



Thank you for considering membership at Fellowship Bible Church!

At Fellowship Bible Church, there are two main functions for membership.

**1. You are committing yourself to the spiritual care of the pastors and elders.**

We believe that Christ established His Church to be shepherded by Elders that meet the qualifications of Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Timothy 3:1-7. These Elders are committed to shepherding the flock “not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:1-5).

By pursuing membership, you are placing yourself in the spiritual care of the Elders and Pastors of Fellowship Bible Church. You are inviting them into your life to love you, encourage you, walk with you, and correct you. You are also committing yourself to go to the Elders directly if a problem arises rather than spreading slander or gossip.

**2. You are committing yourself to participating in the life of Fellowship Bible Church.**

Paul makes clear in several of his epistles that believers “are the body of Christ and individually members of it” (1 Cor 12:27), and that we function in a similar fashion as a human body: each individual member doing their part wholeheartedly as part of the whole. In the same way, membership at FBC means that you are committing to serve the Body faithfully and regularly. We have many different ministry opportunities at FBC and will help you in whatever way you need to find a place to serve.

If you have questions about membership at Fellowship Bible Church, don't hesitate to speak to a pastor or elder!



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## Membership Application

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- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
- Email: \_\_\_\_\_
- Address: \_\_\_\_\_

• How long have you been attending Fellowship Bible Church? \_\_\_\_\_

• Why do you want to be a member of Fellowship Bible Church?

- Have you attended other churches in the past? \_\_\_\_\_
- Have you been a member of other churches in the past? If so, which churches?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

• Please briefly list the reasons you no longer attend these churches.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

• Are you currently under church discipline by any church? \_\_\_\_\_

• How are you serving at Fellowship Bible Church currently?

• If you are not serving anywhere, where and how do you plan on serving once you become a member?

• Are you currently attending a Fellowship Group? \_\_\_\_\_

• If not, what is preventing you from attending?

• Have you been baptized? When? Why?

• Please read the attached "Our Doctrine". Are you in agreement with the doctrine of Fellowship Bible Church?    YES        NO

Do you have any concerns, questions, hesitations?    YES        NO

- Please read the attached "What We Teach". Are you in agreement with the teaching of Fellowship Bible Church? YES NO  
Do you have any concerns, questions, hesitations? YES NO

- Please read the attached "Principles of Ministry". Are you in agreement with the Principles of Ministry of Fellowship Bible Church? YES NO  
Do you have any concerns, questions, hesitations? YES NO

- Please define church membership in your own words.

- In your own words, please share the testimony of your salvation.

# **OUR DOCTRINE**

## **God**

We believe in the only true God (John 17:3), the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19-20). He created all things (Revelation 4:11) and upholds all things by the Word of His power (Hebrews 1:3). In Him we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28). He is a God of truth and without iniquity, He is just and right (Deuteronomy 32:4) and He shall judge the world (Psalm 9:8).

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections, and are worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence and obedience (Mark 12:29; John 1:1-4; Matthew 29:19-20; Acts 4:3-4).

## **Jesus Christ**

We believe in the total deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe He is the manifestation of God in the flesh. We believe He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. We believe Him to be true God and true man (John 1:1, 1:14, 1:18; John 14:8-9; 1 Timothy 3:16).

## **Holy Spirit**

We believe in the total deity of the Holy Spirit and that His ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:14). The Holy Spirit regenerates the sinner upon belief in Christ, baptizing the believer into one body of which Christ is the head. The Holy Spirit indwells, guides, instructs, fills, comforts and empowers the believer for godly living (Mark 13:11; John 14:26; John 16:13; Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 3:16). The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, of God's righteousness and of coming judgment (John 16:8-11).

## **Scriptures**

We believe the Scriptures of the Old Testament and New Testament are verbally inspired by God and inerrant in their original writings. We believe the 66 books of the Old Testament and the New Testament are God's complete and sufficient revelation and therefore carry God's authority for the total well-being of mankind (Psalm 119:97-104; Psalm 119:160; Matthew 5:18; John 5:46-47; John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:15-16).

## **Man**

We believe man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker but, by voluntarily transgressing, fell from his sinless and happy state. Consequently, all mankind is sinful. All people are sinners not only by inheritance, but by their own choice and therefore are under just condemnation without defense or excuse. We believe that without exception every man and every woman is totally depraved and needs a Savior (Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 3:10-19; Romans 1:18, Romans 1:32; Romans 5:1-2).

