

CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS

CALVARY BIBLE CHURCH, Joelton and Nashville, Tennessee
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PREAMBLE

We the members of Calvary Bible Church of Joelton and Nashville, Tennessee recognize a church of Jesus Christ as a divinely instituted spiritual organization. We believe that we are to look to the Bible for the principles on which churches are founded and the laws by which they are governed. Therefore, we hereby adopt the following constitution.

ARTICLE I

NAME AND LOCATIONS

The congregation shall be known as Calvary Bible Church, with campuses in Joelton, and Nashville, Tennessee.

ARTICLE II

MISSION STATEMENT

In unity, affirming the absolute authority and sufficiency of Scripture, we exist to equip the saints through expository preaching, teaching and biblical discipleship, resulting in progressive sanctification, the exercise of spiritual gifts in Christian service, genuine worship, and the evangelization of the lost, all of which exalt the Lord Jesus Christ in His mystical body, the church, bringing eternal glory to God and undeserved blessing to His elect.

Definition of Terms

“IN UNITY”

As Christians we will inevitably differ on preferences and non-essentials of the faith, matters upon which the Bible is silent. Therefore we are commanded to make every effort to be humble, gentle, patient and forbearing with those with whom we differ, “being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3; cf. Romans 15:5-6). However, we are exhorted to “be of the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10) with respect to Bible doctrine (cf. Phil. 3:15-16). True Christian unity and effective service cannot be attained apart from doctrinal unanimity. This is so important that God has specifically gifted and called into service “pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-13),

“ . . . AFFIRMING THE ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY AND SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE ”

Since the Bible is God’s inspired and infallible written revelation to man (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21), we must rely exclusively upon Scripture as our spiritual authority and “contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). Moreover, since man is both material (physical) and non-material (spiritual)—there is no “psychological” third category—we must recognize that Scripture is sufficient, wholly adequate in and of itself to address any non-physical, spiritual problem we might encounter in life (2 Peter 1:3).

Practically speaking, as Christians, the issues of sanctification are exclusively the domain of biblical theology and should therefore never be poisoned by the fallible wisdom of man inherent in the modern psychological integrationist movement. Scripture is superior to human wisdom (1 Corinthians 3:19); capable of discerning and exposing the human heart (Hebrews 4:12-13) able to produce faith and salvation (Romans 10:17; 2 Timothy 3:15) powerful enough to completely equip us to glorify God regardless of circumstance (Psalm 19:7-14; 2 Timothy 3:16-17); containing within it all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are found in Christ Himself (Colossians 2:3); thereby making it utterly sufficient to be our sole rule of faith and practice.

“ . . . WE EXIST TO EQUIP THE SAINTS THROUGH EXPOSITORY PREACHING, TEACHING ”

Saints cannot be equipped for godly living and service apart from precise theology (Ephesians 4:11-16). This is the goal of expository preaching and teaching. The term “exposit” literally means to expound or explain in a detailed manner. Expository preaching is therefore a doctrinal proclamation of the Word of God derived from an exegetical process that is concerned only with the revelation of God, not the wisdom of man, and therefore carefully conveys the God-intended meaning of a text, passionately applying that meaning to the contemporary issues of life with an internal zeal and authority that cannot be extinguished.

Although this kind of preaching and teaching is rare in contemporary evangelicalism, since this was the method exemplified in the Bible (Neh 8:8; Acts 7:2-53; 8:27-35; 20:26-27; Lk 4:16-22; 24-27, 32,44-47), and since we have a divine mandate “to preach the Word” (2 Tim 4:2), we believe that this is the God ordained method and we remain committed to it.

“ . . . AND BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP ”

Every Christian is called to be a disciple maker. Jesus made this clear when He commanded His disciples, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt 28:18-20). Discipleship can be summarized by the three participles the Lord used in this text: *going*, *baptizing* and *teaching*. This means that our duty to new converts extends beyond evangelism. We must “make disciples” (*matheteuo*), a term whose root denotes a combined meaning of producing both *believers* and *learners*.

It is important to understand that discipleship is not some highly structured tutorial complete with curriculum and scheduled appointments. We never see that modeled in Scripture. Rather, it is life on life fellowship that strives to help others grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ. Jesus exemplified this in Mark 3:14 where we are told that He “appointed twelve, that they might be with Him.” Discipleship is *being with others for Christ’s sake*. It is purposeful spiritual involvement. It is “iron sharpening iron” (Prov 27:17). It is mentoring and modeling Christ in the natural ebb and flow of life motivated by a heart of love and a desire to see another believer glorify God and enjoy all the blessings of Christ in their life. Discipleship can happen over a cup of coffee or by email. Sometimes it happens in a crisis and takes on the form of counseling (Col. 2:28). Other

times it occurs in the context of spontaneous fellowship that energizes and encourages a friend. But regardless of its form, it is important to remember that biblical discipleship is not a task relegated exclusively for the pastor or other officials in the church, it is a biblical mandate for *all* Christians (cf. Romans 15:14).

“. . . RESULTING IN PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION”

While every believer is positionally sanctified (set apart unto God) by justification (Acts 20:32; Hebrews 2:11; 1 Peter 1:2), we are also in need of a *progressive sanctification*, a work empowered by the Holy Spirit by which we increasingly reflect our sanctified *position* in Christ with a daily *practice* of Christ-likeness. Said simply, we are to become in *practice* what we are in *position*. Every Christian is in a daily battle with his flesh, a conflict that cannot be won apart from the divine provision of the Holy Spirit as He reveals Himself through His Word (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9). Therefore it is imperative that all believers acknowledge their spiritual battles and need for victory and remain vigilant in their efforts to grow in Christ—a process that should be measurable by others.

