and operate at all times under the authority of certain boards and committees. From time to time and as need arises, the elders may organize additional committees.

### Elder Board

The elder board shall be comprised of the elders and shall be the structure by which the elders exercise their authority and responsibility of care and oversight of the body and ministry of Faith Bible Church. They shall meet regularly to oversee all church function in an organized and unified manner. Every effort shall be made by the elder board to maintain a focus toward the edification of the church body through prayer and the Word of God. The officers of the church shall be elected by the elders at its first meeting immediately following the annual meeting of the membership and consist of a chairman, vice chairman/secretary and treasurer. Each shall serve at the pleasure of the elders and otherwise for a term of one (1) year and until his successor is elected and qualified. Any vacancy in any such office shall be filled promptly by the elder board.

Chairman - The chairman shall represent the board of elders in concert with and subject to the shared leadership responsibilities and collective oversight of the board of elders. He shall preside at all meetings of the elder board and the membership, He may sign, with the secretary or any other duly authorized corporate officer, any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts or other instruments which the elder board has authorized to be executed, except in cases where signing and execution shall be expressly delegated by the elder board or by these By-Laws or by statute to some other office or agent of the corporation. In general, He shall perform all duties incident to the office of chairman and such other duties as may be prescribed by the elder board from time to time.

Vice Chairman/Secretary - In the absence of the chairman or in the event of the chairman's inability or refusal to act, the vice chairman/secretary shall perform the duties of the chairman and, when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the chairman. Additionally, the vice chairman/secretary shall keep the minutes of the meetings of the elder board and the membership; see that all notices

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are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these By-Laws or as required by law; be custodian of the corporate records and of the seal of the corporation and see that the seal is affixed to all necessary documents, the execution of which on behalf of the corporation is duly authorized in accordance with the provisions of these By-Laws; and in general perform 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 elder board.

Treasurer - The treasurer shall be responsible for the oversight of the entire financial function of the corporation and shall discharge his duties in accordance with the directives of the elder board. He shall have charge and custody of and be responsible for the safe keeping of all funds and securities of the corporation; maintain oversight over bookkeeping, the accounting system and the internal control structure; provide for timely and accurate reporting to the elder board; oversee the budgeting process and the corporation's adherence to the approved budget; oversight over all employee compensation, benefits and the employee review process; and in general perform all the duties incident to the office of treasurer and such other duties as from time to time are assigned by the elder board.

### Deacon Board

Shall be comprised of the deacons and shall meet regularly for the purpose of carrying out both their designated responsibilities and other tasks as requested by the elders to assist them in furthering their ministry. They shall elect at its first meeting immediately following the annual meeting of the membership a chairman who will be responsible to organize and head all meetings and to organize the deacons so that they function in an organized and unified manner.

### Committees

The following committees shall be established as permanent functioning committees of the church. Membership on these committees is limited to those who are active church members with interest in and gifts that would enhance being part of the respective committee.

Audit Committee –The audit committee shall operate on a continual basis to ensure that all church assets, liabilities, income, and expenses are accurately reported to the church membership. They shall additionally monitor and report both their safekeeping and their assurance that all financial activity of the church is above reproach. The committee shall report and be accountable to the elders, and shall additionally have a responsibility to report directly to the members at the annual meeting and at any other time, via special meeting as the elders deem necessary.

The elders may, from time to time establish additional temporary committees. The elder board shall determine duties, responsibilities, and accountabilities of these committees.

#### Section 6 – Operational Contingency Plan

Should the church be unable to adequately fill all required lay elder positions, the church shall enter a state of operational emergency until such time that all positions are filled.

During this state, if there are some lay elders able to serve, yet not enough to fill all positions, the existing elders shall consider and transfer on a temporary basis, all responsibilities that are biblically appropriate to the deacon board. If necessary, the existing elders shall appoint the most qualified, available deacon to temporarily serve as the corporate treasurer and as such he shall attend a portion of all elder board meetings as is required to adequately perform his responsibility. The existing elders shall not transfer their responsibility for the accountability of the pastoral staff and shall maintain its oversight over all corporate financial matters. The existing elders shall immediately and until such time that a sufficient number of elders exist to meet the requirements of these By-Laws, begin a process of identifying and training additional elder candidates who shall become the unified leadership of the church.

Should there be no lay elders able to serve, The deacon board shall serve as the elder board until such time as the church has a lay elder. The deacons and pastor shall then immediately and until such time that an elder exists begin a process of identifying and training additional elder candidates who shall become the unified leadership of the church.

#### ARTICLE VI - Statement Concerning Law

Following the command of the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 6:1-8, no member shall take any legal action against Faith Bible Church or its leadership for its counsel, its practices, its ordinances, its doctrine, or its disciplinary action for any reason whatsoever.

#### ARTICLE VII - Amendments

These By-Laws may be amended, altered or repealed, in whole or in part, at an Annual or special meeting of the membership.

As a working flexible document, these By-Laws may be amended, altered or repealed, at an annual or special meeting by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present.

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Proposed amendments to these By-Laws may be presented in writing to the elder board. If accepted, the amendment shall be presented to the church for vote at an annual or special meeting. The meeting will follow the procedure for calling such meetings under Article V. In addition, the proposed amendment will be conspicuously posted in the churches announcement system two (2) weeks prior to the meeting.

### ARTICLE VIII - Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of this organization, proceeds shall be used for a non-profit organization chosen by the membership that meets the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code, Section 501(c)3 of 1954.

### Biblical Teaching on Purpose and Permanence of Marriage

In an attempt to “teach what accords with sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1), we the elders of Faith Bible Church have drafted this document clarifying our biblical convictions concerning the institution of marriage. We trust this document will help us guide the congregation in its responsibility to uphold the covenant of marriage and to protect the congregation from sinful understandings of divorce and remarriage.

1. God intends marriage to be a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman for the purposes of complementing one another so as to represent him as his image bearers (Genesis 2:24; Matt 19:2-9; Mark 10:6–9). These purposes include, but are not limited to, reflecting the glory of God, displaying the relationship between Jesus and his church, bringing up children to worship God, and nurturing the selflessness demanded in following Jesus. Since this relationship is meant to reflect God's unbreakable relationship with his people, Christian marriages should continue until the death of one of the partners (Romans 7:2-3; Matt. 19:6; Mark 10:9).
2. Divorce is not commended or encouraged in the Bible (Mark 10:9; Luke 16:18). In fact, it is always presented in a negative light. Throughout the Bible God continues to espouse the creation ideal of marriage given in Genesis 2:24. So, in submission to God's design for marriage and disdain for divorce, we will work to promote God-glorifying, life-long marriages amongst the body even when these relationships are threatened by sin and distress. In other words, we will encourage and counsel toward restoration.
3. As a result of our sin and the hardness of our hearts, Scripture concedes divorce and remarriage in two areas.
  - a. Where one partner has committed “sexual immorality,” sexual intercourse outside the bounds of marriage, and is unwilling to repent and live faithfully with his/her partner (Matt 5:31-32; 19:3-9). The term “sexual immorality” can also refer more broadly which is why divorce, if it is to be considered, should be considered with counsel from the elders of the church.
  - b. Where one partner is not a Christian and permanently leaves or separates from the Christian partner (1 Corinthians 7:10-16). If the unbelieving partner does not abandon the believing partner, the believing partner is not at liberty to initiate the divorce. Within this type of marriage, the believing spouse should remain and thus seek to sanctify the home.

## DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

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4. Even though the Christian who has been divorced in terms of number 3a above has the right and freedom to remarry, we will encourage him/her to remain unmarried whenever possible so that he/she may seek restoration with his/her spouse. Should the temptation of the flesh or the subsequent remarriage of the adulterous spouse make reconciliation impossible, we will advise remarriage. Furthermore, the Christian who has been divorced on account of abandonment by an unbelieving spouse (as defined by 3b above), has the right and freedom to remarry if he/she has diligently sought reconciliation without success (1 Corinthians 7:27-28a).
5. The Christian who has been divorced for any reason other than number 3 above is not free to remarry until the death or remarriage of the original spouse. Anyone who remarries outside the biblical grounds for divorce is committing adultery and causing the one they marry to commit adultery as well (Matthew 5:32)
6. In light of these clear biblical truths, we expect the members and pastors of Faith Bible Church to uphold the purpose and permanence of marriage. This specifically entails obeying the demands of marriage listed above, teaching these things to other believers (whether they are single, married, divorced, or remarried), empathizing with those who have suffered from the sinful dissolution of a marriage, and enforcing these principles by means of formative and corrective discipline.

