

# Grace Bible Church of San Marcos, TX



## Constitution

# **PREAMBLE**

Let all things be done to the glory of God. (I Corinthians 10:31)

Let all be done decently and in order. (I Corinthians 14:40)

Let all be done with love. (I Corinthians 16:14)

Let all be done to edifying. (I Corinthians 14:26)

Let all things be done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Colossians 3:17)

We, the members of Grace Bible Church, do adopt and establish the following articles to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

Revision, 2005; Revision, 2013; Revision, 2014, Revision 2018, Revision 2021.

## **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this church shall be Grace Bible Church of San Marcos, Texas.

## **ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

The purpose of this church is to glorify God:

- (1) in standing unequivocally for the fundamentals of the faith as contained in the Holy Scriptures.
- (2) in the edification of believers through the teaching of God's Word, the Holy Scriptures,
- (3) in world-wide proclamation of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,
- (4) in the promotion of Godly worship,
- (5) in cooperating with such Christian activity as functions in harmony with God's Word, and
- (6) in the ordination of qualified young men to the ministry, until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **ARTICLE III – DOCTRINAL STATEMENT**

### **DIVISION I - SHORT STATEMENT OF DOCTRINE**

In this division of the doctrinal statement requirements are stated for anyone who desires to become a member at Grace Bible Church. It is necessary for each member or potential member to be in complete agreement with the following statements. If a member is not in agreement or is confused with any of the following statements please consult with one of the church elders.

There is only one God who manifests Himself in three co-equal persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Word of God, in the original manuscripts of the 66 books of the Bible, is without error and infallible truth to mankind.

Because all men are sinners and have broken God's commandments they are alienated from God and are unable to restore a relationship with Him.

Jesus Christ, God in human flesh, was divinely conceived by the Holy Spirit, was born of the Virgin Mary, and lived a perfect, sinless life.

Jesus Christ died a substitutionary death for sinners and was bodily resurrected from the dead to provide salvation.

Those who by grace believe in Jesus Christ as personal Savior receive forgiveness of sins, a relationship with God, and eternal life.

Every believer is responsible by the power of the Holy Spirit to live a holy life according to the Scripture.

There is a future, personal, bodily return of Jesus Christ to the earth to establish His kingdom.

A literal, blissful heaven is the inheritance of all believers, and a literal hell is the horrible future for all unbelievers.

Biblical support and further details are given in the long statement below.

## **DIVISION II - LONG STATEMENT OF DOCTRINE**

This is a fuller statement of “Division I” as well as additional clarification of other doctrinal truths as understood by Grace Bible Church. These statements should be adhered to in any and all classes or studies offered under the authority of this church. Individuals may disagree with some aspects of these doctrinal truths and be welcomed as a member in full standing. However, for sake of unity within the body no person should initiate discussions or teach in a position of authority contrary to these statements. Any person that promotes or attempts to win disciples to a contrary view among the members or those who attend Grace Bible Church will be considered in rebellion to the authority of the Church and in violation of the command to keep the unity of the body.

### Section 1 – The Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God, authoritative, inerrant in the original writings, infallible and God-breathed. We believe that divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings – historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic - as they appeared in the original. We believe that all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Matthew 5:18; John 16:12-13; Luke 24:27, 44).

### Section 2 – The Godhead

We believe that the godhead eternally exists in three persons – The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – and that these three are one God; having precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections and worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence and obedience. (Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:14; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4-6).

### Section 3 – Satan and Angels

We believe in the reality and personality of angels, including both holy and fallen angels. (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6).

We believe in the personality of Satan, who though created holy, fell through pride and became leader of a great company of angels who followed him in his rebellion. He is the open and declared enemy of God and man. (Job 1:6-7; Matthew 4:2-11; Isaiah 14:12-17).

### Section 4 – Man Created and Fallen

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam’s sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, became alienated from God, and is totally unable to retrieve his lost condition. (Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:22-23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:12).

### Section 5 – Dispensationalism

We believe in the dispensational view of Bible interpretation, but reject the extreme teaching known as “Ultra Dispensationalism” such as that teaching which opposes either the Lord’s Table or water baptism as a Scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age. (Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 2:41, 42; 18:8; I Corinthians 11:23-26).