## **Salvation**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice. We believe that each person who by faith receives Him as personal Savior is justified on the basis of Jesus Christ's shed blood on Calvary. Each person who receives Christ as personal Savior is born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby becomes eternally secure as a child of God. We believe the Holy Spirit baptizes each believing person into the body of Christ at the moment of salvation and that there is no second baptism of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:37-39; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 12:13).

We teach that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

## **Resurrection**

We believe in the resurrection of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, His ascension into heaven and His present life for us as High Priest and Advocate (Acts 1:3; Acts 1:9; Hebrews 7:25-26).

## **Heaven, Hell and the Return of Christ**

We believe in the "blessed hope": the personal, premillennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ. His return has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the saved and the lost. The saved are raised to eternal, conscious bliss in heaven (Matthew 25:34; John 14:2;

2 Corinthians 5:1; Revelation 2:7) the lost are raised to eternal torment in hell in conscious separation from God. (Matthew 8:11; Matthew 10:28; Matthew 13:49-50; Mark 9:47-48; Luke 12:5; Revelation 21:8).

## **Church**

Upon accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, a believer becomes part of His body, which is the church. There is one church universal, composed of all those throughout the world who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The Scriptures command believers to gather in order to devote themselves to worship, prayer, teaching of the Word, observance of the ordinances (baptism and communion), fellowship, service to the body through the development and use of talents and gifts, and outreach to the world in fulfillment of the command of Christ to make disciples of all believers (Ephesians 5:23; Romans 12:1; Acts 2:42-46; 1 Corinthians 14:26; Matthew 28:18-20).

Wherever God's people meet regularly in obedience to this command, there is the local expression of the church under the oversight of elders and other supportive leadership. The church's members are to work together in love and unity, intent on the ultimate purpose of glorifying Christ (Ephesians 4:16).

## **Missions**

Realizing that the cause of Christ extends beyond any one local fellowship, we commit ourselves to an ongoing ministry of extending the call of Christ to make disciples around the world (Matthew 28:19-20).

## **WHAT WE TEACH**

### **Discipleship and Church Membership**

We believe in the importance of serving the body of Christ by offering clear paths for people to start and develop healthy and growing relationships with others in the church body. We value an intentional plan to help every interested person enjoy Godly relationships in the church. Church membership is a by-product of people who are growing in Christ and who grasp the importance of serving the Lord by using their gifts to serve others in the local church.

### **Baptism and Communion**

Baptism and communion are the two ordinances required in the church. We teach that Christian baptism by immersion in water is a public identification with Jesus Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. Although baptism is not required for salvation, it is commanded of all believers and is for believers only (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38, 41; Acts 18:18). Scripture shows that a person was baptized after personally receiving forgiveness of sin through accepting Jesus Christ. The waters of baptism are a symbol of our death, burial, and resurrection to newness of life that happens when we become a new creation in Christ -- Colossians 2:12; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:1-4.

Communion is the commemoration by believers of Christ's death and a reminder-- through the bread and the juice--of the Savior's broken body and shed blood.

Communion is to be a time of confession of our sin and should be preceded by careful self-examination -- Acts 4:13; Romans 6:3-6; 1 Corinthians 11:20-29.

### **Charismatic Movement**

Fellowship Bible Church is a non-charismatic, conservative, evangelical fellowship that welcomes all who know Jesus Christ as their Savior and all who are seeking Him. We teach that certain gifts (ie. speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles) were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12; Hebrews 2:1-4.) Those who claim to possess the gift of tongues and other sign gifts are welcome to worship and fellowship with us if they are willing to be a source of unity rather than division within our church

body. While we do not teach that the church today possesses these "gifts," we do teach that the Christian life is supernatural and that the Lord continues to perform miracles.

Current displays of the gift of tongues:

Give unwarranted prominence to the gift, which is described in the New Testament as being only one of many spiritual gifts -- 1 Corinthians 12

Emphasize speaking in tongues as the primary manifestation of the Spirit's work in a person's life, while minimizing the Spirit's work in producing a holy life -- 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; 2 Timothy 1:9, and a life that displays the fruits of the Spirit -- Galatians 5:22

Often suggest that speaking in tongues is a required proof of being Spirit-filled or of possessing salvation in Christ, even though the Scriptures do not teach this.

Fellowship Bible Church seeks to prevent the propagation of doctrines that would cause divisions within an individual church. Therefore, members to and adherents of Fellowship Bible Church are not to propagate the teachings and emphases of the current charismatic movement. Although we do not control personal, individual interactions with the Lord, the expression of tongues and other sign gifts are not to be overtly expressed at meetings that are under the organization and authority of Fellowship Bible Church.