“. . . THE EXERCISE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS IN CHRISTIAN SERVICE”

Every Christian has been supernaturally enabled to make some special contribution to the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:7). These spiritual gifts will vary in nature and effect, but ultimately they will each have a common goal: to put the Holy Spirit on display in the building up of the body of Christ for His glory (see 1 Cor. 12:1-11; Rom 12:3-8). The pastor-teacher does not possess all the gifts to accomplish this glorious task. His gifts are primarily equipping gifts (Eph. 4:11-16) whereas other members of the body will possess the rest of the necessary gifts to do the work of the ministry. Spiritual gifts fall primarily in two categories, *speaking* and *serving* (1 Cor. 12:8-10; Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Pet 4:10). Spiritual giftedness can be determined as one serves in various capacities within the church until such time as other discerning individuals give obvious affirmation.

“. . . GENUINE WORSHIP”

The concept of worship is largely misunderstood. For some it evokes external images of ceremonies, rituals, liturgies and holy vestments, while others see it as a state of emotional arousal stimulated by a combination of mood altering music and preaching designed to induce some ecstatic experience. Unfortunately, such misconceptions are not only counterproductive to genuine worship; they are often unacceptable to God. Worship is not an activity—it is an *attitude*. Jesus said we are to worship the Father “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24); a perfect blending of the subjective (“spirit”) regulated by the objective (“truth”). It must be a heartfelt expression of spontaneous praise that flows naturally from the wellspring of a biblically informed mind without any need of manipulation. David put it this way, “My heart overflows with a good theme” (Ps. 45:1).

Genuine worship requires being filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18)—a moment-by-moment surrender to the will of God as He is revealed in Scripture. This is perfectly summarized in Paul’s admonition to “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” (Colossians 3:16). Worship will naturally manifest itself in acts of sacrificial love, singing, giving, fellowship, prayer and

righteous living. True worshippers will have a consuming adoration of the majesty and glory of God—an adoration that abhors drawing even the slightest attention to self.

With this in mind, every effort must be made to insure the accuracy of right doctrine in order to produce the attitudes and actions of right living. Consequently, we must avoid anything in our lives and in our church services that might fuel our fleshly penchant for hypocrisy, pride, emotionalism or doctrinal indifference.

“ . . . THE EVANGELIZATION OF THE LOST ”

We have been commanded to reach out to the lost through personal and public evangelism (Matt. 28:19-20), a mandate commonly called, “The Great Commission.” Our Lord Jesus was our supreme example, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45). “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

Because of our love for Christ and love for people, we are compelled to faithfully discharge this most rewarding duty of not only leading people to a saving knowledge of Christ, but also helping them grow to maturity in Him. We must remember that each of us have the responsibility to reproduce ourselves. Evangelism is therefore a personal, proactive outreach that will be strongly encouraged by the church.

“ . . . ALL OF WHICH EXALT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IN HIS MYSTICAL BODY, THE CHURCH, BRINGING ETERNAL GLORY TO GOD AND UNDESERVED BLESSING TO HIS ELECT. ”

The church is a living organism of which Christ is Head. As members of His body, we are commanded to exercise the spiritual gifts He has given us producing a divine synergy between Christ and those His Spirit indwells. It is “the pillar and support of the truth” (1 Timothy 4:15b). As together we live in His presence, we enjoy sweet fellowship with Him and one another, celebrating His mercy and grace, knowing that He has chosen and predestined us to be sons, “to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved” (Ephesians 1:4-6). In fact, Christ has made certain that each one He has sovereignly placed into His mystical Body will be equipped “for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man” (Eph. 4:12-13a).

Moreover, we will ultimately “grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love” (vv. 15b-16). Such are the magnificent and joyful promises to all who have been divinely separated unto this glorious assembly.

**ARTICLE III
DECLARATION**

This church is a congregation of baptized believers in Christ, united by missions and purpose for worship of Almighty God and associated in the faith and the fellowship of Jesus Christ. We will practice biblical precepts, recognize and receive Jesus Christ as the Son of God and supreme Lawgiver and Ruler and take the Bible as the only standard by

which we shall judge matters of faith and practice. Therefore we maintain the following convictions regarding the Holy Scriptures:

We believe that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus, the sixty-six books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God (I Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

We believe that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Thessalonians 2:13; I Corinthians 2:13), verbally inspired in every word (2 Timothy 3:16), absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed. We believe in a literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture which affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17).

We believe that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; I Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We believe that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20-21) without error in the whole or in the part (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16).

We believe that, whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17; 16:12-15; I Corinthians 2:7-15; I John 2:20). It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.

ARTICLE IV

Section 1. STATEMENT OF FAITH

We **believe** that the Bible is God's written revelation to man and constitutes the only infallible, authoritative, and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice.

We **believe** that the Word of God is objective, propositional revelation, verbally inspired in every word, and is absolutely inerrant in the original documents.

We **believe** in a literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of all Scripture, which would affirm a distinction between Israel and the church and also affirm the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days, thereby refuting the theory of evolution.

We **believe** that there is but one living and true God, perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three Persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

We **believe** in the deity and virgin birth of Jesus Christ, His incarnation and sacrificial death on the cross to redeem all who will believe on Him alone as Savior, His

resurrection from the grave, His current role as sole mediator between God and man and His glorious second coming.

We believe that all men are sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration thus incurring upon themselves the penalty of spiritual and physical death—becoming subjects to the wrath of God—and have in themselves no power to save themselves apart from God’s grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ and the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that salvation is wholly a supernatural work of divine grace accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God, and is an instantaneous transformation of the inner man and declaration of righteousness to all who, as result of divine regeneration, place their faith in Christ, repent of their sins, and confess Him as sovereign Lord. The genuineness of one’s salvation is then validated by the manifestation of fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous character and conduct.