#### Section 6 – The Person and Work of Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. We believe that He accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice. We believe that our redemption is made sure to us by His literal physical resurrection from the dead. (John 1:1-2, 14; Luke 1:35; Romans 3:24-25; I Peter 1:3-5). We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is now in Heaven, exalted at the right hand of God, where, as the high Priest for His people, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Hebrews 9:24; 7:25; Romans 8:34; I John 2:1-2).

#### Section 7 – Salvation by Grace

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ whose precious blood was shed for the forgiveness of sins. (Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:18, 19).

#### Section 8 – Atonement

We believe that the finished work of Christ – His perfect life, His death, and His resurrection – has potentially provided salvation from sin, reconciliation to God and eternal life for the whole world, and that anyone who desires God’s free offer of eternal life may respond in faith to receive it. (John 1:29; 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:19; 2 Peter 1:1, 1 John 3:23, John 6:40, 1 John 2:2). We believe that in actuality, however, that the atoning work of Christ is limited in its application only to those who believe, described in Scripture as chosen before the foundation of the world according to God’s foreknowledge. (Romans 8:29; Ephesians 1:4; I Peter 1:1-2).

#### Section 9 – Sanctification

We believe that sanctification, which is a setting apart unto God, is threefold: (1) It is already complete for every saved person because his position toward God is the same as Christ’s position. Since the believer is in Christ, he is set apart unto God in the measure in which Christ is set apart unto God. (2) We believe, however, that he retains his sin nature, which cannot be eradicated in this life. (Romans 6:13; 8:12, 13; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:10; I Peter 1:14-16; I John 3:5-9). Therefore, while the standing of the Christian in Christ is perfect, his present state is no more perfect than his experience in daily life. There is, therefore, a progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is to “grow in grace” and to “be changed” by the unhindered power of the Spirit. (3) We believe, also, that the child of God will yet be fully sanctified in his state as he is now sanctified in his standing in Christ when he shall see his Lord and shall be “like Him.” (John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 7:1; Ephesians 4:24; 5:25-27; I Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10, 14; 12:10).

#### Section 10 – Eternal Security

We believe that all believers are kept secure forever. (Romans 8:1, 38-39; John 10:27-30; I Corinthians 1:4-8).

#### Section 11 – The Holy Spirit and Gifts

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, indwells all believers in the present age, baptizes them into the body of Christ, seals them unto the day of redemption, and guides them into all truth. We believe that it is a privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 12:12-14; Ephesians 1:13-14; 5:18; John 16:13).

We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts; and that the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers are sufficient for the work of ministry today. We believe in the principle of temporary or sign gifts, which are no longer operative, and permanent spiritual gifts as set forth in the Scriptures. (Romans 12:3-8; I Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12).

We believe that sign gifts, that is, tongues, prophecies, miracles, and healings, are no longer operative. We acknowledge that God can and does still work miracles in many ways, including physically healing people in answer to prayer. But we hold that Jesus invested supernatural authority in his own apostles (Matt 28:16-20) to bring this good news of the gospel to the world. These apostles and certain others in the early church had a measure of some of these sign gifts. With the coming of the Holy Spirit and the completion of the canon of Scripture these gifts ceased to be necessary and so are no longer operative.

#### Section 12 – The Church Local and Universal

We believe that God's primary, intended organization of believers beyond the family unit in the present age is the local assembly of believers (the local church), committed to the Lord and to each other for the purpose of carrying out the Church universal's visible activities, that is, the communication of God's truth to the people of God, the worship and prayer of God's people to God, the loving care of God's people for one another, and the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth; that these assemblies (or churches), though they should endeavor to cooperate with other Christian assemblies, are to function under the Lordship of Christ, free from external controls of any religious organizations beyond the original intent of the church founders and the influence of mature leaders in the entire Christian community. There may be occasion when counsel from mature and likeminded Christian leaders should be sought. We believe that it is God's intention that all believers publicly identify with a visible, local assembly. (Acts 2:41; 4:19; 5:29; I Corinthians 1:1,2; 5:3-8; I Thessalonians 1:1; Hebrews 10:24-25).