## **Church Planting**

The church exists to glorify God through the fulfillment of the Great Commission, and in the spirit of the Great Commandment --Matthew 28:19-20, Matthew 22:37-38.

The commission is fulfilled as disciples of Jesus Christ are made and grow in their relationship with Him and likeness to Him. God is glorified as we manifest His presence as we do His work -- 2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Corinthians 10:31.

In seeking to act upon the church's purpose, we recognize the extraordinary value in multiplying the reach of His ministry by planting local churches and by associating with existing, like-minded local churches. God is glorified when Fellowship Bible Church and other like-minded churches associate with one another in order to foster relationships that edify, protect, encourage, support and admonish.

## **Counseling Philosophy**

The Lord changes lives and accomplishes His purposes directly through reading and applying the Scriptures, meditating on the truths of the Scriptures and prayer. The Lord also uses those who minister His Word as they encourage, exhort, admonish, edify, implore, reprove, rebuke and console others toward godliness. God needs no new or unique insight into the human condition in order to change lives, regardless of whether that insight is gained through psychology or some other tool of human origin. Problems that are approached by integrating the Scriptures with psychological theories tend to deceive individuals into diminishing the God of the Scriptures and into believing that He has not provided and cannot provide sufficient truth, insight and wisdom that will change their lives -- Colossians 2:8-10.

When psychology and other social sciences step beyond observing human behavior and seek to explain the causes of human behavior, they enter spiritual territory. Only the God of the Scriptures can explain causes and offer solutions that lead to godliness and a fruitful, joyful life. God has given us everything we need for life and godliness -- 2 Peter 1:3. He changes us as we discipline ourselves through obedience to the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit -- 1 Timothy 4:7; 2 Peter 1:5-11.

Each Christian's passion should be to become more like Christ and fulfill the Great Commandment to love the Lord with the entire heart, soul, mind and strength -- Romans 8:29; 1 John 3:2, Deuteronomy 6:5; Mark 12:30; Matthew 22:37-38.

The Christian who learns and applies the Word becomes mature and, in turn, can help others mature -- 2 Timothy 2:2.

## **Creation, Evolution and God's Sovereignty**

We teach that God created the universe in six 24-hour days and that, before He created the universe, nothing except God existed -- Genesis 1; Exodus 31:17; Psalm 33:6-9; Acts 17:24; Hebrews 11:3; Colossians 1:16.

God chose to create the universe and all that is in it to reveal His glory, divine nature, eternal power, infinite wisdom and supreme authority -- Isaiah 43:7; Psalm 19:1-2; Jeremiah 10:12; Romans 1:20; Revelation 4:11.

We do not teach the theory of evolution, which states that nonliving substances gave rise to the first living material, which then reproduced and diversified to produce all living creatures. We believe that all people are descendants of Adam and Eve, whom God created personally and individually and as complete human beings -- Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 2:7; Genesis 2:21-22; 1 Corinthians 11:8-9. The fall of Adam and Eve infected all people with sin and death, but the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ gives the opportunity to receive God's gift of eternal life -- Romans 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22.

God rules over His creation and cares about and is involved in the lives of individual people -- Job 12:10; Acts 17:25; Acts 25:28; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:13; Ephesians 4:6.

## **Eternal Security of the Believer**

It is God's divine decision to save a person and it is God's kindness, forbearance and patience that lead that person to repentance -- Romans 2:4. All glory for the salvation and security of every believer belongs to God alone -- Romans 3:21-31; Ephesians 1:7-9; Ephesians 2:8-9, Jude 1:24-25. We teach that everyone who is born again by the Spirit through Jesus Christ is eternally assured of salvation from the moment of conversion. This assurance relies on God's decisive grace rather than on the works of the Christian. Obedience, good works and fruit-bearing do not earn or retain the believer's salvation, but indicate the reality of the person's love of Christ and profession of faith -- Luke 6:46; John 14:21; James 2:17-18.

Eternal security in salvation relies on the Lord's guarantee of each believer's adoption as His son or daughter -- Galatians 4:4-7, and His seal of the believer by the Holy Spirit -- 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Ephesians 1:13-14, and the conviction that God gives the Holy Spirit to each believer as a down payment toward future bliss in heaven -- 2 Corinthians 1:21-22. A person who professes genuine faith in Christ immediately becomes His possession -- Luke 23:42-43; Acts 2:40-41; Acts 16: 30-34, and nothing can snatch that person out of His hands -- John 10:27-29. Having been bought with the price of Jesus Christ's crucifixion as complete payment for sin, Christians are not their own. They are Christ's possession -- 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. This assurance is absolutely certain, reserved in heaven, protected by God's unlimited power -- 1 Peter 1:4-5.