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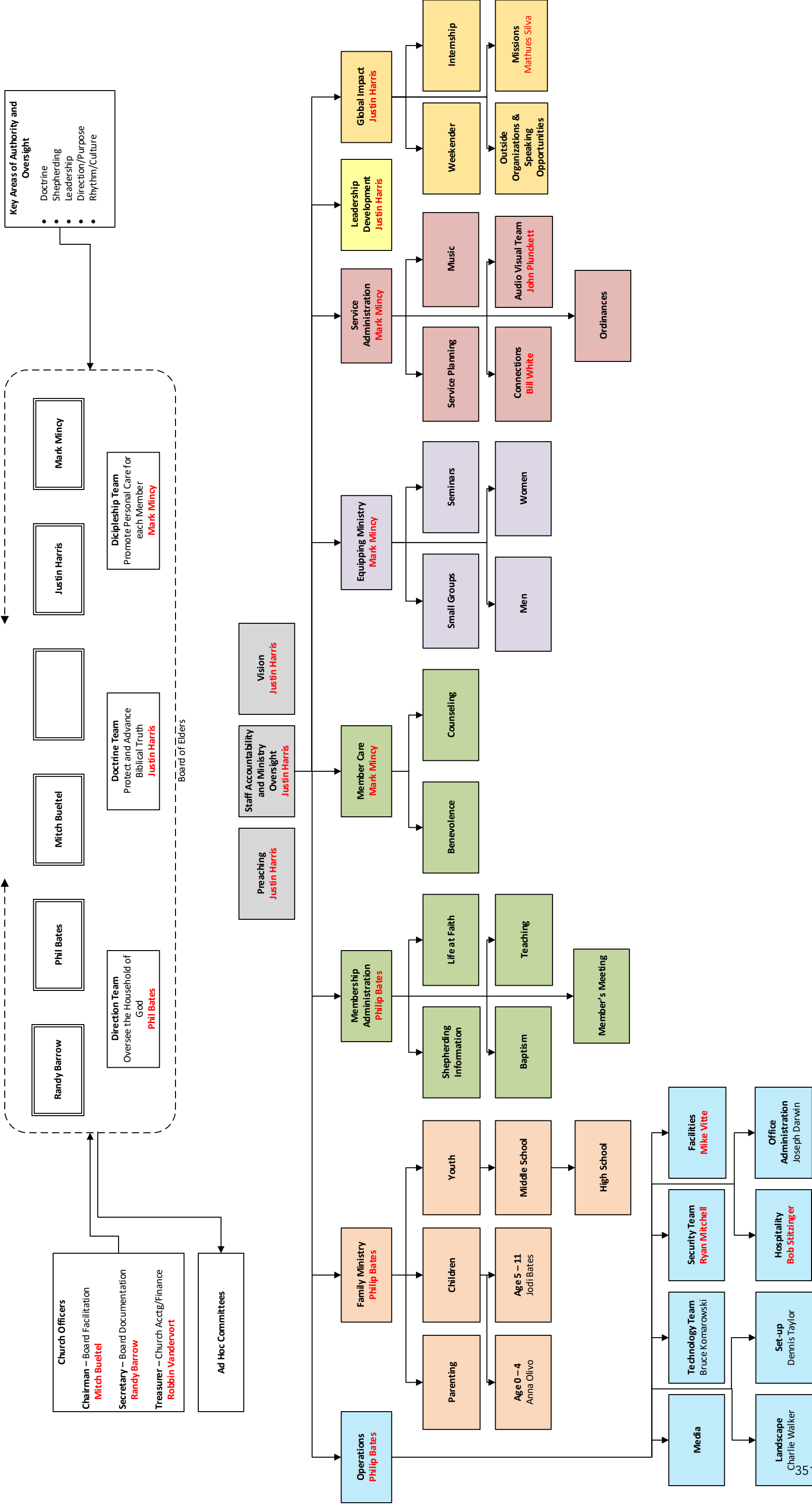
### Questions to ponder:

- Woman whose husband threatens her life. If verified (i.e., if the civil magistrate agrees that it is a true threat to her life), elders may consider this a case of “constructive desertion,” and thus a case of *porneia*? (If her life is in danger, she is being defrauded of her conjugal rights.)
- An unbelieving woman previously married and divorced (based on mutual consent, “no fault”). When converted, she wants to marry a believer, but sees that her divorce was not based on *porneia*. What should she do?
- A pregnant Christian woman dating the father of her child, asks what God would have her do. She can see difficulties, but feels that because of the baby, she is in some way obligated to marry. In the course of discussion, the man mentions that he is planning to divorce his present wife. What is the biblical view of their relationship?
- Christian couple. The wife moves to Atlanta to take a job. She refuses to give the husband her address and contacts him only through an intermediary. What is his position?
- “Sexual desertion” (for an extended period of time) under the same roof. Grounds for approved divorce, if proven (e.g., admitted)?
- Do we agree that we should never give advice about legitimacy of divorce without speaking to/with both parties, and in the context of the church (“a public and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed; and the persons concerned in it not left to their own wills, and discretion, in their own case”)?



# Faith Bible Church

A Church Displaying God's Glory by Making Disciples Through the Gospel of Jesus Christ





# *Family Ministry*



Why develop a Family Ministry Philosophy?

It is essential for all who care for the faith of the next generation at Faith Bible Church to have a clear target in view so we know where to aim when we are interacting with our children and youth. Most importantly, our philosophy must be defined by the biblical vision for the next generation. There are several places in the Bible where God reveals His vision for the next generation.

*1 Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth!  
2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old,  
3 things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us.  
4 We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious  
deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.  
5 He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our  
fathers to teach to their children,  
6 that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn,  
and arise and tell them to their children,  
7 so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God,  
but keep his commandments;*

Psalm 78:1-7

*14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from  
whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred  
writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

2 Timothy 3:14-15

*And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them  
diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you  
walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.*

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

## PHILOSOPHY OF FAMILY MINISTRY: CHILDREN

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What: Faith Bible Church Family Ministry exists to glorify God and work alongside parents

Why: for the spiritual good of children

How: by teaching (evangelizing) children God's Word  
by equipping parents for ministry in the home  
by training (edifying) servants  
by providing children a safe and healthy environment

Desired results:

Children will know, honor and value God's Word

Children will know, honor and value the gospel of Jesus Christ

Children will set their full confidence in Christ alone for the forgiveness of sin and the fulfillment of all His promises, including eternal life.

Families will be supported in their God-given role as parents

The Church will be strengthened

### Teaching Children

The Bible is not just a collection of stories teaching moral lessons, nor is a child's greatest need behavior modification. A child's greatest need is to be born again, because from birth they are dead in their sins (Ps 51:5; Eph 2:1). So the greatest gift we can give the next generation is the gospel. Only the gospel is able to rescue their soul from sin and death and secure for them an inheritance in heaven forever.

But what is the gospel? While the core of the gospel is forgiveness of sin through the death of Christ (Matt 1:21; John 1:29), this is only the center of a much bigger story. After all, why do we need forgiveness? What is God's plan for those who are forgiven? Family Ministry at Faith Bible Church seeks to lead children through the whole story of God's great rescue mission. It does so in the hope that children would come to a comprehensive understanding of the gospel message and that by the grace of God they would look to Christ in saving faith.

### Equipping Parents

The most important job of parents is to raise their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Eph 6:4; Col 3:21). Parents are to be the primary evangelists and spiritual trainers of



their children. Parents must work very hard at this, teaching their children every day by their regular example and specific instruction (Deut 6:7). So an effective children's ministry will do all it can to equip parents in their mission, and one way to do this is by providing helpful tools to parents. This is what Faith Bible Church strives to do.

Through Generations of Grace, we provide the Family Devotional, a valuable tool designed with both parents and children in mind. The Family Devotional aims to aid the parents in their own knowledge, love, and holiness. Then as the parents grow in godliness, the Family Devotional also helps parents teach their children throughout the week the same stories and principles that are taught each Sunday.

### Training Servants

The church is commanded to edify and equip its people to serve (Eph 4:11–16). This happens as the elders of the church preach and teach, but it also happens when the elders provide resources to help the members grow in Christlikeness. The Children's Ministry at Faith Bible Church has chosen to use Generations of Grace as a resource for members working with children.

Unlike many kid's curricula, the Teacher Book does not script out lessons that a teacher can read without much thought. Instead, the lesson commentary in particular is designed to go beyond what the teacher will actually be able to teach in one lesson. It is designed to edify the teacher, filling his mind with truth and his heart with passion. The Family Devotional is also a great tool for the teacher, allowing him to approach the lesson in a devotional way throughout the week before he teaches it on Sunday. Then the teacher will have a deep well to draw from as he crafts a lesson specifically for his own Sunday school class.

While emphasizing the teacher's own edification, The Teacher Book also gives practical help by clearly and simply laying out main points, objectives, outlines, questions, introductions, illustrations, and applications. Also, additional questions in the Family Devotional can add to a lesson or provide discussion questions for small groups following the main teaching time.

In addition to great resources Faith Bible Church also provides regular training sessions for the Children's Ministry Team.

### Children's Ministry Schedule Overview

Sunday Seminars                      9AM

Nursery for infants and toddlers  
Ages 3 & 4  
K5 - 2nd grade  
3rd - 5th grade

Sunday Service                      10:15AM

Nursery for infants, toddlers and ages 3 & 4  
Junior Church for K5 - 2nd grade

Wednesday                      6:30PM

Nursery for infants and toddlers  
Ages 3 & 4  
K5 - 2nd grade  
3rd - 5th grade

### Questions to be answered:

- What do we want children to understand about God and His Word?
- What do children need to know and embrace about Jesus and the Gospel?
- What marks of faith and spiritual maturity do we want children to understand?
- What portions of God's Word do we want hidden in their hearts through memorization?
- How do we want children to respond to success? To tragedy and suffering?
- How does the Bible characterize a true disciple?

### Partnership with Parents

We believe that God has called both the church and home to raise up the next generations to know, honor, and treasure God through Jesus Christ. We believe this is best accomplished through a strategic, loving partnership between the church and home. This partnership affirms the role and responsibility of church leadership to provide encouragement and training for parents, and also to provide formal instruction for children and youth. This partnership affirms that parents by proximity, opportunity, and God's design, bear a unique responsibility for



nurturing their children's faith. Our ministry philosophy, classes and resources are designed to foster this partnership.

Four ways Faith Bible Church will foster a partnership with parents:

### 1. Clarify Roles and Expectations

It is helpful if there are clear, distinct roles for both church and home, and that both work together to pursue one main goal for children. However, for that partnership to happen, these roles need to be clarified and expectations need to be articulated.

Family Ministry at Faith Bible Church will...

- recognize and affirm that parents bear the primary responsibility for nurturing their child's faith. Teachers and other leaders will not seek to usurp that role.
- provide a safe, welcoming, structured, age-appropriate environment for children.
- instruct children with well-prepared, theologically sound, faith-nurturing Bible lessons that are presented in an age-appropriate, interesting, and God-honoring manner.
- design a class structure that is attentive to the needs of the children, while emphasizing and maximizing spiritual instruction.
- provide parents with written communication outlining class procedures and expectations, behavioral guidelines, contact information, curriculum notes, and other relevant information.
- extend to parents an open invitation to sit in and observe the classroom when so desired.
- speak directly to the parents when an issue arises with their child and seek solutions that properly weigh the needs of the larger class and the specific child.

### 2. Provide Parents with the Generations of Grace Family Devotional

One very strategic way Family Ministry resources foster a partnership between church and home is through the inclusion of the family devotional that accompanies the Generations of Grace curriculum. After children have received formal weekly instruction

in the classroom, the Family Devotional provides parents with a tool that will assist them in taking the biblical truths learned and guiding their children to personal application. Parents have the greatest opportunity for “teachable moments,” situations that arise in everyday life that can be opportunities to apply the truth of God. Real heart application of biblical truth, which changes lives, usually takes place in the context of relationship and everyday life.