We believe that all who are united to the risen and ascended Son of God are members of the church which is the body of Christ, which began at Pentecost and is completely distinct from Israel. Its members are constituted as such regardless of membership or non-membership in the organized churches of earth. We believe that by the same Spirit all believers in this age are baptized into, and thus become one body that is Christ's, whether Jews or Gentiles, and having become members one of another, are under solemn duty to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace rising above all sectarian differences, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently. (Matthews 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:5; I Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Colossians 3:14-15).

#### Section 13 – Church Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ constituted the ordinances of Baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper to be observed until His return. (Matthew 28:19-20; I Corinthians 11:23-26).

#### Section 14 – Responsibility of Believers

We believe that all believers should seek to walk by the Spirit, not bringing reproach upon their Lord and Savior. (Romans 12: 1,2; Galatians 5:16, 25; 2 Corinthians 6:14; 7:1). We believe that it is the obligation of every believer to witness by life and by word to the truths of the Holy Scriptures and to seek to proclaim the gospel to all the world (Acts 1:8). We believe that it is the responsibility of all believers to remember the work of the Lord in prayer and to support it with their means as the Lord has prospered them. (I Corinthians 16:2).

#### Section 15 – The Great Commission

We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth of His father into the world. We believe that, after they are saved, they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses, and that one of their primary purposes in life should be to make Christ known to the whole world. (Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 16:15; John 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; I Peter 1:17; 2:11).

#### Section 16 – The Blessed Hope

We believe that the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord Jesus in the air to receive to himself the dead in Christ and believers who are alive at His coming, otherwise known as the Rapture and translation of the church. (I Corinthians 15:51-57; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14).

#### Section 17 – The Tribulation

We believe that the Rapture of the Church will be followed by the fulfillment of Israel's seventieth week, the latter half of which is the time of Jacob's trouble, the great tribulation. (Daniel 9:27; Jeremiah 30:7; Matthew 24:15-21; Revelation 6-19).

#### Section 18 – The Second Coming of Christ

We believe the great tribulation will be climaxed by the (premillennial) return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth to set up His kingdom. (Zechariah 14:4-11; Matthew 24: 27-31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 20:6).

#### Section 19 – The Eternal State

We believe that the souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation do at death immediately pass into His presence, and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming, when soul and body reunited shall be with Him forever in glory; but the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the Judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when the soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. (Luke 16:19-26; 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20: 11-15).

## **ARTICLE IV - BY- LAWS**

### **I. DIVISION I - GOVERNMENT**

#### **A. Head of the Church**

Grace Bible Church recognizes the Lord Jesus Christ as head of the Church and shall be governed by the principles of the Word of God and led by the Elders according to the will of God (I Peter 5:1,2; I Timothy 5:17). Elders are appointed by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28) through the existing elders (Titus 1:5). The members of Grace Bible Church are and shall be sole owners and controllers of church property and under no circumstances shall anyone or any group have authority to turn it over to any denominational control.

#### **B. Elders**

The government of this church is vested by the congregation in the board of elders.

##### **i. Trustees**

The board of elders shall serve as trustees. Executive authority in all spiritual matters is vested by the congregation in the board of elders. Executive authority in all material matters is vested by the congregation in the board of elders. Executive authority in all legal matters is vested by the congregation in duly appointed trustees from among the elder board members.

##### **ii. Executive**

The board of elders shall be the executive of the congregation in its dealings with the pastors, employees, affiliated organizations, branch work, and any outside denominations and organizations.

##### **iii. Property management**

The board of elders shall have the management and control of all property belonging to the church. It shall not encumber with load, transfer, sale, or purchase of any real estate for the church except by express authorization conveyed through a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the membership present at a constitutionally called business meeting.

iv. Authority

The board of elders shall have authority to call congregational meetings for the purpose of recommending action requiring a vote of the congregation, and for the purpose of receiving advice or instruction from the congregation.

v. Duties

The board of elders shall handle and consider suggestions, recommendations, and grievances upon the part of any member or organization affiliated with the church. The board of elders will have regularly scheduled monthly meetings.

vi. Additional duties

The board of elders shall perform such other duties as may be defined by this constitution and shall at all times be subject to the Lord's direction.

vii. Decisions

The determining factor in any issue discussed in an elder board meeting shall be the unanimity of the members present. No decision shall be made at any meeting of the board of elders unless a quorum be present. A quorum shall consist of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the official board.