We believe that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the church, the bride of Christ, and that the purpose of the church is to glorify God by building itself up in the faith by the instruction of the Word, by keeping the ordinances, and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world. The formation of the church, the Body of Christ, began on the Day of Pentecost and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture.

We believe the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign Agent in regeneration who baptizes all believers into the body of Christ at the moment of salvation and that it is the duty of all believers to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit. At salvation, the Holy Spirit bestows all His gifts upon believers for the perfecting and empowering of the saints for service. (The miracle of speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church 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). The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, restrains from sin, comforts, and seals believers unto the day of redemption.

We believe that all the redeemed receive a “divine nature”; a “new self”; a “new mind”; a “new will”; a “new nature”; and become a “new creature” in Christ. Consequently, genuine salvation is transformation of the inner person and is therefore not defective or short-lived, but rather a faith which will endure forever, protected by the power of God.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will come and remove His church from this earth before the seven-year tribulation; a time in which God will pour out His wrath upon an unbelieving world and fulfill the seventieth week of Daniel’s prophecy. At the end of the tribulation, Christ will physically return to the earth to occupy the throne of David and establish His glorious messianic kingdom for 1,000 years, thus fulfilling His unilateral, unconditional, and irreversible covenants made to Abraham and David and His chosen people Israel, who, because of their disobedience, have been temporarily displaced as the custodians of divine truth, a responsibility that was temporarily transferred to the Gentile church.

We **believe** in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved unto the resurrection of life and eternal glory and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment.

Section 2. See Appendix A for Full Doctrinal Statement

Section 3. STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen 1:26-27.) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as revealed in Scripture (Gen 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4.) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10.)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Calvary Bible Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to our members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Calvary Bible Church, or who serve as leaders (paid or unpaid) or who volunteer in any capacity, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22.)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin whatever it may be as defined by Scripture. He forgives all who seek His mercy and grace through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11.)

We believe that every person—regardless of the heinousness and life-dominating nature of their sin—be treated with utmost compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the convictions of Calvary Bible Church.

Section 4. STATEMENT ON THE OFFICIATING OF MARRIAGE

Because God's Word and will revealed in Scripture alone is our sole spiritual and moral authority and therefore transcends and supersedes all cultural values and laws that may stand in contradiction to it; because we are commanded to obey God, not man (Acts 5:29), and because we fear God, not man (Prov 1:7; 29:25; Rev 15:4), Calvary Bible

Church will only conduct a wedding ceremony between one man and one woman who are members of Calvary Bible Church (or who, due to unique circumstances, have been granted special permission by the Elders), and only after the prospective couple (man and woman) have been approved by the Board of Elders for marriage, having completed the premarital counseling requirements established by the Board of Elders (including regular attendance during their premarital counseling), and having agreed with the *Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality* as set forth in Article IV, Section 3 of this Constitution and By-Laws.

ARTICLE V MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the church shall be composed of individuals who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and who give evidence by their confession and conduct that they are living in fellowship with Him.

A person desiring membership shall take the following three steps:

1. Make your desire for membership known to the Pastor or Elders and receive instruction from them regarding the beliefs and practices of this church (which includes reading this constitution).
2. Sign a membership application form, share your testimony of salvation with at least two Elders, and be deemed eligible by them. (If you presently have your membership at another evangelical church, upon your application, we will write to that church and request a letter of good standing be sent to us.)
3. Publicly accept our church covenant and be received into our church family with the right hand of fellowship.

TERMINATING MEMBERSHIP

Membership in this church may be terminated in five ways. In each case, removal from the membership roll will be granted by the Board of Elders.

1. By written request from the member to the Board of Elders.
This request will not be honored if the member is at the time subject to any stage of church discipline as described in Article VII.
2. By recommendation to another church. Letters of good standing shall be sent to churches of like evangelical faith upon request of members who apply for them, providing they are not subject to any stage of church discipline at the time of application. Members who join another church without requesting a letter of good standing will likewise be removed from the membership roll.
3. By prolonged absenteeism. When a member is habitually absent from all church services and fails to communicate with the church for three consecutive months without a justifiable reason (such as physical disability or temporarily living out of town), an elder will make personal contact to encourage active participation in the life of the church. If, after an additional three months following this contact, the member still chooses to not attend the church services; he or she will be dropped from the membership roll.

4. By church discipline. It is the prerogative of the Board of Elders, and in harmony with the Scriptures, to exclude from membership any person who promotes false or heretical doctrine, or who lives inconsistently with the moral standards set forth in the Scriptures and therefore exhibit habitual, persistent, life-dominating sin (1 Corinthians 5:11-13; Galatians 2:11-14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15). Moreover, consistent with the shepherding responsibilities God has conferred upon the plurality of elders He has established to lead, feed, and protect the flock of His Church (1 Pet 5:1-3; Heb 13:17), the Board of Elders reserve the right to deny any individual the privilege of participating in any activity at Calvary Bible Church.
5. By death. The names of deceased members will, of necessity, be removed from the membership roll.

ARTICLE VI CHURCH COVENANT

Those who enter into the membership of this church shall publicly accept the following covenant after subscribing to our Statement of Doctrine:

“Having confessed my faith in the Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior, and in the Bible as the inspired, inerrant and authoritative Word of God, I joyfully commit myself to be a faithful member of Calvary Bible Church. By the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, I take this church to be my church, and I accept its members as my fellow brothers and sisters in the family of God.

I make it my goal to live a holy life that is pleasing to God, to conduct myself in a way, which exalts the reputation of Christ in my community, and to submit to the loving oversight and discipline of this church. As I grow spiritually, I will seek to faithfully attend its services, pray for its burdens and participate cheerfully and regularly in the financial support of its ministries. I will seek to maintain personal daily Bible reading and prayer, and use my spiritual gift to serve faithfully in some ministry within the church. As I have opportunity, I will seek, by my life’s example and verbal witness, to lead other people to put their trust in Christ.”