## Process of Sanctification and Maturity

Mature disciples walk with Christ, worship Christ and work for Christ. A person committed to a relationship with Christ focuses on personal walk with Him, worship of Him and work for Him. That person will experience significant growth in personal sanctification and, therefore, will experience a closer personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and will become "complete in Christ" (Colossians 1:28). We are committed to multiplying the godly characteristics of leaders' lives into others -- 2 Timothy 2:2. This multiplication of ministry is key to the healthy growth of the church. We teach that the disciples of Jesus Christ should minister to one another in the local church, rather than one or a small number of professional pastors bearing total responsibility to care for the entire congregation. God has given spiritual gifts to all of His people to provide mutual ministry in the context of the healthy and strong local church -- Ephesians 4:11-12.

## Spiritual Warfare

Satan and his demonic servants viciously oppose the work God performs in and through His people -- 1 Peter 5:8; Genesis 3:1-7; Ephesians 6:12. God, who by His nature is infinitely more powerful than Satan, in due time will have complete and total victory over Satan -- 1 John 4:4; Revelation 20:1-10.

Although it is appropriate to pray in Jesus' name for protection against demonic activity, the Scriptures do not instruct the Christian to "bind Satan in Jesus' name." Rather, the Scriptures instruct the Christian to combat Satan by:

- Humbly drawing near to God, knowing that He will give grace, mercy and strength -- 2 Corinthians 12:7-9; Hebrews 4:15-16; James 4:8; 1 Peter 5:6-10
- Resisting his temptations -- James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9
- Rightly applying the truth of the Scriptures -- Matthew 4:1-11; John 8:44; Ephesians 4:24-27
- Forgiving offenses -- 2 Corinthians 2:10-11
- Putting on the armor of God's truth, righteousness, readiness to share the Gospel, faith, salvation and prayer -- Ephesians 6:11-20
- Demonstrating faithfulness to the Lord by enduring trials -- Revelation 2:10; Revelation 2:13; Revelation 3:9-10.

## **Sufficiency of Scripture**

We teach the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures and that they contain all the words of God that we need in order to completely trust and obey Him. The Scriptures are inerrant in their original writings -- Psalm 119:97-104; Psalm 119:160; Matthew 5:18; John 5:46-47; John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:15-16, and are infallible in their instruction -- Proverbs 6:32; 2 Peter 1:19, eternal in duration -- Isaiah 40:8; 1 Peter 1:23-25; the final authority and the standard for faith and practice (Matthew 4:4; Psalm 119); and sufficient for counsel in every issue of life (Psalm 19:14-17; 2 Timothy 3:16). We teach that the very words of Scripture in the original Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic are inspired by God. Therefore, we believe that the Bible versions which translate God's Word most literally into modern English should be preferred.

## **Women in Ministry**

Fellowship Bible Church affirms the God-ordained and significant role that women should play in establishing and leading the local church. Every leadership opportunity is open to women except those that are excluded by Scripture. The Scriptures clearly state that men are to serve in the office of Elder and that women are not to be serve in church positions in which they exercise authority over men or in which they teach doctrine to men -- 1 Timothy 2:12; 1 Timothy 3:1-2; Titus 1:6-9. We do not see this as an issue of equality, for men and women are equal under God. The Bible is clear that men and women do not have the same roles. Qualified women should serve in any leadership position that is not forbidden in the Scriptures.

## **Worship**

The chief purpose of mankind is to glorify God by loving Him with the entire heart, soul, mind and might -- Deuteronomy 6:5; Isaiah 43:7; Matthew 22:37. All believing men, women and children are to glorify God and thus fulfill the purpose of their existence. Worship glorifies God through adoration -- Psalm 95:6, praise -- Psalm 99:5, prayer -- Daniel 6:10-11, thanksgiving (Nehemiah 12:46) and a complete yielding to Him (Romans 12:1). Worship declares His worth, pays Him homage and celebrates Him in a life of devotion. We seek to worship the Lord in spirit and in truth -- Exodus 15:1-21; 2 Samuel 6:14-16; Psalm 5:7; John 4:23-24; Revelation 4:11; 5:12.