The Family Devotional provides parents with the following:

- Lesson title, main ideas, selected memory verse, and a list of Scripture presented in the lesson.
- Daily interaction from Scripture
- Questions to further spiritual discussion and heart application.
- Action Step: suggestions for acting on biblical truth.

It is important to educate parents regarding the importance of this tool and seek ways to motivate and assist them if necessary.

### 3. Connect Parents to the Classroom Experience

A very tangible and practical way for Family Ministry to partner with parents is to encourage parents to become more acquainted and involved in their child’s classroom experience. Here are a few ways we do this:

- Encourage parents to volunteer with the children’s ministry team.
- Host a Parent Orientation and Open House at the beginning of each Sunday school year where students and their parents hear an overview of the curriculum and class structure, as well as meet the teachers and volunteers.
- Encourage parents to sign up to bring and help serve a treat.
- Host a Sunday lunch for the families of your class.
- Give a personal invitation for parents to visit the classroom.
- Invite parents to pray together before the class begins.

### 4. Recommend Discipleship Resources for the Home

- *The Disciple-Making Parent: A Comprehensive Guidebook for Raising Your Children to Love and Follow Jesus Christ* by Chap Bettis
- *Gospel-Powered Parenting: How the Gospel Shapes and Transforms Parenting* by William P. Farley
- *Teach Them Diligently: How to Use the Scriptures in Child Training* by Louis Paul Priolo
- *The Faith of a Child: A Step-by-Step Guide to Salvation for Your Child* by Art Murphy
- *Your Child's Profession of Faith* by Dennis Gundersen
- *Shepherding a Child's Heart* by Tedd Tripp
- *Instructing a Child's Heart* by Tedd and Margy Tripp
- *Age of Opportunity: A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens* by Paul David Tripp
- *Future Men* by Douglas Wilson
- *Parenting Booklets* by Truth 78

### Together in Worship

God-centered worship is supremely important in the life Faith Bible Church. We approach Sunday morning worship with great seriousness and earnestness and expectancy.

Parents have the responsibility to teach their children by their own example the meaning and value of worship. Therefore, parents should want their children with them in worship so the children can catch the spirit and form of their parents' worship.

Children should see how Mom and Dad participate in prayer during the preparation for worship and pastoral prayer. They should see how Mom and Dad sing praise to God with joy in their faces, and how they listen hungrily to His word. They should catch the spirit of their parents meeting the living God. Parents should be jealous to model for their children the tremendous value they put on reverence in the presence of Almighty God.

Worshiping together counters the contemporary fragmentation of families. Hectic American life leaves little time for significant togetherness. It is hard to overestimate the good influence of families doing valuable things together week in and week out, year in and year out.

Worship is the most valuable thing a human can do. The cumulative effect of 650 worship services spent with Mom and Dad between the ages of 4 and 17 is incalculable.

We invite parents to consider this perspective by reading *Together in Worship* which is available upon request.

In this article, we hope to do two things: 1) demonstrate that parents (or some responsible adult) should bring little children to the Sunday morning worship service rather than send them to a "junior church," and 2) give some practical advice about how to do it.

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY ADMINISTRATOR JOB DESCRIPTION

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Ministry Title: Deacon(ess) of Children's Ministry Administration

Elder Oversight: Pastor of Family Ministry

Job overview: Manage Sunday morning Children's Ministry gatherings for age 3 - 8th grade.

Communication:

The Children's Ministry Administrator (CMA) will work directly with the Pastor of Family Ministries. The CMA will maintain communication with 9AM Sunday Kid's Bible teachers, Junior Church teachers and Middle School Teachers on scheduling, curriculum distribution, classroom needs and substitutions. Primary communication will be through Planning Center Online Groups and Services.

Responsibilities:

1. Recruit teachers and assistants with input from Family Ministry Pastor
2. Train team in Children's Ministry policies and procedures.
3. Maintain working knowledge of Generations of Grace curriculum
4. Create curriculum scope and sequence for Children's Ministry Team
5. Create annual comprehensive schedule for Children's Ministry Team
6. Schedule team using Planning Center Services
7. Assist teachers with substitutes when necessary
8. Assist teachers with classroom set-up and supplies
9. Coordinate Children's Ministry Team greeters (2nd floor and lobby) for check-in
10. Oversee technology features such as check-in ipads and printers, apple tvs, junior church proclaim
11. Train team in Children's Ministry policies and procedures.
12. Study / read lesson weekly

Expectations:

1. Encourage team to delight in Christ, serve others and advance the truth in love
2. Promote a healthy team culture of gracious relationships and clear communication
3. Maintain a safe and secure environment for children

Qualifications:

- They will be a member of Faith Bible Church.
- They will possess the qualities as given in Acts 6:3 and in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- They will be able to biblically discern the spiritual and physical needs of people.
- They will be able to recruit and organize members to serve those in need.
- They will be available to offer significant time to the ministry responsibilities.

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY ADMINISTRATOR JOB DESCRIPTION

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### Accountability:

The Deacon(ess) of Children's Ministry Administration will be directly accountable to the Elder overseeing Family Ministries and be broadly accountable to the Elder board.

### Functionality

1. Upon request from the elders, the congregation will privately nominate a servant on the basis of his/her character and competence.
2. The elders will then recommend a deacon candidate for office to the members at a regular congregational meeting. Affirmation by the membership is completed by not less than a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of those present and voting.
3. Upon recognition, they will serve for a three-year, non-consecutive term during which they will
  1. manage a specific responsibility on behalf of a particular elder
  2. and report to the elders and/or congregation as requested by the elders
4. They shall exercise their role with a special concern for the unity of the local church.

### Deaconess of Childcare for Age 0-4

#### Ministry Description

The Elders of Faith Bible Church are responsible for the oversight and shepherding of the body and ministry of the church. One of those responsibilities is providing a safe and secure environment conducive for children to hear the gospel. In that this responsibility is large in both time and scope, and the Elders are to be devoted to prayer and the ministry of the Word, Faith Bible Church shall elect a Childcare Deaconess to oversee the care of children during events held at the church building.

#### Duties:

Planning and oversight for Sunday Morning and Wednesday evening (roughly 5 hours per week plus Sunday mornings from 8:30 am - 12:00 pm, Wednesdays 6:30pm - 7:30pm.)

- Assign workers and communicate via Planning Center Services
- Ensure child care rooms for children are prepared (e.g. rooms are adequately stocked, toys are in age-appropriate areas, hazards are removed, etc.)
- Ensure nursery is set up
- Confirm child check-in is set-up and staffed by a member
- Greet visiting families as they arrive, provide information about children's ministry as necessary.
- Ensure compliance with the Child Protection Policy.
- Submit accident reports to the Director of Children's Ministry
- Facilitate the cleaning of rooms and equipment after events.

#### General Responsibilities

- Recruit volunteers to serve in children's ministry (as needed basis).
- Conduct children's ministry training sessions for members.
- Verify background checks are completed for every member serving
- Serve as a liaison between families, volunteers and Elder overseeing family ministry.

#### Accountability:

The Director of Childcare will be directly accountable to the Elder overseeing family ministry and be broadly accountable to the Elder board.

### Qualifications:

- They will be a member of Faith Bible Church.
- They will possess the qualities as given in Acts 6:3 and in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- They will demonstrate administrative and communication skills
- They will be available to offer consistent time to ministry responsibilities.

### Nomination Process

1. Upon request from the elders, the congregation will privately nominate a servant on the basis of his/her character and competence.
2. The elders will then recommend a deacon candidate for office to the members at a regular congregational meeting. Affirmation by the membership is completed by not less than a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of those present and voting.
3. Upon recognition, they will serve for a three-year term during which they will
  1. manage a specific responsibility on behalf of a particular elder
  2. and report to the elders and/or congregation as requested by the elders
4. They shall exercise their role with a special concern for the unity of the local church.



What: High School Ministry and Middle School Ministry at Faith Bible Church exists to glorify God and work alongside parents

Why: for the evangelism, edification and equipping of their teenage youth

How: by teaching them God's Word  
by showing them how to apply God's Word  
by helping them to follow Christ  
by providing them a safe, relational environment  
by equipping their parents

Desired results:

Youth will set their full confidence in Christ alone for the forgiveness of sin and the fulfillment of all His promises, including eternal life. (John 1:12, Phil. 3:9)

Youth will grow in treasuring Jesus, obeying Jesus, proclaiming Jesus and serving Jesus (Phil. 3:7-8)

Youth will honor parents in attitude and action (Eph. 6:1-2, Col. 3:20)

Youth will partner with the church through membership

High School and Middle School Ministry at Faith Bible Church exist to work alongside parents for the evangelism, edification and equipping of their teenage youth by teaching them God's Word, showing them how to apply it, and helping them to follow Christ. Our desire is to see students come to salvation in Jesus Christ and to grow in how they treasure him, obey him, proclaim him and serve for his glory. We seek to do all these things with a safe, relational environment.

Shepherding: Who will oversee High School and Middle School Ministry?

The Faith Bible Church Elders will provide direction and accountability for High School Ministry. Functionally this ministry will be shepherded by Philip Bates as the pastor overseeing family ministry and led by a High School Ministry Director and Middle School Ministry Director.

Structure: What structures will be utilized for discipling students?

Seminars are a strategic teaching environment where people grow in the understanding of God's Word and are equipped for ministry. High School students are encouraged to weekly attend these intergenerational classes with their parents.

Sunday 9AM is an important meeting time for middle school. Generations of Grace will serve as a foundational outline for teaching middle school students.

Sunday Nights: High School and Middle School will each have their own youth group meetings three times a month. These will take place on Sunday night at 6PM at Faith. The focus of youth group is the text from the Sunday morning message. This emphasis should solidify the value of the Sunday corporate gathering and strengthen students' ability to listen to expository preaching and apply God's Word. Elements like games and food will accompany the teaching and discussion.

Special Events will supplement the teaching and application of God's Word by building unity and trust through enjoyable and relational activities. Special events typically take place once per month.

Equipping: How will we equip parents?