C. Tax Exempt Status

Grace Bible Church of San Marcos, Texas operates as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

D. Constitutional Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted by the elder board to the church membership and must be approved by at least two thirds majority vote of the church membership.

## II. DIVISION II - TENETS

- A. This church shall not at any time become a member or support any religious organization found to be unsound with regard to the above doctrinal statement.
- B. Those who desire to affiliate with this church may do so by complying with the provisions of Article VII and signing a covenant of membership.
- C. This church shall be careful when receiving funds from unbelievers so that GBC does not in any way mislead the giver into a belief that giving to the Church is a good work towards salvation.

## ARTICLE V - CHURCH OFFICES

# I. DIVISION I - ELDERS

## A. Number

The number of elders is limited only by biblical qualifications

## B. Establishing the elders

Those qualified to be elders shall be appointed;

- i. By the existing elders of the local church, or;
- ii. In case of a mission church, by the elders of the mother church.
- iii. In either case, a period of the time will be allotted for scriptural recourse to the elders by the membership. (I Timothy 5:19)
- iv. The office of the elder shall be permanent, though sabbatical may be recognized.

## C. Selection of additional elders

- i. The elders established previously may, by unanimous consent, appoint additional elders.
- ii. Appointment is subject to scriptural recourse as set out in part "B.ii" above and part "F.3" below (call of pastors).

## D. Qualifications for elders

- i. Elders shall be qualified for the office by the provisions set forth in Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9).
- ii. Elders must prayerfully desire the office (1 Peter 5:2).

## E. Termination of elders

- i. An elder may terminate his office by resignation from the board of elders if he is no longer able to fulfill the duties of the office in the church.
- ii. An elder may terminate or be terminated by the elder board and be removed if he no longer meets the qualifications for the office as required by Scripture (see part "D.i" above).

## F. Duties of elders

### 1. general duties

- a. oversight of all functions of the church (1 Timothy 3:4-5; 5:17; Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:2).
- b. guard the purity of doctrine in the church (Titus 1:9; 2 Timothy 2:2).
- c. sensitively shepherd the flock of God (1 Peter 5:2).

### 2. specific duties

- a. administration (1 Timothy 5:17a)
  - i. maintain the church office on a daily basis.
    1. organize and arrange weekly services.
    2. direct pastoral contact with and care of the congregation.
    3. conduct weekly services.



- ii. teaching (1 Timothy 5:17b)
  - 1. communicate the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 4:5).
  - 2. teach the Word faithfully (2 Timothy 4:2), and in doing so prepare others to teach (2 Timothy 2:2; Colossians 1:28)
- 3. call of pastor (elder's invitation to new pastor to serve as elder in administration and teaching, see Part B above-"Establishing the elders"). For the purpose of this document we hold that the terms "Elder" and "Pastor" are synonymous, but we recognize there may be times when we have a younger "Pastor" that does not qualify to serve as an "Elder" (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9).
  - i. qualifications
    - He must meet the qualifications of an elder (see part D).
    - He must subscribe to the doctrinal statement of the church.
    - He must agree to be governed by the constitution of the church.
  - ii. approval
    - He must be approved unanimously by the elders.
    - He must be presented to members for a time of testing. His name will be submitted to the membership so that they (any member) may observe and question the candidate and give feedback to the Elder board of the church.
  - iii. sabbatical
    - Release from pastoral duties but with continuance on the board of elders for an agreed time may be granted by unanimous consent of the board of elders.
    - Release from the board of elders with continuance of pastoral duties under the authority of the board of elders may be granted for a time sufficient to re-qualify for the office of elder by unanimous consent of the board of elders.
    - If he is salaried, the board of elders will determine circumstances to continue full or partial salary based on the financial condition of the church at the time and cost to supply or supplement pastoral duties.
  - iv. termination (see part E above)
 

Termination of pastor relationship can be affected in any of the following manners:

    - Application is made to the board of elders to be released from pastoral responsibilities and is approved by consent of the same.
    - Removal from pastoral duties can be accomplished by a majority of the board of elders at a regularly constituted board meeting.
    - If salaried and termination occurs according to the paragraph immediately above an amount equivalent to one month's salary will be paid after the time of severance.