Several tenets guide our worship. We seek to:

- Lift high the name of Jesus Christ -- John 4:22-26; John12:32; John 14:6
- Lead God's people to lift their hearts and voices to Him, giving Him praise and thanks in music and lyric (Nehemiah 12:45-46; Psalm 66:1-4; Psalm 95:1-2);
- Prepare hearts to hear the Lord speak through the proclamation of Scripture (Psalm 95:6-9; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42);
- Emphasize fresh and contemporary expressions while retaining traditional elements that recognize the richness of our heritage in the faith (Deuteronomy 32:7; Psalm 33:3; Isaiah 46:8-9; Matthew 13:32, Ephesians 5:19; Revelation 5:9);
- Pursue excellence in worship, knowing that God is worthy of our best (Exodus 12; Deuteronomy 17:1; Psalm 33:3, 1 Timothy 4:14-15; Hebrews 11:4).

## **LIFE, MARRIAGE, AND SEXUALITY**

We teach that God as Creator established life (Gen 1:1, 26-28), marriage (Gen 2:22-23; Matt 19:4-6), and the moral implications therein (Gen 2:24; Lev 18:1-30; Matt 5:28; 1 Thess 4:1-8). We teach this is exclusively, authoritatively, and sufficiently expressed in Scripture and that such definitions are universal truths which define reality and do not change (Ps 19:8-15; 2 Tim 3:16-17) John 17:17, Prov 8:22-36).

We teach that humans bear the image of God (Gen 1:26-27; 9:6; James 3:9) and are such persons at conception (Ps 139:13, 15; cf. Job 3:3) as directly recognized by God (Ps 22:10; Isa 49:1; Jer 1:5; Luke 1:41-44; Rom 9:10-11; Gal 1:15). God does not differentiate between murder in or outside of the womb (Exod 21:12; 22-24). Therefore, any form of abortion is murder, a defiant act against the God of life (John 5:26) and against children whom He cares about (Matt 18:10) and gives as blessings (Ps 127:3). We teach that those created in the image of God must be treated with dignity (Gen 9:6; Luke 13:15-16; James 3:9) and that this must extend to these persons in the womb.

We teach that marriage is always a public, formal, and officially recognized covenant between one birth biological man and one birth biological woman. Biological gender is defined as chromosomal genetics with XY being male and XX being female. Fellowship Bible Church will only recognize marriages between one birth biological man and one birth biological woman. Further, the pastors, elders and staff of Fellowship Bible Church will only participate, officiate, or solemnize marriages and weddings between one birth biological man and one birth biological woman. The facilities and property of Fellowship Bible Church shall only be used by Fellowship Bible Church members to host weddings between one birth biological man and one birth biological woman.

We teach that marriage was given by God as part of His common grace, and that it has no meaning other than as He has provided (Gen. 2:18-24). We teach that marriage is subject to the curse of the Fall, but this curse does not change the definition of marriage

established at creation (Matt. 19:1-9). We teach that the term “marriage” has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in scripture (Gen. 2:23-24). Believers, living in obedience to the Scripture and under the control of the Holy Spirit, can begin to experience peaceful, productive, and fulfilled marriage as intended by God (Gen. 3:16; 1 Peter 3:7).

We teach that the marriages of believers are to illustrate the loving relationship of Christ and His church, with the husband loving his wife as Christ loves the church and the wife responding to her husband’s loving leadership as the church responds to Christ (Eph. 5:18-33).

We teach that as believers’ marriages are to illustrate Christ’s relationship with His church, believers should choose to marry those who share their faith and regenerate life (2 Cor. 6:14).

We teach that without such a covenant, which may include a “common law marriage,” where valid in specific cases under pertinent law, prolonged conjugal cohabitation does not establish, and is not equivalent to, marriage (John 4:18). Biblically, such a relationship is fornication (1 Cor. 6:9) requiring repentance of such behavior.

We teach that where no such covenant exists, or can be discerned, between a cohabiting couple prior to coming to faith in Christ, family units should be preserved to the extent possible and, if otherwise appropriate, solemnization encouraged. We teach that where a valid marriage has been established prior to coming to faith in Christ, the couple should remain married (1 Cor. 7:24).

We teach that God hates divorce, permitting it only where there has been sexual immorality (Mal. 2:14-16; Matt. 5:32, 19:9) or desertion by an unbeliever (1 Cor. 7:12-15). We teach that remarriage is permitted to a faithful partner, but only when the divorce was on biblical grounds.