The Bible consistently places the primary responsibility for teaching, training, and disciplining children on their parents. Family Ministry at Faith will provide support, encouragement, teaching, equipping, and accountability to parents in their God ordained role. We intend to accomplish this by providing a year long parenting track during our Seminars on Sunday morning.

Resources

Articles:

*Why Youth Stay In Church When They Grow Up*  
*Family First In Youth Discipleship And Evangelism*  
*Youth Ministry Done Well For The Benefit Of The Church*

Books:

Parenting

*Age of Opportunity: A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens*  
by Paul David Tripp  
*Shepherding a Child's Heart*  
by Tedd Tripp

Family Worship and Discipleship

*Big Truths for Young Hearts: Teaching and Learning the Greatness of God*  
by Bruce A. Ware  
*Training Hearts Teaching Minds: Family Devotions Based on the Shorter Catechism*  
by Starr Meade  
*A Guide to Biblical Manhood*  
by Randy Stinson and Dan Dumas  
*God's Big Picture: Tracing the Storyline of the Bible*  
by Vaughan Roberts  
*Christian Beliefs: Twenty Basics Every Christian Should Know*  
by Wayne Grudem and Elliot Grudem  
*Am I Really a Christian?*  
by Mike McKinley

Teenage Living

*Sex, Dating, and Relationships: A Fresh Approach*  
by Gerald Hiestand and Jay S. Thomas  
*Sexual Detox: A Guide for Guys Who Are Sick of Porn*  
by Tim Challies  
*Modest: Men and Women Clothed in the Gospel*  
by R. W. Glenn and Tim Challies



# YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM LEADER JOB DESCRIPTION

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## OVERVIEW

### VISION - who we are

Faith Bible Church exists to raise up generations of God glorifying Christ followers

### MISSION - what we do

Live a life that delights in Christ, serves His people and advances the truth in love

### VALUES - what we emphasize

As Faith Bible Church works to accomplish its mission, we will do so emphasizing the following core values:

OBEDIENCE: submission to the sufficient Word

DEVOTION: allegiance to Biblical church structure

MATURITY: personal and passionate Christ-likeness

MULTIPLICATION: every member a disciple maker

COMMUNITY: interdependent and affectionate growth of the body

## SPECIFICS

What

The youth ministry facilitator leads discussion of the Sunday message

Why

1. To understand the text preached
2. To value the text preached
3. To apply the text preached

How

We want youth to follow Christ by learning, loving and living the Word of God

- By directing youth in summarizing the message
- By guiding youth to see the gospel themes in the text
- By drawing youth into meaningful dialogue through questions and exercises
- By listening to questions and concerns of youth in relation to the text and discussion

## YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM LEADER JOB DESCRIPTION

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- By guiding youth to make Biblical application that relates to their heart, family, church and community
- By leading youth to praise and pray in response to the Word of God
- By following up on the main applications in a future context
- By fostering relationships with youth outside of the discussion setting
- By modeling Christlikeness as seen in God's Word
- By pointing youth to parents as their primary discipler

### Other responsibilities

- Attend the Sunday morning service
- Meet with the youth leader ministry team weekly
- Be the voice of youth group meetings on Sunday night
- Encourage parents through regular communication through PCO groups
- Attend youth activities as time allows
- Communicate with Youth Ministry Team Administrator on youth group details

### Other information

- Youth Group takes place three times monthly from 6PM to 7:30PM on Sunday nights
- General pattern of youth group entails welcome, announcements, singing, game, discussion, prayer and food.
- Youth Activities take place once per month on average and are geared toward service, spiritual growth and group unity.
- The Youth Ministry Team will also include an administrator and connectors.
- Youth Ministry Team meetings will take place on Sunday afternoons typically right after the morning service and include prayer, application preparation and administrative planning.

Time commitment: 4 hours per week, 2 year commitment preferred

Ministry Report: Accountable to the pastor overseeing family ministries who is broadly accountable to the Elder Team

Revision date: September 2019

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## SPECIFICS

### What

The youth administrator coordinates details

### Why

1. To support the evangelism, edification and equipping of youth
2. To promote excellence
3. To ensure safety

### How

- By setting youth meeting dates in conjunction with the church calendar
- By organizing Sunday Night Youth food
- By uploading resources to the Family Ministry PCO groups page

## YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM ADMINISTRATOR JOB DESCRIPTION

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- By assisting with youth activity preparation
- By communicating details to parents using the Family Ministry PCO groups page
- By maintaining accurate contact information for parents and youth
- By modeling Christlikeness as seen in God's Word
- By pointing youth to parents as their primary discipler

### Other responsibilities

- Attend the Sunday morning service
- Meet with the pastor overseeing Family Ministry regularly
- Attend youth activities as time allows
- Communicate with Youth Ministry Team Leaders on youth group details

### Other information

- Youth Group takes place three times monthly from 6PM to 7:30PM on Sunday nights
- General pattern of youth group entails welcome, announcements, singing, game, discussion, prayer and food.
- Youth Activities take place once per month on average and are geared toward service, spiritual growth and group unity.
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## SPECIFICS

### What

The youth ministry connector builds relationships

### Why

1. To create a warm and inclusive environment
2. To assist leaders in creating an atmosphere conducive for discussion

### How

- By talking with youth when they are at Faith
- By participating in group discussions when appropriate
- By assisting with set-up, games and food on Sunday Nights
- By listening to questions and concerns of youth

## YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM CONNECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

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- By leading youth to praise and pray in response to the Word of God
- By attending extra-curricular events that youth participate in
- By getting to know parents of youth
- By modeling Christlikeness as seen in God's Word
- By pointing youth to parents as their primary discipler

### Other responsibilities

- Attend the Sunday morning service
- Meet with the youth leader ministry team weekly
- Encourage parents through regular communication through PCO groups
- Attend youth activities as time allows
- Communicate with Youth Ministry Team Administrator on youth group details

### Other information

- Youth Group takes place three times monthly from 6PM to 7:30PM on Sunday nights
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- Youth Activities take place once per month on average and are geared toward service, spiritual growth and group unity.
- The Youth Ministry Team will also include a leader and administrator.
- Youth Ministry Team meetings will take place on Sunday afternoons typically right after the morning service and include prayer, application preparation and administrative planning.

Time commitment: 3 hours per week, 2 year commitment preferred

Ministry Report: Accountable to the pastor overseeing family ministries who is broadly accountable to the Elder Team

Revision date: September 2019

# Appendix





## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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What information would a potential new member receive about the “process” of joining Faith Bible Church?

This information is disseminated at the Life at Faith event. We do not publish a process but do verbalize the next step after the lunch. The *LIFE AT FAITH EVENT: WHAT WHY HOW* document contains these steps.

What do you hand out or publish as the invitation to a Life at Faith event?

1. We run the following invitation in the bulletin for a few weeks prior to the lunch.  
"Interested in knowing more about becoming a part of Faith Bible Church? Join us for our Life at Faith Luncheon. Lunch will be served free of charge and childcare will be provided. RSVP by Wednesday, April 3 by emailing [faith@faithnaples.org](mailto:faith@faithnaples.org)"
2. Additionally we make an announcement during the Sunday service for three weeks leading up to the event.
3. We track regular attenders and reach out to them personally the week of a Life at Faith event inviting them to join us. The personal invitation results in 85% of the attendees.

What material do you cover in a Life at Faith lunch?

See *LIFE AT FAITH EVENT: WHAT WHY HOW*

What are the instructions for the prospective members and elders following the Life at Faith event?

Prospective members will sign up for a time slot to meet with an elder (see Sign-Up Sheet) following the event. Elders are responsible to schedule a shepherding information meeting with prospective members based on their own availability. These meetings are coordinated amongst the elders through a shared Google document.

Do the potential members prepare for the meeting with an elder?

Each prospective member reads through the church Covenant, Confession, and Constitution (provided to them in their Life At Faith Playbook) prior to their meeting with an Elder.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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What are the pastors trying to accomplish with the shepherding information meeting?

The Elder is trying to accomplish three things during this meeting:

1. Get to know the prospective church member
2. Help him/and or her understand the church
3. Begin pastoral care for the candidate

The shepherding information form is filled out by the elder and not the prospective member. This ensures that the elder is able to hear and ask appropriate questions to understand the spiritual condition of the one being interviewed.

Upon completion the elder should recommend one of the following 1) be presented to the membership for affirmation, 2) be presented to the membership for affirmation upon baptism, 3) meet for further gospel clarity, 4) be assisted in finding another church that will better care for them. This fourth option is rare but would take place if there are theological differences or geographical distance that make it detrimental to partner with them.

What is the schedule for members' meeting and life at faith lunches?

Members' Meetings occur every other month, on the third Sunday of the month.

Life at Faith events are typically scheduled on the Sunday following a Member's Meeting ensuring enough time for elders to meet with potential members.

What is the church covenant?

See attached Church Covenant.

Does the congregation review the church covenant at various times?

Yes. The members read the covenant together at every member's meeting. It is also used when introducing new members.

How does the church use the covenant to introduce new members?

The covenant is altered for new member introductions. Each section has been adjusted to question form. New members simply answer "I will" after the elder introducing them reads each question.

See attached "Covenant in Question Format"

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

---

How do baptisms alter the schedule of when people are added?

Those desiring to be baptized follow the same process as any other prospective member by attending a LAF event, meeting with an elder and being affirmed by the membership. A baptism Sunday is scheduled within two Sundays of a member's meeting.

See *Baptism* document for more information about process and preparation.

When are new member's introduced?

An introduction Sunday is scheduled following the members' meeting and baptisms. At the conclusion of the service new members are brought to the front, answer the covenant questions, prayed for and welcomed to membership. They remain in the front after the benediction to be greeted by the membership.

Do you currently have or are you working on some sort of church confessional that serves as a baseline of what each member must believe?

The confessional is currently being revised by the elders. New members affirm the current confession.

What is your communion pattern? Are regular attenders and guests able to participate in communion?

Communion takes place the first Sunday AM service of every month. Regular attenders and non-members are welcome to partake of Communion as long as they are in Christ and a baptised member at a church that expresses the true gospel. The elder leading communion explains the criteria for who is able to partake.