ARTICLE VII CHURCH DISCIPLINE

The following procedure is stated in great detail for the purpose of encouraging the congregation to handle every church discipline situation biblically and for the goal of restoration of another brother or sister in Christ.

Section A: Introduction to Guidelines for Church Discipline

We believe that loving church discipline and restoration of a believer is one of the great blessings and privileges of belonging to a Christian church. The following guidelines were developed to provide a clear biblical framework for carrying out church discipline and restoration. These guidelines provided in detail so that people may fully understand CBC’s disciplinary procedures before they decide to become a member or faithful attender. This should help prevent later misunderstandings or disappointments! We believe that these guidelines are biblical and provide the greatest opportunity to glorify God and to love one another in the midst of dealing with sin-issues both individually or

corporately. They are established to provide a loving, biblical framework within which we hope to remain faithful to God and His Word while at the same time lovingly confront those who may be overtaken in a trespass (Galatians 6:1-2).

Another important reason for spelling out the disciplinary and restoration process in such detail is to insure a gracious, loving and fair process, in order to prevent any possibility of the church misusing its authority and insures that a person who has been accused of wrongdoing will be treated fairly and with Christ-like grace and love. In addition, these guidelines for church discipline and restoration not only apply to church members and faithful attenders, but also for all church leadership, pastoral and support staff.

As you read these guidelines, we encourage each member and faithful attender to study the Bible passages that are cited next to each particular provision. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak with one of our Elders, who will be happy to talk with you about these matters.

Section B: Guidelines for Church Discipline and Restoration

1. Church discipline and restoration shall be instituted according to the Bylaws of this church. These guidelines shall be considered as essential components of the Bylaws of this church to protect the purity of Christ's church (1 Cor 5:6-8; Heb 12:7-13) and love for other brothers and sisters in Christ (Rom 12:9-10; Eph 4:15; 1 John 3:14-15).
2. Mutual accountability and discipline within the church is commanded by God in Scripture and is one of the most important responsibilities of a true church of Jesus Christ (see Matt 18:12-20; Rom 16:17; 1 Cor 5:1-13; Gal 2:11-14; Eph 5:11; 1 Thess 5:14; 2 Thess 3:6-15; 1 Tim 1:20; 5:19-20; 2 Tim 3:1-5; Titus 3:10; 2 John 7-11; Rev 3:19).
3. Church discipline and restoration is the exercise of that authority which the Lord Jesus Christ has committed to the visible church for the preservation of its purity, peace, and good order. All members and faithful attenders of the church are under the care of and also subject to the discipline of the church. Keeping in mind that the ultimate goal of church discipline and restoration is to train Christians to be self-disciplined so that they may share in the holiness of God (Heb 12:7-13).
4. Church discipline and restoration is concerned with the prevention and correction of sin which offends our Lord and Savior, along with other brothers and sisters in Christ. A sinful offense is defined as anything in the doctrine or practice of a member or faithful attender that is contrary to the Word of God. The purpose of discipline is: (1) to guard and preserve the honor of God (Rom 2:24; 1 Cor 10:31); (2) to protect the purity of the church and to guard other Christians from being tempted, misled, divided, or otherwise harmed (see 1 Cor 5:6); and (3) to restore fallen Christians to usefulness to God and fellowship with His church (see Matt 18:12-14; 2 Cor 2:5-11; 7:8-10; Gal 6:1-2).
5. According to Matthew 18:15-20, discipline involves four components or phases: **(1) Step One:** Each believer has the responsibility to confront privately other believers who have sinned. The individual who is aware of the violation should arrange a private meeting with the offender of God's Word. The goal here in step one is to assure accuracy of the sin that was witnessed by another believer, to clarify the biblical basis of concern, and, if he/she repents, to forgive the person. If the sinning believer acknowledges his sin and repents, the confronting believer has graciously

and lovingly won that believer to a place of restoration (Gal 6:1-2). We believe that step one is where most discipline and restoration begins and ends.

(2) Step Two - However, if the sinning believer does not repent, step two demands that the believer who originally witnessed the offense, bring other brothers and sisters in Christ to lovingly confront, counsel, and encourage the individual towards repentance. Step two may occur repeatedly! For the intent of other individuals being involved here in step two is to *guarantee clear communication, and to provide witnesses should the matter later be taken to a public level.*

(3) Step Three: If the previous efforts do not correct an offense, the unrepentant person may be mentioned before the church (Matt 18:17). This shall be done in the following manner:

- A. The Board of Elders, if not already involved, shall be informed of the matter in writing.
- B. A person accused of persistent, unrepentant sin shall be given a written notification to meeting with the Board of Elders at a specific time and place. The notice may, but need not, specify the sins that have been revealed to the individual in question by other believers in step one and step two. This notification or request to meet with the Elders shall be served in person, but in case that is not possible, notices shall be sent by certified mail to the individual in question.
- C. At the first meeting, when of the Board of Elders address this matter, only these actions may be taken: (i.) the specific sin(s) shall be read and presented to the believer in question, together with the names of any witnesses and copies of any documents that have been presented against he/she; (ii.) the Elders shall establish a time, date, and place for a second meeting, and shall send out notices to any one whose presence the Elders may deem necessary; and (iii.) the sinning individual in question will also have the right to add to the Elders list names of the witnesses whom he/she wishes the Elders to summon.
- D. If the individual in question refuses or fails to appear without satisfactory reason for their absence at the time appointed for a hearing of the matter, he/she will be provided with another notice to appear, with the warning that, if he/she does not appear, the Board of Elders will proceed with the matter in their absence. The time allowed for the appearance shall be determined by the Elders with gracious and loving consideration of the individual in question and their circumstances. If he/she still refuses or fails to appear, the Elder Board may proceed in he/she's absence.
- E. If unusual circumstances require it, the Board of Elders may deny the individual in question the privilege of participating in the Lord's Supper, or of performing the functions of his/hers office or ministry, until the matter is reconciled.
- F. If the accused appears at the second meeting of the Elders, he/she shall be asked whether or not he/she is guilty of the accusation. If he/she pleads that he is not guilty of the accusation, the Elders shall proceed to receive evidence. No person shall be denied the opportunity to use the Word of God as evidence

of their innocence. If additional meetings of the Board of Elders are required, the accused and all witnesses shall be called to appear as provided above.