We teach that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We teach that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (Heb. 13:4). We teach that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, transsexualism, transvestitism, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, pornography, in desire or behavior (Matt. 5:28) is sinful and offensive to God. In addition, any attempt to change one’s sex or disagreement with one’s biological sex is sinful and offensive to God who ordained the sexes of male and female at creation (Gen 1:26-28) and one’s particular sex at conception (Lev. 18:1-30; Deut. 22:5; Matt. 5:8; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1, 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8).

We teach that homosexuality, in particular, is subject to God’s wrath of abandonment, is a matter of choice and not inherited status, and epitomizes man’s degenerate rebellion against God and His commands (Rom. 1:18-28).

We teach that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. We teach that the faithful proclamation of the Scripture, including the call to repentance, does not constitute hate speech, or hateful and harassing behavior, but is

instead a fundamental part of the church's loving mission to the world (Matt. 28:16-20; 2 Cor. 5:11-20; 1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:1-2).

We teach that God offers redemption and forgiveness to all who confess and forsake their sin, including sexual sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We teach that His forgiveness is total and complete (Ps. 103:11-12, 130:3-4; Is. 43:25, 44:22; John 5:24; Col. 2:13-14) and that God imputes the full righteousness of Christ (2 Cor. 5:21) to the believing sinner. We teach that the forgiven sinner has been cleansed from the guilt of sin, set apart unto God, or made holy, and justified before Him (1 Cor. 6:9-11). We teach that any man or woman who has received that forgiveness is "in Christ" and is a "new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17), able to persevere in and pursue a way of life that pleases the Lord by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:10-15; 2 Cor. 3:16; Phil. 2:13).

## **Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct**

The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Fellowship Bible Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Elder Board is Fellowship Bible Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

## **The Sanctity of Human Life**

We teach that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Psalm 139)

# **PRINCIPLES OF MINISTRY**

## **A Proper View of Scripture**

The Scriptures are the very Words of God (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21) and for that reason they are inerrant. The truths of God's Word do not change and are therefore absolute. Scripture is the foundation of truth upon which the church is anchored.

Therefore its content is what guides the church in how it functions internally and what it proclaims to all people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or nationality. Scripture is the final arbiter, judge and jury of every ministry carried out within the church. To suppress the voice of Scripture in the church is to suppress the work, wisdom and blessings of God.

- **Inspired** - Scripture is "breathed out" by God. (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21)
- **Inerrant** - The Word of God is void of error. God conveyed truth to divinely chosen individuals. What is written has not strayed from the original formulation of truth as it existed in the mind of God. (Psalm 19)
- **Authoritative** - That which Scripture says requires obedience from the believer. Every aspect of ministry (whether a sermon, Bible study, program, or activity) must be driven by an understanding of the authority of Scripture and must bring Scripture to bear upon the lives of believers (Luke 8:21, 2 Timothy 3:16, James 1:22-25).
- **Sufficiency** - 2 Timothy 3:16-17 states, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." This verse proclaims that the Word of God is sufficient for all areas of ministry, including preaching, teaching, and counseling believers unto godliness. Anytime the church gathers, the emphasis must be on the proclamation of God's Word and the exhortation to obey it. (1 Timothy 4:13)
- **Relevance** - Scripture is relevant for every situation (Psalm 19; 119:105; Isa. 40:8, 2 Tim. 3:17). Although it may not give explicit answers to every trial Scripture will always give us the principles in which we can glorify God in every situation.

## **A High View of God**

- God is holy, righteous, and just (Ex. 15:11, Lev. 11:44; 19:2, 1 Sam. 2:2, Ps. 7:11; 9:4; 11:7; 19:9; 50; 96:10-13; 119; 145:7; 29:1-2; Is. 6:1-13; 57:15, Dan. 9:14-16 Zeph. 3:5 Rom 2; 3:21-22, Eph 4:22-24, 2 Tim 4:8, Heb 10:30-31, 1 Pet 1:15-16; 4:5, Jas 4:12, 1 Jn 1:7; 2:1; 2:29; 3:3; 3:7;
- We must seek to exemplify His communicable attributes since we are image bearers of God (Gen 1:26, Eph. 4:32-5:1; Col 3:9-10, 1 Jn 4:7).
- A failure to have a high view of God leads to toleration of sin and a focus on man. A poor view of God tends to manifest itself in the church through faulty and/or heretical teaching and man centered programs that are not designed with the goal of achieving the maximum glorification of God. As a result the church reflects a humanistic mindset that seeks for man's approval rather than glorify God (Gal 1:6-12, 1 Thes 2:4, 1 Cor 10:31-33, 1 Tim. 1:3-7, 2 Tim. 1:8-14; 3:1-9; 4:1-5).
- A high view of God will lead the church to view His Word as the compass for our lives (Ps 19; 25:4-5; 86:11; 119; 2 Tim 3:16, 1 Jn 2:3-6).