What items are covered at a typical members' meeting?

A Member's Meeting agenda consist of welcome with covenant renewal, corporate prayer that highlights gospel ministry relationships, receiving of new members and dismissal of those transferring membership to the care of another church, public care list review (for those with intensive physical care needs and those in church discipline process), financial update, ministry opportunities update and announcements.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

---

How do you set an agenda for the Member's Meeting?

A vocational elder makes the agenda for the Member's Meeting. A shared digital list ensures that other elders have access to this agenda. The Member's Meeting agenda is approved by the Elders one week prior to a scheduled Member's Meeting.

Is there child care for Member's Meetings? If so, who does that?

There is child care available during members' meetings. We let parents know that a few qualified babysitters are available to help with childcare needs. There is little to no structure or programming. The security team provides further oversight. The elders have considered hiring child care in the future should the need arise.

What is the best way to explain "elder led, congregational affirmed, deacon served"?

See *"Elder Led, Congregational Affirmed, Deacon Served"* document



## SEMI-ANNUAL ELDER MINISTRY REVIEW

---

What? review of the the ministry efforts of the elders, including the senior pastor

Why? to increase excellence, to promote transparency, to provide support

How? bi-annual review of all elders with a special report of staff form Sr. Pastor to interested lay-elders

### REVIEW BROADLY:

- Do you still fully affirm our [doctrinal statement](#) or have any questions about it?
- Do you still fully affirm our [church covenant](#) or have any questions about it?
- Do you still fully affirm your elder commitment (basic elder job description below) or have any questions about it?
- Are we clear on expectations?

### REVIEW SPECIFICALLY:

*This section of the review is primarily for all elders. As we review each of the following, do you see evidence of progress or need help?*

All elders at Faith Bible Church (whether paid by the church or some other means of employment) accept the responsibility for . . .

- Engaging in relationships with congregation so as to grow members in maturity
- Participating in teaching (large or small) on a regular basis
- Protecting sound doctrine (through focused and disciplined study of the Word)
- Perpetuating the teaching (by training other leaders as God grants the opportunity)
- Looking out for the sheep (limping, fighting, biting)
- Leading flock through wisdom and service (confidently and gently)
- Shepherding as a part of the team (preserving unity amongst elder team)
- Modeling maturity (exemplary leadership in holiness and love)
- Praying for the flock (at least praying through membership directory on a weekly basis)
- Overseeing the Household of God (by means of attendance at elders' meetings and members' meetings)

## SEMI-ANNUAL ELDER MINISTRY REVIEW

---

*This section of the review is primarily for staff elders. As we review each of the following, do you see evidence of progress or need help?*

Why do we hire staff?

- specialization (special pastoral gifting to be leveraged)
- mobilization (pastoring at all and an abundance of hours)
- facilitation (on it not in it)

Your understanding of your primary staff responsibility (if all else fails)?

*List primary job description to discover if you see evidence of progress and/or need help.*

Your understanding of your other staff responsibilities?

*List secondary job descriptions to discover if you see evidence of progress and/or need help.*

### REVIEW PERSONALLY

#### Christian Walk

- Maintaining Christlike attitude while working through issues facing and its members:
- Managing family:
- Progressing in personal walk with the Lord:

#### Ministry Satisfaction

- How satisfied are you with your role?
- What goals do you have for yourself to improve your satisfaction in this role?
- What changes would you like to see in order to enhance your satisfaction in this role?
- How could I better serve you? What specific support or challenge do you need from me?

## TEAM 360

Faith Bible Church - Naples

B

(80.1%)  
 Team Health

### CATEGORY RESULTS

|                      |                     |                  |                  |                 |                |
|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>C</b>             | <b>B</b>            | <b>B</b>         | <b>B</b>         | <b>D</b>        | <b>C</b>       |
| (76.5%)              | (88.7%)             | (85.3%)          | (83.3%)          | (68.2%)         | (78.6%)        |
| <b>Communication</b> | <b>Relationship</b> | <b>Alignment</b> | <b>Execution</b> | <b>Capacity</b> | <b>Culture</b> |

| <b>Communication</b>  |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Every team member's voice and contribution is truly heard, appreciated, and valued.       | <b>C (76.5%)</b> |
| Vision and change are communicated effectively to the wider organization.                 | <b>C (71.7%)</b> |
| Our team knows what to share, when to share it, and with whom to share it.                | <b>D (67.7%)</b> |
| Email and meetings are used effectively and efficiently.                                  | <b>C (75.3%)</b> |
| Our team members know how to bring effective and appropriate critique and feedback.       | <b>B (83.1%)</b> |
| Systems and standards are in place for sharing consistent communication and expectations. | <b>B (84.9%)</b> |

| <b>Relationship</b>   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Our team really likes each other and works well together.   | <b>B (88.7%)</b> |
| Our team trusts one another to follow through on what they promise.                                   | <b>A (95%)</b>   |
| Our team does not have drama and gossip - we are able to speak the truth without fear of retribution. | <b>A (90%)</b>   |
| Our team enjoys working with one another - we value and respect each other's contributions.           | <b>A (93%)</b>   |
| Conflicts and challenges are addressed in a timely, respectful, and constructive manner.              | <b>A (91%)</b>   |
| Our team consistently speak highly of each other - internally and externally.                         | <b>C (76.7%)</b> |
|   | <b>B (86.4%)</b> |

## Alignment

**B (85.3%)**

Our team believes in the mission and vision, and finds it compelling.

**A (95.3%)**

Our team knows and lives out the organizational values in our daily activities.

**B (85%)**

Our team's roles and responsibilities are clearly understood by everyone.

**B (87.4%)**

Our team has a clearly defined strategy that will allow us to achieve our vision.

**B (80%)**

Our team has the right people, systems, and financial capital to deliver its objectives.

**B (83.1%)**

Our team believes we are aligned and clearly knows how we win.

**B (81%)**

## Execution

**B (83.3%)**

Every member of the team can be relied upon to follow through on their agreed upon actions.

**B (87.6%)**

We leave team meetings with a clear sense of who is responsible for specific deliverables.

**A (90%)**

Our team over-delivers compared to its key performance indicators.

**C (77%)**

Our team has learned the disciplines required to deliver on the ideas we generate.

**B (80%)**

Project management is a strength for our team - we deliver on time and on budget.

**B (85%)**

Our team knows when we have achieved success.

**B (80%)**

## Capacity

**D (68.2%)**

Our team has clear succession planning in place for each member of the team.

**F (40%)**

Our team has the margin to do more and capitalize on new opportunities.

**F (59.4%)**

Our team promotes a healthy work/life balance.

**C (72.4%)**

Our team members work from a healthy level of energy from week to week.

**B (85%)**

Our team has an intentional strategy for multiplying and scaling our skills and expertise.

**C (73.4%)**

Our team is operating in our natural strengths and competence without being drained.

**C (79%)**

## Culture

**C (78.6%)**

Winning as a team is prized more highly than individual advancement, accolades, or agendas.

**A (90%)**

Each member's skills and expertise are being deployed in a way that optimizes team productivity.

**B (84.1%)**

We prize collaboration by inviting honest contributions from everyone regardless of experience or job description.

**B (84.9%)**

We have managed to avoid the silo mentality - in discussions no one defaults to protecting their own team and turf.

**B (81%)**

We have a culture of empowerment and opportunity that allows our team to thrive.

**C (79.1%)**

Our team carries and reflects our organizational DNA, which is easily recognizable internally and externally.

**B (85%)**

Our team morale is positive and does not waver in the event of adverse circumstances.

**C (78%)**

Our team likes where they work and are excited to report to work each day. Others want to be on our team.

**B (84.1%)**

Our team engages in regular group activities and traditions that are not directly task related for the purpose of cultivating unity and rapport.

**F (40.9%)**



## TEAM 360

Faith Bible Church - Naples

B

(87.4%)  
 Team Health

### CATEGORY RESULTS

|                      |                     |                  |                  |                 |                |
|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>B</b>             | <b>A</b>            | <b>A</b>         | <b>B</b>         | <b>B</b>        | <b>B</b>       |
| (83.3%)              | (91.3%)             | (91.7%)          | (85.5%)          | (83.3%)         | (89.5%)        |
| <b>Communication</b> | <b>Relationship</b> | <b>Alignment</b> | <b>Execution</b> | <b>Capacity</b> | <b>Culture</b> |

### Communication

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>Communication</b>  | <b>B (83.3%)</b>   |
| Every team member's voice and contribution is truly heard, appreciated, and valued.       | <b>B (87.8%)</b>   |
| Vision and change are communicated effectively to the wider organization.                 | <b>C (74.5%)</b>   |
| Our team knows what to share, when to share it, and with whom to share it.                | <b>C (79.5%)</b>   |
| Email and meetings are used effectively and efficiently.                                  | ↓ <b>C (76.3%)</b> |
| Our team members know how to bring effective and appropriate critique and feedback.       | <b>A (92.3%)</b>   |
| Systems and standards are in place for sharing consistent communication and expectations. | <b>B (89.5%)</b>   |

### Relationship

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>Relationship</b>   | <b>A (91.3%)</b>   |
| Our team really likes each other and works well together.   | <b>A (91%)</b>     |
| Our team trusts one another to follow through on what they promise.                                   | <b>A (93.3%)</b>   |
| Our team does not have drama and gossip - we are able to speak the truth without fear of retribution. | ↓ <b>B (88.3%)</b> |
| Our team enjoys working with one another - we value and respect each other's contributions.           | <b>A (91.3%)</b>   |
| Conflicts and challenges are addressed in a timely, respectful, and constructive manner.              | <b>A (90.8%)</b>   |
| Our team consistently speak highly of each other - internally and externally.                         | <b>A (92.8%)</b>   |

## Alignment

**A (91.7%)**

Our team believes in the mission and vision, and finds it compelling.

**A (99.5%)**

Our team knows and lives out the organizational values in our daily activities.

**A (91.3%)**

Our team's roles and responsibilities are clearly understood by everyone.

**B (88.3%)**

Our team has a clearly defined strategy that will allow us to achieve our vision.

**B (86.8%)**

Our team has the right people, systems, and financial capital to deliver its objectives.