- G. Evidence must be biblical and factual in nature. It may be direct or circumstantial. Caution should be exercised by the Elders when considering the value of evidence that is purely circumstantial. The individual in question may challenge the legitimacy of any witness and to the authenticity, admissibility, and relevancy of any testimony or evidence produced in support of the accusation of the sin issue in question. The Elders shall decide on all such concerns brought to the attention of the Elders by the individual in question. Remembering that the testimony of one witness shall be insufficient to establish the truth of any specifications without corroborating evidence (see 2 Cor 13:1). If the accused so requests, no witness, unless a member of the Board of Elders, shall testify in the presence of another witness who is to testify concerning the same specification.
- H. Nothing which has been stated above prevents or prohibits the Board of Elders from taking additional gracious and loving actions which it believes is necessary to result in either the pronouncement of innocence or in the repentance and reconciliation of a sinning brother or sister in Christ.
- I. At the conclusion of the matter, the Board of Elders, after deliberation, shall come to a unanimous decision about the guilt or innocence of the individual in question. If he/she, after tender exhortation, solemn rebuke and warning does not repent, then the Elders shall proceed to determine an appropriate time and occasion when the church body will be informed about the unrepentant person.
- J. When the unrepentant person is mentioned before the church, the congregation shall be instructed to pray for him, and to pursue him for the purpose of restoration, which is the goal of all church discipline. After a sufficient time determined by the Elders, the sinning member or attender either repents or refuses to do so.
If he/she refuses then by virtue of Jesus' own pronouncement in Matt 18:18-20, step four shall be enacted.

(4) Step Four: This involves the public dismissal, or disfellowshipping of the individual in question from the congregation. The public announcement of discipline shall always be accompanied by prayer that God will graciously use the discipline for His own glory, the restoration of the offender, and the edification of the church. This announcement may be made during a regular worship service, at a special meeting of the congregation, or by letter. Public dismissal precludes his attendance at all public meetings in keeping with the Apostle Paul's instruction in 1 Cor 5:9-13. He is to be treated as one who rejects the gospel of Christ, warned of the consequences of his sin, and exhorted to come to a saving relationship with the Christ he once confessed. The church should continue to pray for the individual imploring God to bring about repentance.

- K. If the individual in question leaves the church during the disciplinary process or after having been disfellowshipped, and if the Board of Elders learns that he/she is attending another church, the Board of Elders may inform that

church that the person is currently under church discipline and restoration process. The Board of Elders may ask that church to encourage the accused to repent of his sin and to be restored to the Lord and to any people whom he has offended. The purpose of such communications is to hopefully and prayerfully enhance the possibility that the individual in question may finally repent of their sin, and at the same time, it serves to warn the other church to be on guard against the harm that the accused might do to its members and faithful attenders (see Matt 18:12-14; Rom 16:17; 1 Cor 5:1-13; 2 Thess 3:6-14; 2 Tim 1:15; 2:16-18; 4:9, 14-15; 3 John 9-10).

- L. Just as a good shepherd will go after a sheep that has wandered from the flock (Matt 18:12-14; Ezek 34:4, 8, 16), so should the Elders, members and faithful attenders of this church to seek to restore a wandering believer back to the Lord through biblical discipline and restoration. Therefore, discipline may be instituted or continued either before or after a member or faithful attender seeks to withdraw from membership or attendance if the Board of Elders determines that such discipline may serve to guard and preserve the honor of God, protect the purity of the church, or restore the wandering believer to the Lord. While the church cannot force a withdrawing person to remain in this congregation, the church has the right and the responsibility to encourage restoration, to bring the disciplinary and restoration process to an orderly conclusion, and to make a final determination as to the person's membership or attendance status at the time withdrawal is sought or acknowledged. In doing so, the Board of Elders, at its discretion, may temporarily suspend further disciplinary proceedings, dismiss any or all accusations against the accused, or proceed with discipline and pronounce an appropriate disciplinary action.
- M. If a person who has been disfellowshipped comes to repentance, the church shall rejoice and praise God as they warmly and lovingly restore he/she to fellowship within the Body (see Matt 18:13; Luke 15:11-32). Once the Board of Elders is persuaded that the person has sincerely confessed his wrongs and sought forgiveness from God and the person or persons he/she has offended, their restoration shall be announced for all to celebrate and to glorify the Lord for His mercy and grace during this process and its results! The announcement shall be accompanied by a solemn admonition to the congregation that the restored person's offenses have been forgiven and are not to be held against them or otherwise hinder their fellowship within the church (see 2 Cor 2:5-11). When deemed appropriate by the Board of Elders, however, the restored person may be restricted from certain responsibilities within the church until he/she has demonstrated the requisite qualities for those responsibilities (see Phil 1:10; 2:12-14; Col 1:22; 1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6; 1 Peter 2:11-12).

Article VIII

CHURCH ORDINANCES

Baptism

Baptismal services shall be scheduled as needed by the Board of Elders. Baptism is an ordinance for Christians, commanded in the Scriptures. It is to be observed as a public

testimony of a believer's salvation. It is not essential to salvation, but should be entered into by all believers. Baptism shall be by immersion. Any exception to the mode of immersion because of physical disability must be approved by the Board of Elders. All who desire to be baptized shall first receive biblical instruction regarding its significance by a Pastor or an Elder (Acts 2:41, 8:36-38, 10:48; Romans 6:3, 4; 1 Corinthians 1:13-16).