## II. DIVISION II - DEACONS

### A. Number

The board of Deacons shall consist of as many deacons as the elders deem necessary to assist in the ministry.

B. Establishing the Board of Deacons

- i. The Board of Deacons shall consist of those men selected by the Elder Board. The office shall be permanent.
- ii. The following procedure shall be utilized to expand the board of deacons:
  - a. The existing elders and deacons shall select men so qualified for a time of testing. Their names will be submitted to the membership so that they (any member) may observe and question the candidates and give feedback to the elder board.
  - b. The elder board shall select the additional deacon (s) on the basis of qualifications (I Timothy 3:8-13), and the desire to serve.
  - c. Deacons so selected shall then be publicly set apart to the ministry by the elders. (Acts 6 may or may not set a precedent for the selection of deacons since the word “deacon” does not appear in the text. It may be best to understand Acts 6 as relating to a unique occurrence in the early church.)
  - d. Qualifications for deacons: I Timothy 3:8-13
  - e. Duties of deacons  
The deacons shall assist the elders as requested in the ministries of the church and in the worship services.
  - f. Meeting of deacons (If separate from the elder board)
    - i. The deacons shall meet at least once per month at a time and place mutually agreed upon.
    - ii. Special meetings may be called by:
      1. Pastor/elders
      2. Chairman of the board of deacons
    - iii. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the deacons.
  - g. Selection of the chairman of the board of deacons:  
The chairman of the board of deacons shall be elected by the deacons on a yearly basis at the first meeting in January. A chairman cannot succeed himself.
  - h. Removal of deacons  
A deacon must continue to meet the Biblical qualifications (I Timothy 3:8-13).  
Deacons may terminate their office by resignation from the board of deacons if they are no longer able to fulfill the duties of the office in the church  
Deacons may terminate their office by removal by the elder board if they no longer meet the qualifications for the office as required by Scripture.

## ARTICLE VI - CHURCH STAFF

## **I. PASTORAL STAFF**

All pastoral staff need not be appointed as elders, but they associate with and assist the elders in performing pastoral duties.

- A. Pastoral staff is under the authority of the board of elders.
- B. Pastoral staff may be volunteer, full or partially salaried.
- C. Types of pastoral staff
  - i. Director of education
  - ii. Church administrator
  - iii. Pastor of visitation
  - iv. Pastor to seniors
  - v. Youth pastor
  - vi. Children's director
  - vii. Minister of music

## **II. SUPPORT STAFF**

Support staff assists in designated duties. They associate with and assist both the elders and the pastoral staff.

- A. Support staff is under the authority of the board of elders.
- B. Support staff may also be under the authority direction of one or more of the pastoral staff.
- C. Support staff may be volunteer, full or partially salaried, paid an hourly wage or agreed amount for responsibilities rendered.

# **ARTICLE VII - MEMBERSHIP**

## **I. QUALIFICATIONS**

A person shall qualify for membership who...

- A. confesses the Lord Jesus Christ as Personal Savior.
- B. indicates a sincere commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all matters of faith and practice.
- C. reads and agrees to be governed in church affiliation by the Word of God and this Constitution
- D. signs a Covenant of Membership.
- E. has been interviewed by at least two of the elders, approved by the remainder of the elders, with the elders having received no Scriptural warning from the membership. (I Corinthians 5:10-11)

## II. MEMBERSHIP PROCEDURES

Any person desiring to become a member of this church should make such a request known to an elder of the church who shall arrange an interview and give a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws to be read, and a Covenant of Membership to be signed.

## III. CHURCH POLICY OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. The voting members of the church shall be limited to those who are at least 21 years of age.
- B. Minor children in families whose parents have signed a Covenant of Membership are considered non-voting members of Grace Bible Church.
- C. When children in member families reach the age of majority (in Texas, 18 years of age) if they wish to continue as a member they must sign a Covenant of Membership.