**A (96.8%)**

Our team believes we are aligned and clearly knows how we win.

**B (87.3%)**

## Execution

**B (85.5%)**

Every member of the team can be relied upon to follow through on their agreed upon actions.

**A (91.5%)**

We leave team meetings with a clear sense of who is responsible for specific deliverables.

**A (91%)**

Our team over-delivers compared to its key performance indicators.

**B (84.8%)**

Our team has learned the disciplines required to deliver on the ideas we generate.

**B (84%)**

Project management is a strength for our team - we deliver on time and on budget.

**B (81.8%)**

Our team knows when we have achieved success.

**B (80%)**

## Capacity

**B (83.3%)**

Our team has clear succession planning in place for each member of the team.

**C (76%)**

Our team has the margin to do more and capitalize on new opportunities.

**C (74%)**

Our team promotes a healthy work/life balance.

**B (83.3%)**

Our team members work from a healthy level of energy from week to week.

**A (90.5%)**

Our team has an intentional strategy for multiplying and scaling our skills and expertise.

**B (84.8%)**

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| Our team is operating in our natural strengths and competence without being drained.   | <b>A (91%)</b>   |
| <b>Culture</b>   | <b>B (89.5%)</b> |
| Winning as a team is prized more highly than individual advancement, accolades, or agendas.  | <b>A (94.8%)</b> |
| Each member's skills and expertise are being deployed in a way that optimizes team productivity.   | <b>A (91.8%)</b> |
| We prize collaboration by inviting honest contributions from everyone regardless of experience or job description.                               | <b>A (94.3%)</b> |
| We have managed to avoid the silo mentality - in discussions no one defaults to protecting their own team and turf.                              | <b>B (88.3%)</b> |
| We have a culture of empowerment and opportunity that allows our team to thrive.   | <b>A (91.8%)</b> |
| Our team carries and reflects our organizational DNA, which is easily recognizable internally and externally.                                    | <b>A (92%)</b>   |
| Our team morale is positive and does not waver in the event of adverse circumstances.  | <b>B (84%)</b>   |
| Our team likes where they work and are excited to report to work each day. Others want to be on our team.  | <b>A (94.5%)</b> |
| Our team engages in regular group activities and traditions that are not directly task related for the purpose of cultivating unity and rapport. | <b>C (74.3%)</b> |





# 5 VOICES

## QUICK START GUIDE





# NURTURER SNAPSHOT

## STRENGTHS

- They intuitively feel how an organization will react to a new idea.
- They defend values - people will always come before profit.
- They function as the relational oil inside teams and organizations.
- They are pragmatic realists who ask, "Has this really been thought through?"
- They take genuine delight in celebrating the achievements of others.
- They are natural team players.

## POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACT

- They can become overly resistant to change & demonstrate passive aggressive tendencies.
- They rarely value the contribution they make.

## CHAMPION OF...

- Champion of People, Relational Harmony, and Values



## Nurturer

### VOICE VOLUME



### POPULATION

43%



### CHAMPION OF

People, relational harmony, and values



### WATCH OUT FOR

Nurturers have a fear of conflict and often won't speak out, beware of silence



### HOW TO EMPOWER THEM

Let them speak first, affirm their competence and the genuine value of their contribution



# CREATIVE SNAPSHOT

## STRENGTHS

- They are the Conceptual Architects and love to think outside the box.
- They function as an “early warning radar system” for teams, often seeing the opportunities and dangers long before everyone else.
- They are never satisfied with the status quo — they inherently believe things can always be better.
- If the vision is compelling the word “can’t” is not in their vocabulary.
- They exhibit a strong social conscience and desire for personal and organizational integrity.

## POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACT

- They often struggle with the fact that, “people never seem to fully understand my ideas”
- Being internal perfectionists they can often fail to celebrate the 90% that has been achieved, focusing instead on the 10% that hasn’t!

## CHAMPION OF...

- Champion of Future Ideas, Innovation, and Organizational Integrity



### Creative

#### VOICE VOLUME



#### POPULATION

9%



#### CHAMPION OF

Future ideas, innovation, and organizational integrity



#### WATCH OUT FOR

Creatives can struggle to communicate effectively and have idealist perfectionist tendencies



#### HOW TO EMPOWER THEM

Don't judge them on what they say first, help them communicate their ideas. Let them know it's ok to be wrong sometimes



# GUARDIAN SNAPSHOT

## STRENGTHS

- They have a relentless commitment to ask the difficult questions.
- They will always seek to honor the past as teams look towards the future.
- They accept as personal the commitment to deliver projects on time and on budget.
- They have the ability to detach decision-making from personal sentiments.
- They are naturally risk averse asking, "Is it worth the risk and investment?"
- They respect and value logic, order, systems and repeatable processes.

## POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACT

- Their desire for truth & right decisions can sometimes override the feelings of others.
- Inability to compromise when they have a strongly held opinion.

## CHAMPION OF...

- Champion of Due Diligence, Resources, and Efficient Systems and Processes



## Guardian

### VOICE VOLUME



### POPULATION

30%



### CHAMPION OF

Due diligence, resources, and efficient systems and processes



### WATCH OUT FOR

Guardians are risk averse, can be negative and bring excessive critique



### HOW TO EMPOWER THEM

Welcome their challenging critique and commitment to due diligence



# CONNECTOR SNAPSHOT

## STRENGTHS

- They are persuasive and inspirational communicators — rallying people to causes and things they believe in.
- They are incredibly resourceful — “Whatever we need, I can get it or I have a source.”
- They have the capacity to maintain a large number of relationships.
- They know how to connect with people & their aspirations.
- They need appreciation and credit for making key connections — “Are you aware of what I’ve done?”

## POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACT

- Their people pleasing tendencies means they often struggle to bring effective challenge.
- They often struggle to hear or engage fully with critical feedback.

## CHAMPION OF...

- Champion of Relational Networks, Internal Collaboration, and Effective Communication



### Connector

#### VOICE VOLUME



#### POPULATION

11%



#### CHAMPION OF

Relational networks, internal collaboration, and effective communication



#### WATCH OUT FOR

Connectors always interpret challenge of their ideas as personal



#### HOW TO EMPOWER THEM

Give them time to share their ideas and passions, appreciate before you critique



# PIONEER SNAPSHOT

## STRENGTHS

- They approach life with an “anything is possible!” attitude.
- Visioning and shaping a scalable future is always the highest priority.
- Their strategic military thinking makes them incredibly effective at aligning people, systems and resources.
- Winning is a massive driver, they hate to give up and will drive their team long after others would have given up.
- They are powerful communicators, using logic and rationality to provide an attractive and compelling vision of the future.

## POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACT

- The immature Pioneer can often appear very arrogant with a “me focused” agenda.
- They quickly dismiss the contributions of those they don’t believe to be competent or experienced.

## CHAMPION OF...

- Champion of Strategic Vision, Results, and Problem-Solving



## Pioneer

### VOICE VOLUME



### POPULATION

7%



### CHAMPION OF

Strategic vision, results-focused, and problem-solving



### WATCH OUT FOR

Pioneers lack sensitivity, can be unwilling to listen, and perceived as arrogant



### HOW TO EMPOWER THEM

Don't worry - they empower themselves. Just affirm their competence





# THE LEADERSHIP TOOLKIT

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3 Tools Every Leader Needs

**GIANT**



When it comes to the perils and trials of leadership, every leader needs a toolkit.

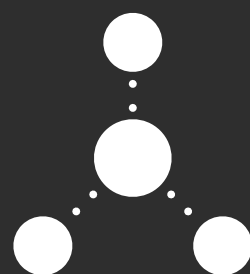
A set of principles, frameworks, and strategies to help them navigate the pitfalls of relational dynamics and the barriers to self-awareness that hinder them from reaching their highest potential.

It begins first with cultivating awareness about the things in our lives that make us tick - what motivates us, corrupts us, elevates us. It's about what brings out the best in who we are and the relationships we need to create a healthy atmosphere to thrive. It also provides avenues for more effective, empathetic management of employees in such a way that you can help them expand their leadership capacity.

So, without further ado, here are three tools to add to your leadership toolkit:

1. People, Place, Purpose
2. 5 Gears
3. 5 Circles of Influence





# **FINDING YOUR PEACE**

*People, Place, & Purpose*

## HOW AT PEACE ARE YOU?

This might sound like an odd question to some, but how much peace do you have in your life right now? How content are your heart and mind with the various aspects of life and routine at the moment?

What if there was a way to do a quick self-assessment to find out? It's not a quick fix, but rather a tool to understand some of the hidden anxieties that covertly sabotage your contentment - something that can help you find a target to shoot

at and begin taking back a measure of peace in your day-to-day routine.

A great friend of GiANT, Frog Orr-Ewing, introduced us to the following concept that provides a lens for analyzing, identifying, and categorizing pain points in our lives. It seems simple at face value, but if you dig deeper into your responses and use them as benchmarks over time, you'll find there's a lot more to this tool than meets the eye.

## MEASURING PEACE: PEOPLE, PLACE, PURPOSE

### **How *purposeful* do you feel?**

Is your work satisfying? Do you feel like you have a direction in your personal life that matches your values, vision, and goal for yourself? Are you energized or passionate about what you do?

*Determine a percentage number from 1-100% with 1% indicating a complete lack of any satisfying purpose and 100% representing a perfect alignment with your personal purpose at work and home.*

**How well are you enjoying your connection to the people around you at work and in your personal life?**

Do you have a close/meaningful group of friends? Are the people in your life - friends, family, work colleagues - bringing you down or calling you up to the best version of yourself? Do you feel like you can depend on your group of friends, and are you connecting often and/or deeply enough with them?