Lord's Supper

This church shall observe the Lord's Supper at least monthly as the Board of Elders may deem appropriate. All born-again believers in Jesus Christ, whether members or non-members, are eligible to participate in the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:17-34).

ARTICLE IX CHURCH ORGANIZATION

Section A. Governing Structure

1. Autonomous or "free" church government: In keeping with the biblical principles, our church shall remain its own highest authority, conducting its business through the business sessions of our congregation and Board of Elders, responsible to the Lord Jesus Christ and Scriptural principles.
2. Congregational Authority: We choose that our congregation will decide the following by vote:
 - (a) Ratification of revisions to this constitution.
 - (b) Election of our Board of Elders subsequent to elder screening.
 - (c) Changes in affiliation.
 - (d) Installing or removal of pastoral leadership
 - (e) Adoption of an annual budget.
 - (f) Approval of unbudgeted expenditures that exceeds \$15,000 that is otherwise not mentioned in this document.
 - (g) Purchase and sale of real estate.
 - (h) Major capital improvement or renovation projects that exceeds \$15,000
 - (i) Decisions to take legal action.
 - (j) Petition for external peacemaking if the Board of Elders should become involved in an irreconcilable conflict.
 - (k) Any other issue our Board of Elders chooses to place before the congregation.
3. Biblical Church Leadership & Authority: In keeping with New Testament principles of church government, CBC holds to a congregationally affirmed biblically-based church leadership, to be comprised of a group of biblically qualified men whom the Word of God calls "Elders" who are described as "God's Stewards" (Titus 1:7). The Board of Elders is hereby authorized to give direction, set policies, maintain standards, shepherd our members, and provide for doing any other things necessary to make sure CBC functions effectively and efficiently as a New Testament local church honoring the Lord Jesus Christ.

The description, selection and responsibilities of the Elder's are described in Article XII, Section C. The Board of Elders is hereby authorized to establish specific written policies and procedures as needed, in keeping with Scripture, state law, and this constitution.

Furthermore, under the authority of the Board of Elders, the various ministries, boards, committees and organizations of CBC are authorized to set forth written policies and procedures pertaining to their area of ministry, but these must be approved by the Board of Elders. All policies will be contained in a policy book, and followed, but may be revised by the Board of Elders when circumstances dictate.

4. Affiliation: This church may choose to affiliate or disaffiliate with any association for the cause of joint local church and Gospel ministry.

Section B. Church Services

The Sunday services shall be held regularly at times determined by the Pastor-Teacher and Board of Elders; further opportunities for study, prayer and fellowship, may also be provided as needed.

Section C. Business Meetings

1. The Moderator at all Congregational business meetings shall be the Chairman of the Board of Elders. In the absence of the moderator, the Board of Elders, by a majority vote, will appoint another elder as moderator for the meeting. The Moderator shall follow Roberts' Rules of Order to the best of his ability.

2. *Congregational Meetings* are for the purpose of reviewing the ecclesiastical, fiscal, and spiritual life of the church during the intervening months and to consider its future welfare. Voting shall be open to all active church members in good standing 18 years of age or over.

3. Secret ballots shall be used in the election of officers and the approval of the budget. The ballots are to be counted immediately by three non-candidate members of the church who are selected by the Moderator. A majority vote will decide all actions (except when specified otherwise in this constitution).

4. *Corporation Meetings* are for the purpose of complying with the State of Washington requirements, and to review and carry on temporalities of the church as related to matters over which the Elders have sole jurisdiction, and any additional matters that the congregation may allocate to the Board of Elders. Corporation Meetings shall be open to all church members in good standing eighteen years of age or over. The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall be recognized as the President of the Corporation. The Board of Elders shall be the Directors and Trustees of the Corporation.

5. *The Corporation Meeting* shall be duly and regularly called by the Board of Elders for the same date and place as the Congregational Meeting. The Corporation Meeting shall have the same notice as the Congregational Meeting. It is recognized that the church is a corporation, by virtue of the Articles of Incorporation filed with the State of

Tennessee. A roll call of members shall be taken at all business meetings of the congregation, and 25 percent of the active membership shall constitute a quorum.

6. A *Congregational Meeting* shall be called at least once each year during the first week of November, or at the discretion of the Board of Elders. Annual Reports shall be submitted by the Chairman of the Board of Elders and Budget Committee (which is appointed by the Board of Elders and serves at the pleasure of the Board) in January and shall be distributed to the Membership within 45 days after the close of the church year.

7. *Special Meetings* may be called for either the Congregation or Corporation at any time by request of the Senior Pastor, or a majority of the Board of Elders, or by 30% of the active membership as reported at the last annual meeting. Those calling the meeting shall specify in writing the purpose of the meeting and the nature of the business to be transacted, and shall give proper notice of the time and place of the meeting in the bulletin and from the pulpit for two Sundays before the meeting is held.

8. A *Congregation Meeting* for the specific purpose of dealing with church discipline situations may be called by the Board of Elders with only a one weeks' notice from the pulpit at a Sunday morning worship service.

ARTICLE X

OFFICES OF PASTOR AND ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Election of Pastors

The elected officers of Calvary Bible Church are as follows: The Pastor-Teacher, Associate Pastor(s), from a minimum of (3) three to (12) twelve Elders.