## **A Low View of Man**

Mankind is totally depraved. On his own man can do nothing that is good in the eyes of God (Romans 3:10-18). Mankind is unable to understand or accept the things of God apart from the enlightening grace of God that turns his eyes to the truth (1 Corinthians 1:18; 2:14; Hebrews 6:4). Ultimately, the seat or will of man (the heart) is bent toward wickedness and his goal in life is selfish satisfaction (Gen. 6:5; Eccl. 9:3; Jer. 17:9-10). Therefore, no matter how good one may appear in the areas of charity, loving one's neighbor, sacrificing for the good of others, advancement in education for the betterment of humanity, or serving in an office for the public's good, the core of man's heart is driven by selfish gains not from a pure heart and clean conscience (Psalm 24:4; 36:1-5; 14:1-3; 1 Timothy 1:5)

Man is corrupt. Wickedness radically permeates man's entire being to the point that he is enslaved to it and no amount of eloquence on the part of the Christian evangelist's is able to grant him life (2 Peter 2:19). Man is spiritually blind. The Christian evangelist's only hope as he seeks the conversion of the lost for the regeneration of their soul is found in the sovereignty of God (John 3:1-10; Rom 1:16-17; 9:6-13, 2 Cor 4:1-5).

God created man to glorify Him and rule over His creation. But because of sin man sought and even now continues to seeks his own glory and tear down the glory of God (Genesis 1:26; 2:19; 6:3, 4-12; Psalm 8:1-9; 86:1-13; Rom 3:23).

The goal of all true God-centered ministry is to lead man to a relationship with God through obedience to His Word (1 John 1:1-4).

## **A Correct View of the Church**

The church is comprised of all who have repented of their sin, confessed with their mouth Jesus is Lord, believed that God has raised Jesus from the dead and participated in believer's baptism, and placed their faith in Christ alone for their salvation (Acts 2:38; Romans 10:8-10).

The church can be viewed in two different dimensions: the Body of Christ and the Bride of Christ.

As the Body of Christ, the church is the physical representation of Christ in the world (1 Cor 12:27, Eph 1:23). This state of the church is not the eternal state of the church, but it is the earthly state of the church.

As the Bride of Christ, the church is made up of all who have been, are being, and shall be born again (Jn 3:3, Rev 19:6-9). It is composed of those who are united with Christ (Col 3:1-4). This is the eternal state of the church, and even now Christ is purifying His church and preparing her for joyful eternal union (Eph 5:26-27). Only God's elect are included in the Bride of Christ.

Christ so loved the Church that he died for her (Eph 5:25). Christ both nourishes and cherishes the church (Eph 5:29). He is head over His bride and has established her as being "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph 2:20, 23, Col 1:18). The church is the means by which believers are instructed for the purpose of maturing into the full stature of Christ (Eph. 4:11-16)

Believers are to edify one another with their spiritual gifts given by Christ for the church (Rom 12:6-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11). Believers regularly assemble together for teaching, for fellowship; for the equipping of ministry and corporate edification of the body (Acts 2:42;

Heb 10:24-25; Romans 15:1-13; 1 Cor 12:1-11; 14:26). Therefore, church ministry must seek to foster a deepening love for and commitment to one another (the church body).

- The church exists to worship and glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31; Heb. 13:15)
- The church exists to be a storehouse of divine truth. (1 Tim. 3:15)
- The church exists to provide a context of loving fellowship for the purpose of edification (Eph. 3:16-19, 4:12-16)
- The church exists as a training center where people can grow through the application of teaching (Matt 28:19-21, 1 Cor. 12-14; Rom. 12; Eph 4)
- The church exists to be a light in this dark world, for the evangelization of God's elect (Matt 5:13-16, 28:19-20; Titus 2:11-15)
- The church exists to provide accountability (Matt. 18, Gal. 6:1-3)

We recognize that within the corporate gathering of the church, a distinction can be made between 2 types of people: Disciples of Christ who have been born again, and disciples of Christ who have not yet been born again but are being drawn by the Father to learn of Christ.

Those who are not yet born again should not be ashamed and are not of less worth. Instead, they should keep learning of Christ and seeking Him until God births them anew.