*Determine a percentage number from 1-100% with 1% indicating a complete lack of any satisfying friendships or personal connections and 100% representing a perfect alignment of your relational needs with your current group of friends, family, and co-workers.*

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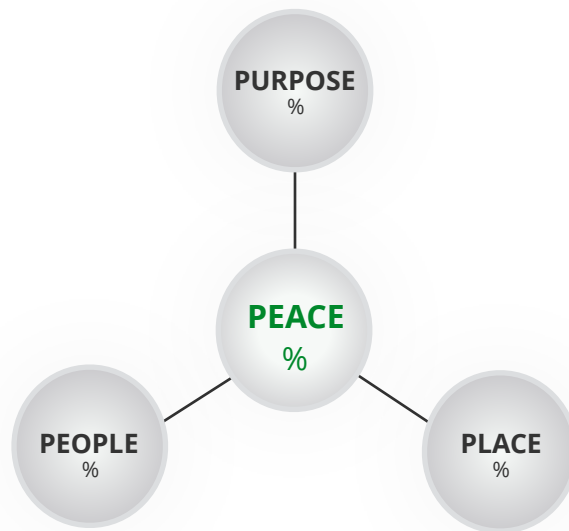
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**How well does the *place* you are living suit you?**

Does where you live suite your lifestyle preferences? Are there enough places to hike and walk in parks, go to art galleries, sample great restaurants, or work on the land? Does your house or apartment suit the needs of your family? Is there enough diversity of people, activities, and clubs or organizations in which to get involved?

Whatever your preference for life and leisure, are you finding it where you live? Or does traffic, lack of ocean or trees, or some other factor subtly (or maybe not so subtly) affect your outlook on life at the moment?

*Determine a percentage number from 1-100% with 1% indicating an ill-fitting lifestyle or location and 100% representing a perfect alignment with your lifestyle preferences and needs.*



## FINDING YOUR PEACE PERCENTAGE

The beauty of this exercise is that it helps you categorize three foundational, influential elements of life and how they might be impacting, for better or worse, the degree of peace and contentment you are experiencing in your life right now.

So take a moment to write down your numbers for each category, then add them up and divide by 3 to find a simple average of your People, Place, Purpose scores. This is your overall peace number. While neither perfect nor rocket science, spending 5-minutes walking through the exercise provides a helpful, ballpark snapshot of where you believe you are at the moment. We often find that this simple little

personal reflection serves as a wake up call to either recognize our true sense of gratitude and contentment, or otherwise alert us to an underlying discontentment whose significance has flown under the radar until now.

Once you understand what this overall number means for you, look at each component separately and ask yourself which specific drivers are dictating that number for you? For example, which aspects of relationship and personal connection are satisfying, such as family and friends, and which aspects are contentious, such as your environment among co-workers?

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTIVATING PEACE

By taking the time to find your pain points and recognize the blessings of life, you can better maintain your sense of gratitude and contentment in the pursuit of a fully realized vision for our lives. After all, unrecognized blessings pile up, unnoticed, until they are forgotten entirely. Don't waste time missing the good things in life while suffering from the bad. Examine your life - the ups and downs, the things you can't do without and the things you wish to change. Then go out and do it. Seize the day and make your life your own. In the end, whether you find peace or not is up to you.

As the old adage goes, "whether you think you can, or you think you can't, you're right."

---

# REFLECTION EXERCISES

## 1 ●○○ ANSWER THE QUESTIONS FOR YOURSELF

1. How purposeful do you feel?
2. How well are you enjoying your connection to people around you at work and in your personal life?
3. How well does the place you are living suit you?

*Note: Feel free to look back through the questions in their expanded form above and really take the time to think through the pain points and pitfalls that seem to rob you of peace in your daily routine and relationships.*

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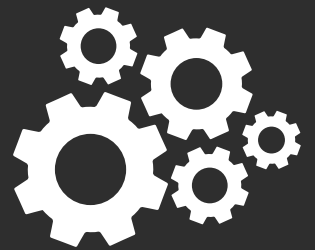
## 2 ○●○ FIND YOUR PEACE PERCENTAGE

It may sound silly or arbitrary, but once you've mined out a few sticking points for each of the areas of peace, you'll be able to gauge where you fall in the 0-100% range for each category of People, Place, and Purpose. It's important that you be completely honest with yourself and remove any sense of pride, aspiration, or shame from your analysis. This will become both your baseline for progress as well as your compass for personal development, gently guiding you to the areas that need the most attention.

---

## 3 ○○● CULTIVATE PEACE

For each of the three areas - People, Place, Purpose - determine 2 or 3 steps you can take over the course of the next week or month to raise your level of peace in that area. Do you need to make more of an effort to connect with friends and family rather than allow work and social disconnection to characterize your daily routine? Or maybe you need to look for a new apartment or some professional training to help you find the area of town or subject matter expertise you need to live out your dreams for living and working.



## **THE 5 GEARS**

*Why Relational Advantage Gives You a  
Competitive Advantage*

## THE RISE OF THE RELATIONAL ECONOMY

In an age where information is free and global connectivity puts the brilliance of far flung colleagues and gurus at everyone's fingertips, how do you gain a competitive advantage?

The traditional career advancement model focuses heavily on IQ for "corporate ladder climbing" - that is, it prioritizes hard skills and measured intelligence benchmarks for promotion. However, in this new world where everyone has access

to the same information and specialized skills are becoming less exclusive, your greatest asset lies in your ability to connect with people to form lasting, positive relationships. In that sense, the information economy has inadvertently given rise to the relational economy.

The ability to cultivate such relational influence is called "Relational Intelligence."

## RELATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

This people-centered form of intellect elevates the importance of soft skills in working to build long-term, mutually beneficial relationships, both inside and outside your company. It increases your influence, likability, and the desire for people to want to be around you. Ultimately, colleagues and clients alike want to do business with people they enjoy working with. So if crafting your personal brand and success is becoming harder to do through specialized IQ and knowledge, due

to the information economy, then a shift in mindset is crucial. At GiANT, we describe this approach as a "relationship before opportunity" mentality.

Essentially, such a mentality involves first paying attention to the needs and interests of others before ourselves. It means knowing how to be present with the right mindset in the right way, depending on the given social or work environment. For many of us, our greatest barrier to true connection



with others - whether at home with our families, at work with colleagues, or out and about with friends - is an inability to shift into the right mental “gear” at the right time.

That’s why we devised a simple, visual system called the “5 Gears.”

**“Most of us focus on how much we know, but the ability to connect and be present in the midst of tasks is what sets leaders apart.”**

*Fast Company article featuring  
GiANT’s 5 Gears book*

## THE 5 GEARS

What are the gears? Here is a quick overview of each gear and its purpose.

### **1st Gear - *Recharge Mode***

Full recharge via reading, sleeping, meditating, fitness, etc.

### **2nd Gear - *Connect Mode***

Depth connections and experiences with family, friends, or colleagues.

### **3rd Gear - *Social Mode***

Casual social connection, activities, and events.

### **4th Gear - *Task Mode***

Working hard, but multitasking and managing various interruptions, collaborations, meetings, etc.

### **5th Gear - *Focus Mode***

Getting “in the zone” for laser-like focus and productivity, usually done alone and without distractions

### **(Bonus) Reverse - *Responsive Mode***

Some of our strongest relational capital comes from sincere apologies and personal accountability.

Just as with a manually shifting car, there are rhythms and routines to our lives, a natural progression of shifting throughout the day that entails a right order and time for each gear.

Conversely, we can also find

ourselves stuck in the wrong gear at the wrong time. Those who figure out how to shift smoothly into the appropriate gear in the right setting set themselves up to connect quicker, more deeply, and more authentically with others.

## GRINDING GEARS

For example, you know that guy who always shows up to after-hours social gatherings and can't seem to drop the shop talk, even when everyone else is clearly trying to relax? Or what about the colleague who comes flying into the office every morning, barking questions and asking about assignments before you've even had your 9 am coffee? You can't even get a 'hello' from either of those people before getting an ear-full about some task or meeting.

These are prime, everyday examples of being in the wrong gear at the wrong time. They seem trivial, but accumulated over time, these behaviors shrug aside opportunities to connect and raise barriers to relationship. Unfortunately, the unpleasant phenomenon of grinding gears isn't restricted to the workplace.

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Have you ever come home from work and, before you know it, your kids are climbing all over you, or your spouse is excited to greet you, only to meet them in return with an upraised hand and a "not-now" look that tells them to wait until you're off the phone? We call that "the stiff arm."

For those of us who have adopted "the stiff arm" habit for any period of time, we end up realizing that our kids stop rushing to dog-pile us the moment we're home. Our spouses stop looking to the door when we walk in. Here's the real key: Relationship is in the details. And those details are worth your attention. The relational misfires in the examples above sabotage opportunities for connection by keeping us stuck in the wrong gear.

## APPLYING THE 5 GEARS

But that's where the 5 Gears come into play. Use them to help you improve your relational intelligence in three ways:

### 1. UNDERSTAND WHERE YOU GET STUCK

First, understand where you get stuck. Pay attention to the natural transitions of the day in which you either fail to shift, or find yourself grinding your gears. Is it waking up in the morning and going straight into Gear 4 or 5 work modes without some Gear 1 and 2 time?

Do you struggle to leave the office behind at the end of the day, coming home in Gear 5 rather than Gears 2 or 3? Once you figure out where you're getting stuck, you can set triggers to help you shift more quickly and effectively.

### 2. LEARN TO USE TRIGGERS TO HELP YOU SHIFT

If you tend to neglect a healthy morning routine to warm up for the day, then plan a little extra time to fit in some Gear 1 recharge (read, meditate, workout) or Gear 2 connection with your family (breakfast with spouse or kids) before diving into Gear 4 and 5 work mode. I promise, you'll feel more energized and ready to take on the day.

If you find yourself stiff-arming your kids or spouse the minute you

walk in the door, set a physical trigger (store, gas station, street light) 2 miles from your home on your return commute. When you reach it, hang up the phone and start thinking about what your family has been up to for the day and how you can engage them or help them with their needs when you get home. This will help you get in the right Gear 2 or 3 mindset to be fully present when they finally get to see you.

### **3. WORK WITH INTENTIONALITY**

Lastly, work with intentionality. Try to be aware of when you need to be in 4th or 5th Gear, and communicate clearly with others if you need time to finish what you're working on before being dragged into a hallway conference or other

distraction. It will ultimately help you be more respectful of both your time and your colleagues' time when you can make sure you are able to shift and be fully engaged with them.