## IV. MEMBERSHIP POLICY ON DISCIPLINE

All members are subject to discipline by the church as determined by the elders to be in accord with the Scriptures, this Constitution, and their signed Covenant of Membership.

- A. Discipline of members may occur when they:
  - i. are recalcitrant (denying constituted authority or Scriptural commands). 1 Thes 5:14; 2 Thes 3:6
  - ii. promote doctrinal error. Titus 3:10
  - iii. practice immorality 1 Cor 5:11-13; I Cor 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21
  - iv. cause division in the church or sow discord among the brethren. Romans 16:17
- B. Disciplinary procedures are modeled after:
  - i. three steps of reproof. Matthew 18:15-18
  - ii. public rebuke for unrepentant sin. 1 Timothy 5:20
  - iii. gentle and humble admonishment for the purpose of restoration. Galatians 6:1-2
- C. Disciplinary action of the church (one of more of the following):
  - i. social ostracism in withdrawing fellowship. 1 Cor 5:9&11
  - ii. excommunication from membership. Matthew 18:17

- iii. delivering one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. 1 Cor 5:5
- iv. pronouncing accursed those who preach a false gospel. Galatians 1:8-9

D. Biblical restoration includes:

- i. freely acknowledging sin. 1 Jn 1:9; Prov 28:13a
- ii. cessation of sinful activity. James 5:19-20; Prov 28:13b
- iii. asking forgiveness of the offended party and making restitution when needed. Philemon 18-19; Mt 5:23-24
- iv. demonstrating genuine change of heart and godly sorrow. 2 Cor 7:10-11; Ps 51:11-12
- v. exhibiting outward manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit. Gal 5:22

V. MEMBERSHIP REVOCATION OR TRANSFER

- A. Membership may be terminated by the member making a formal, written request to the elders.
- B. Membership may be transferred to another church upon formal, written request by the member.
- C. Membership may not be terminated once disciplinary procedures have begun due to violation of the Covenant of Membership.
- D. Membership may be revoked by the church leadership after the policy of discipline has been followed in section 4 and there is failure on the member's part in regard to restoration as prescribed under point D of section IV.

## **ARTICLE VIII - PRACTICES**

### **I. DIVISION I - THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH**

- A. We believe that the role of women is limited only with regard to leadership and teaching.
- B. Women are not ordained to the church office of Elder or Deacon.
- C. Women are not to have authority over men in church matters (I Timothy 2:11-13; 1 Corinthians 14:33b-35).
- D. Women may teach women's classes, children's classes, Vacation Bible School, and other Bible classes, but may not teach men.
- E. Women are to give deference to the men in the church.

### **II. DIVISION II - SANCTIFY OF LIFE**

- A. We hold that all humankind is created in the image of God and is sacred from conception to natural death. (Genesis 1:26; Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah.1:5)

- B. Abortion on demand, infanticide, & euthanasia are morally and ethically reprehensible to God and should be opposed by God's people.
- C. We protest the killing of millions of pre-born babies.

### III. **DIVISION III - SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE**

- A. Marriage is a divinely instituted lifelong covenant between one man and one woman.
- B. Marriage was ordained by God...
  - i. for His glory (Genesis 1:26-28),
  - ii. for companionship in our journey (Genesis 2:18),
  - iii. for mutual assistance in God's purposes and calling (Genesis 1:28; 2:18b, 24),
  - iv. for procreation of the human race and the stability of the home (Genesis 1:28)
  - v. for the stability of children and the promotion of tribes and nations (Deut. 6:4-7; Proverbs 14:34),
  - vi. and for the pleasure and intimacy of legitimate sexual union (Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 7:2-5).
- C. Adultery, homosexual relations, and polygamy are considered rebellion against the prescribed one man/one woman divine institution of marriage (Genesis 2:24; 1 Corinthians 6:9).
- D. Living together outside of marriage is sin. Our position is that the believer is to conform to the clear commands of Scripture. We are to submit to the authority of the divine institutions of church and of the state where the believer resides so long as they do not violate God's prescribed commands. (Romans 13:1-5; Hebrews 13:7; Acts 4:19; Acts 5:29)