ARTICLE XI:

DUTIES OF PASTORS

Section A. The Pastor-Teacher

1. The Pastor-Teacher is to be a spiritually mature ordained minister who has been determined by the Board of Elders to be in accord with the doctrines and constitution of the church. He must meet the scriptural qualifications of an elder (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) and be capable of equipping the saints for ministry through the exposition of the Word of God (Eph 4:11-13). He is to provide both spiritual and organizational leadership, and oversight for the church, in cooperation with the Board of Elders, as one of the compensated Elders. He is to preach the Word, exercise pastoral oversight of the church, be responsible for the regular preaching services of the church, and administer the ordinances. In addition, the Pastor-Teacher must also be faithful at training others to make disciples, developing ministry skills of emerging leaders, envisioning the future, and being sufficiently familiar with every ministry of the church in order to integrate and give direction to the whole in conjunction with the Board of Elders.

The Pastor-Teacher also provides strong leadership in biblically refining the churches mission and vision. He is to be a voting member of the Board of Elders eligible to vote on all matters of the Board of Elders except evaluation of pastors and benefits for Pastors.

The Pastor-Teacher will serve in permanent tenure until he resigns, or is discontinued for just cause with provisions provided in the By-Laws. The Pastor-Teacher shall be an ex-officio member of all councils and committees and he shall be responsible to the Board of Elders. The Pastor-Teacher shall arrange for and conduct all public and regular services of the church and shall be responsible for general oversight of the spiritual welfare of the church.

2. The Pastor-Teacher shall be selected by the Board of Elders and confirmed by the members of the church at its annual meeting or at a special business meeting, and such confirmation shall be a three-fourths (3/4) majority of all the votes cast. He shall remain in office an indefinite period of time, at which time he and his wife become members of the church, but will be subject to the following reservations.

A. The Elders reserve the right to dismiss the Pastor-Teacher:

a) Upon giving him one month's written notice of its intention to dismiss and is also confirmed by an affirmative vote of (3/4th) three-fourths of church members present.

b) Individuals or groups within the membership may present a written, signed request that the Board of Elders consider dissolution of the pastoral relationship. Upon the majority request of the Board of Elders, or upon the signed petition of 20% of the members in good standing, dissolution of the relationship shall be considered at a Special Meeting for this purpose. If, by written ballot, over 50% vote for his dismissal, he shall immediately be dismissed as pastor and receive one month's salary and benefits for every year he has served.

c) The Pastor-Teacher may resign with two months written notice to the Board of Elders (or less, if mutually agreeable). Upon the death, removal, or resignation of the Pastor-Teacher, the Board of Elders shall, without unnecessary delay, deliberate to secure a successor. In order to avoid confusion, only one candidate shall be recommended and presented to the church at a time.

3. A pastoral agreement will be written by the Board of Elders, and updated annually for the Pastor-Teacher (as well as all other pastors on staff). It will contain confirmation of call, details of compensation, and understanding of pastoral approach, key expectations, principles for evaluation, and other matters with the Board of Elders (including the pastor) may deem appropriate. This agreement, including compensation details, will be accessible and available to any member of the congregation.

4. The Pastor-Teacher will not serve as Chairman of the Board of Elders, nor any congregational meetings.

Section B. Associate Pastor(s)

1. Associate Pastor(s) are to be spiritually mature trained men who have been determined by the Board of Elders to be in accord with the doctrines and constitution of the church. They must meet the scriptural qualifications of an elder (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) and be proficient in performing the responsibilities for which they were

called. Associate Pastor(s) may serve in areas of ministry (either a singular or a combination of ministries), serving at the pleasure of the Board of Elders, under the direction, supervision and authority of the Senior Pastor. These men are to be voting members of the Board of Elders eligible to vote on all matters except evaluation of pastors and benefits for Pastors.

2. The calling and resignations of Associate Pastor(s) is to follow the same procedure as for the Pastor-Teacher.

Section C. Elders & “God’s Stewards”

1. **Biblical Functions & Responsibilities** – Subject to limitations of these Articles and these Bylaws and of pertinent restrictions of the corporation’s Code of the State of Tennessee, all the activities and affairs of the corporation shall be exercised by or under the direction and trust of the Board of Elders, comprised of a congregationally affirmed (“selected”) group of men. The Elders of Calvary Bible Church are “God’s stewards” (Titus 1:7), who are responsible for shepherding and entrusted by Christ with the complete and comprehensive oversight of His flock and the resources of His church. Elders are the pastors of the church (these phrase: “Elder” refers to maturity and wisdom; “Overseer” refers to the administrative duties and tasks; “Shepherd” (pastor) refers to the caring heart and concern for the flock of Christ). The Elders jointly teach, lead and protect the church under Christ, the chief shepherd. The Elders are also responsible for initiating and directing church discipline. The church is to submit to their God-given leadership. Their leadership should be distinguished as pastoral, shared, male, qualified and servant-like (1 Pet 5:1-4; 1 Thess 5:12-13; Heb 13:17).

It is hereby expressly declared that the Board of Elders shall have the following powers in addition to the other powers enumerated in these By-laws.

(a) To select and remove any officers, agents, pastors, staff and employees of the corporation, prescribe such duties for them as may be consistent with the law, with the Articles of Incorporation, or with the Bylaws, fix the terms of their offices and their compensation.

(b) To make such disbursements from the funds and properties of the corporation as are required to fulfill the purposes of this corporation as are more fully set out in the Articles of Incorporation thereof and generally to conduct, manage and control the activities and affairs of the corporation and to make such rules and regulations not inconsistent with the law, with the Articles of Incorporation or with the Bylaws, as they may deem best.

(c) To adopt, make and use a corporate seal and to alter the form of such seal from time to time as they may deem best.

(d) To establish policies and practices for the church consistent with the purposes of this corporation; giving direction, setting policies, maintain standards, shepherding members, and making sure CBC continues to function as a New Testament church honoring the Lord Jesus Christ. The Board of Elders arrange for ongoing teaching and equipping of the church, for the bonding together the family of believers, for the maintain of our mission and vision, for preserving our

peace, and for fulfilling all the biblical duties of “Elders,” “Overseers,” “Shepherds.”