# REFLECTION EXERCISES

## 1 ●○○ RANK YOUR GEAR ORDER

- First, rank them based on which gears you spend the most in to the least time.
  - Then rank your gears based on which ones you do best, versus which ones you tend to grind the most in transition, handle poorly in general, or just maybe never reach.
  - What can you learn by comparing these two lists? Are you spending a lot of time in gears that you do not do well in? Or maybe you are avoiding some gears all together? Think about the frequency and quality of time you spend in each gear.
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## 2 ○●○ MAP YOUR DAILY SCHEDULE

- For example, do you wake up and go straight into 5th gear - checking emails, making calls, and looking at spreadsheets - before you take time to eat breakfast, see your kids, or start your day in meditation?
  - Do you spend a little too much time in 3rd gear around the break room, or maybe you need to slip out of 5th gear every now and then for some collaboration 4th gear work time with colleagues to both gain new perspectives and build camaraderie?
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## 3 ○○● REVIEW ALL 5 GEARS AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING FOR EACH...

- Where do I grind gears or get stuck during my transitions into or out of this gear?
- What's one thing I can do to make time in this gear more effective?
  - Example: If you need to be better about making time for 5th gear, maybe you need to have a sign on your office door so others will know you are in 5th gear.
  - Example: If you need help transitioning from 4th gear work mode to 2nd gear with your family after work, find a building or gas station a few miles away from home, and when you pass it, commit to ending work phone calls and switching gears to think about your kids or spouse and what they have been up to for the day or might have coming up.



## **5 CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE**

*Accidental vs. Intentional Leadership*

## THE LEADER WE SHOULD STRIVE TO BECOME

Liberating leaders are “leaders worth following” rather than leaders who have to be followed. Becoming such a leader boils down to knowing when to bring an appropriate level of support (encouragement, training, resources, etc.) to others, but also when to call your people up to a higher level of work or conduct (accountability, standards, deadlines, etc.). The best leaders, those who create a culture of

empowerment and healthy growth, are the leaders who learn how to calibrate an appropriate degree of both support and challenge. As a result, we champion a tool called the “Support-Challenge Matrix” that helps plot leader tendencies along the support and challenge axes in order to understand the (im)balance of these elements and highlight the kinds of cultures they create.

## ACCIDENTAL VS. INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP

But in order to become a Liberator, leaders need to be intentional about their own growth by adopting a lifelong pursuit of self-awareness. Many people are familiar with the term “self-awareness,” along with the myriad number of books written about the concept, but fewer people understand the importance of accidental versus intentional leadership in cultivating that self-awareness

Accidental leadership is when we go about our lives merely reacting to the situations that confront us in

the moment. It’s characterized by a lack of vision and intentional forethought around the person or leader we want to become. As a result, we have no plan for how to deal with life and leadership challenges, which results in an ever-shifting moral and leadership compass with no consistent direction or path to get where we want to go.

Therefore, the journey toward Liberating Leadership begins with intentionality. It’s rooted in a willingness to look in the mirror, or



even let others hold up a mirror for you, in order to see what it's like to be on the other side of you. What is it like to be led by you? Loved by you? What tendencies do you have that build others up or bring them down, and are those tendencies increasing or decreasing your influence with them?

## **INTENTIONALITY: THE PATH TO LIBERATING LEADERSHIP**

This sort of self-honesty is a challenge for everyone. It requires being secure in who you are, but also the humility to commit to a process of uncovering your weaknesses in order to become the best person and leader you can be in all areas of your life.

Unfortunately, tendencies don't really change, but with intentionality, humility, and effort, we can begin to have a choice between our default patterns of how we normally respond to a situation, and what we want our actions to be.

The best leaders are intentional about this process and invite others to help them see where they can improve - to hold up of a mirror of

sorts. Our best description of the leaders who commit to this challenge is that they are humble, hungry, and smart. Humble enough to admit, "I really want to grow," and invite others to help me; hungry because they decide "I really don't want to stay the way I am;" and smart enough to be able to learn and commit to such learning and growth over a period of time.

## THE 5 CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE

In a related concept, the 5 Circles of Influence remind us that every person, regardless of formal leadership titles, has 5 areas of everyday life in which they leave a positive, negative, or even apathetic impact. Whether it's on yourself, family, team, organization, or community, your actions and intentionality (or lack thereof) leave a profound mark on all those in your circles of influence.

Working diligently on your self-leadership generates a ripple effect that spreads throughout every circle of influence. Generally, when you begin leading yourself better you will find that your relationship with family and friends improves, which grows your capacity to lead your team and your organization, all of which enhances your influence in the wider community.

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However, it's important to note that you must maintain intentional investment in each circle if you want to generate a consistent, healthy life. You can't be a hero in one circle and a disaster in another and hope it goes well. Good self-leadership provides a boost to every level of influence, but does not make up for direct, intentional leadership investment in each area individually.

Plenty of executives and organizational leaders excel in their roles at work. They may even be revered and loved by the wider community. But sometimes when you dig deep you find a great deal of trouble at home or an absentee parent who doesn't know their children, simply because they chose to be intentional at work but accidental in their approach to family.



## INTENTIONALITY LEADS TO CONSISTENCY

No matter which way you slice it, Intentional leadership is not for the faint of heart. After all, accidental leadership is the definition of default mode. It's easy, it's reactionary, and it doesn't require facing our weaknesses or embracing our learning opportunities. And it certainly doesn't require inviting others to challenge us in that process.

The truth is, most leadership fails because the leader is inconsistent, and in that regard, accidental leadership can never be the answer. It succumbs too easily to the whims of self-preservation and knee-jerk reactions. Another word for consistent, however, is intentional.

So if you remember nothing else, remember this: Intentionality leads to consistency.

When you become consistent, you become healthy, as both a leader and a person. And when you become healthy, your influence grows dramatically. Then, guess what happens: You start winning. Your team starts winning. You actually start feeling at peace with yourself. With that security comes confidence and humility, which makes people begin to respect you even more.

That's what it means to be a liberator and an intentional leader.

# REFLECTION EXERCISES

## 1 ●○○ RANKING YOUR CIRCLES

Rank your circles of influence from the areas in which you believe you are most intentional to the ones in which you are least intentional (i.e. accidental).

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## 2 ○●○ TAKE SOME TIME TO REFLECT ON WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF YOU


Hold up a mirror to yourself and think about the following:

- What is it like to be led by you?
  - What is it like to be loved by you? Do you love some people in your life differently than others? If true, how so?
  - What tendencies do you have that build others up or bring them down? Are those tendencies increasing or decreasing your influence with them?
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## 3 ○○● DETERMINE YOUR ACTION

Determine one thing you can do in each circle of influence to become more intentional with the people/work in your life over the next week.

These can be one-time situations, such as apologizing to someone you have hurt, or they can constitute entirely new habits you can begin to implement for greater health, intentionality, and freedom in every area of your life.



**5 QUESTIONS  
EFFECTIVE LEADERS  
CANNOT IGNORE**

# Leadership is not easy.

Organizations are complex machines with a lot of moving parts. Throwing people into the mix complicates things to an entirely new level.

As a leader, you are charged with an impossible task: see the future, set the direction for your company or department, make critical decisions on the fly, and grow the business.

Oh, and do all of this while creating a healthy culture and motivating a team of individuals to work together.

**“Rough waters are truer tests of leadership. In calm waters every ship has a good captain.”**

## QUESTION #1

### *What's it like to be on the other side of me?*

Self-awareness is a foundational component of leadership. Liberating leaders understand that you have to know yourself to lead yourself, and you have to lead yourself before you lead others.

This question provides a great mirror for yourself, and its real power is displayed when you ask other people for feedback, both good and bad.

**Use the spaces below to list people who you are going to ask.**

| Family | Work | Friends |
|--------|------|---------|
|        |      |         |
|        |      |         |
|        |      |         |

## QUESTION #2

### *Is decision-making clear at every level?*

One significant and sometimes unnecessary challenge in organizational life is the role people play in the decision-making process. It's significant because giving input or participating in a decision creates incredible ownership and buy-in.

It's challenging because when people don't understand their role in the process, confusion and tension may result. Clarifying this can alleviate a lot of unnecessary problems.

**Answer the following questions by yourself and then with your team.**

1. Are decision-making structures clear?
2. Do individuals and teams have stunning clarity regarding the part they are playing?



## QUESTION #3

### *Am I in balance?*

Work. Spouse. Kids. Friends. Health. Balancing everything can be very hard to achieve and even harder to maintain. Balance forces leaders to merge their own priorities with the needs of others. You have to put others before yourself to achieve it.

We all know what the important things in life are, but sometimes we wait too long to attend them and end up with damaged relationships and careers.

**List the top 5 priorities in your life and identify what ideal balance looks like in them.** In reality, are you achieving balance? Rate yourself 1-10. What needs to change?

| Priorities | Rating |
|------------|--------|
| 1          |        |
| 2          |        |
| 3          |        |
| 4          |        |
| 5          |        |

## QUESTION #4

### ***Am I passionate about what I am doing?***

This is a powerfully sobering question that every great leader has wrestled with. The truth is, the world has enough CEOs, marketing gurus and accountants. Although we have a plethora of skill, we don't always have the same level of passion. Every leader who has "made a dent in the universe" has been passionate about what he or she is doing. Perhaps you used to be passionate but have lost interest. Sometimes all you need is to be reminded of why you began your journey in the first place.

**Use these questions to identify why you are passionate about what you are doing.** If you find this too difficult, it may be time for a change.

1. Why do I get up in the morning and why should anyone care?
2. How am I making a difference in the lives of those around me?
3. What legacy am I going to leave behind?

## QUESTION #5

### ***What self-preservation do I need to eliminate?***

At GiANT we spend a lot of time helping leaders break through their walls of self-preservation. Self-preservation itself is not bad. It's not bad to want to protect your family or to have a secure job. When self-preservation gets dangerous is when we begin to overprotect things we're afraid of losing. For example, when we are insecure about our competency, appearance, or status, we begin using any measure necessary to protect our image in the eyes of others. When this happens, self-preservation becomes a disease and begins to rob leaders of their influence. We all have a wall of self-preservation that we need to break through.

**Use these questions to identify your wall of self-preservation and begin breaking it down.**

1. What am I afraid of losing?
2. What am I trying to hide?
3. What am I trying to prove? To whom?