Those who have been born again should walk with all who enter the church regardless of their standing before God, loving them, teaching them, and seeking to restore them to repentance when they sin (Gal 6:1-2, Jude 22-23)

## **A Scriptural View of Leadership**

Spiritual leaders are not masters but servants. Their servant leadership comes from their divine call to serve (Acts 20:29) Elders or overseers have a responsibility to equip (Eph 4:11), care for (Acts 20:28) and teach (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9) the members. The members are to respect (1 Thess. 5:12) and submit to these leaders (Heb. 13:17), but not to treat them as infallible (1 Tim. 5:20)

1. Leaders must reflect the character of Christ to be models for the flock (1 Thess. 2:4-12; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5)

## 2. Leaders must adequately equip their people to do the work of the ministry (Eph 4:12)

Scripture makes clear that spiritual leadership is not a light matter, and those who take on that responsibility should not be chosen hastily (1 Tim 3:6, 5:23-24). Those who are selected by the elders or pastors for spiritual leadership must meet certain qualifications laid in scripture.

### Deacons

We seek to use the biblical model expressed in Acts 6:1-6 and the qualifications established in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Deacons will serve under the leadership of the Elders and Senior Pastor. Their main function is to carry out the practical aspects of ministry in serving the saints so that the elders and pastors are able to devote themselves to prayer and teaching. Deacons are to be “men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of Wisdom” (Acts 6:3).

### Pastors and Elders

Pastors and Elders are the the under-shepherds of the flock of Christ (1 Pet 5:1-5). They are to set an example in godliness for the sheep (1 Pet 5:3). All elders and pastors must meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-5 and Titus 3:5-9, as well as the qualifications for deacons (1 Tim 3:8-13). Though Pastors and Elders are held to the same standard, their role is not the same.

- Pastors are more involved in the direct shepherding of the Flock, interacting with the sheep often and being extremely available for their spiritual care. Their time is devoted to the care of the sheep at all times.
- Elders are responsible for the direction of the church as a whole, maintaining and setting doctrine, handling church discipline, and shepherding the flock. They are generally older men with great godliness and experience in the Church.

### Structure of Leadership

God has designed for men to fill biblical leadership positions in the church. Scripture does not permit women to fill those positions (1 Cor 14:33-35, 1 Tim 2:11-15). However, women may lead other women or be involved in teaching children (2 Tim 1:5, 3:14-15, Tit 2:3-5).

There is one head of the Church: Jesus Christ (Eph 5:23, Col 1:18). As such, the whole Church and all that is in it belongs to Him.

Under Christ's leadership, we are an elder led church, meaning the elders direct the church as a whole.

## **How to Understand the POM: Foundational Truth**

The principles are guidelines derived completely from Scripture. In essence, we are free to minister in every way conceivable as long as the ministry actions themselves demonstrate to our fullest ability the holiness of God and His holiness being lived out through the lives of His people whom He has inhabited.

Therefore, the POM is truth lived out through a practical methodology for implementation of ministry by our church body which is an offering to God through holy ministry actions / activities.

We emphasize freedom in how we can practically minister to the world. As a church body the most difficult aspect to church ministry is the work of maintaining the balance between demonstrating holiness to the world and the freedom of how we accomplish the task.

## **How to Implement: The How To's of Church Ministry**

In practical ministry we evaluate every action by Paul's guiding philosophy of ministry,

Source: (1 Cor 10:23; 31-33; Col 3:15-17).

- All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify.
- Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor
- Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God
- Give no offense either to Jew or to Greeks or to the church of God
- Just as I [Paul] also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved.
- Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

- Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.
- Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father

## The Goal of the POM: Fellowship

Every thread of practical ministry action is to be tied back to the knot of fellowship that unifies the whole to God through:

- Scripture
- Ministry
- Fellowship

Source: (1 John 1:1-4)

The most practical aspect of philosophy of active ministry is fellowship.

- The Preeminence of Scripture: What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life
- How We Minister to the World: The life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us
- The End Result: What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.
- Answering the Why: These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

### In a Nut Shell:

- The Principles of Ministry is the foundational support for everything we do. It is derived completely from the doctrines of Scripture. It is our authority in ministry and our check and balance for our hearts and the heartbeat of the Church.
- Paul's epistles provide us with the limitations or boundaries for ministry.
  - The "What" or "How" to do or not to do, in all forms of active ministry.

- John's epistle provides us the "Why we do what we do" in all forms of ministry.
- Fellowship is the end result.