(e) To assist the Pastor-Teacher in the administration and ordinances of baptism and communion.

(f) To borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purposes of the corporation and to cause to be executed and delivered therefore, in the corporate name, promissory notes, bond, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges or other evidences of debt and securities; with the approval of a 2/3rd congregational vote.

(g) To carry on a business and apply any such profit that results from the business activity in which it may legally engage.

2. Number of Elders – (Article X).

3. Nomination, Selection, and Tenure of Office – Recommendations to fill the office of Elders shall be requested once a year and such recommendations are to be based on the qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 2:1-7 and Titus 1:5-16. Recommendations for the Office of Elder will be received by the elders from any church member in good standing. The Elder Board will then determine each nominee’s biblical qualifications. The Elders shall then interview each of the candidates and by a (2/3rds) two-thirds majority vote approve the name of one man to be considered as the nominee for each existing vacancy on the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders shall then approve, disapprove or add to the list of nominees. They will then personally contact each nominee on the list to seek their approval for their name to be publically posted in alphabetical order at least two (2) weeks prior to the annual meeting of the church members. The list of the nominees shall also be in the church bulletin for two (2) successive Sundays prior to the annual meeting. At the annual meeting the Board of Elders will present their recommended slate of nominees to the members to affirm. These Elder nominees shall be approved on an individual basis by secret ballot at the annual meeting by an affirmation vote of (2/3rd) two-thirds of the church members present, to serve indefinitely at the discretion of the Board of Elders and the membership.

Newly approved Elders shall be ordained and licensed to their office during a regularly scheduled service(s) of the church, once they have (individually or collectively) completed the ordination and licensing process determined by the Board of Elders.

If nominees fail to be approved by the church or is unable to complete the ordination and licensing process, the Board of Elders may propose another nominee to be voted on at a special congregational meeting. An Elder who has been previously approved, but who resigned from or was divested of the office must be reapproved by the Board of Elders, and when required and determined by the By-laws, through a congregational vote.

4. Qualifications – Each member of the Board of Elders must be an active member of Calvary Bible Church and possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He shall be:

- (a) Blameless; above reproach as a God's steward and trustee of His church (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6-7).
- (b) Husband of one wife; a man devoted to his wife; does not infer to the possibility of a prior biblically-based divorce (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6).
- (c) Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Tim 3:2).
- (d) Sober-minded, prudent (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8).
- (e) Of good behavior; orderly, respectable (1 Tim 3:2).
- (f) Given to hospitality (1 Tim 3:2); Titus 1:8)
- (g) Apt to teach; able to teach; he can exhort believers and refute false teaching (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9).
- (h) Not given to wine (1 Tim 3:3 Titus 1:7).
- (i) Not violent; pugnacious (1 Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7).
- (j) Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Tim 3:3).
- (k) Not a brawler; uncontentious; not soon angry or quick-tempered (1 Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7).
- (l) Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy of base gain (1 Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- (m) Rules well his own house. His children are faithful; not accused of rebellion to God (1 Tim 3:4; Titus 1:6).
- (n) Not a novice; not a new convert or spiritually immature (1 Tim 3:6).
- (o) Has a good report or reputation with outsiders (1 Tim 3:7).
- (p) Not self-willed (Titus 1:7)
- (q) A lover of good men and things (Titus 1:8)
- (r) Just, fair (Titus 1:8)
- (s) Holy, devout (Titus 1:8)
- (t) Self-controlled (Titus 1:8).

Furthermore, the Board of Elders are to hold one another accountable to maintain integrity in these areas. As the head of His church, Christ demands the highest standards, morals and ethical responsibility from the stewards of His church.

5. Vacancies – Any Elder may resign effective upon giving written notice to the Chairman of the Board or the Secretary of the Board, unless the notices specifies a later time for the effectiveness of such resignation. If the resignation is to take effect at some future time, a successor may be selected before that time. A vacancy or vacancies in the Board of Elders shall be deemed to exist in case of the death, resignation or removal of any Elder, or if a need exists and the specified limit is not exceeded. No reduction of the authorized number of Elders shall have the effect of removing any Elder.

6. Removal of Elders – Any Elder may be removed from office if he becomes physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or his inability to serve is established in the minds of the remainder of the Board of Elders.

7. Place of Meetings – Notwithstanding anything to the contrary provided in these Bylaws, any meeting (whether annual, regular, special or adjourned) of the Board of

Elders of the Corporation may be held at any place within or without the State of Tennessee, if agreed to by a quorum of the Board.

8. Regular Meetings – Regular meetings of the Board of Elders shall be held at their convenience. The first (30) thirty minutes of the regular meetings shall be open to church members in good standing to observe or to address the Board of Elders.

9. Special Meetings – Special meetings of the Board of Elders may be called at any time by order of the Pastor-Teacher, or any other elder.

10. Notice of Special Meetings – Special meetings of the Board shall be held upon four (4) days notice by first class mail or a (24) twenty-four hour notice given personally or by telephone, email or other similar means of communication. Any such notice shall be addressed or delivered to each Elder or as such Elder's address as it is shown upon the records of the Corporation or as may have been given to the Corporation by the Elder for such purpose of notice.

11. Quorum for a Meeting of the Board of Elders – Except as otherwise provided herein, a majority of the Elders currently serving shall constitute a quorum (a quorum shall consist of not less than (60%) sixty percent of the eligible board members.

12. Participation in Meetings by Conference Telephone – Members of the Board of Elders may participate in a meeting through use of conference telephone, email or similar communications equipment, so long as all members participating in such meeting can hear one another.

13. Attendance of Meetings & Participation in Fellowship and Ministry – Members of the Board of Elders are to attend and participate in no less than 85% of all meetings throughout the calendar year. In addition, an Elder must be actively involved in no less than 90% of both Lord's Day worship services and Sunday School attendance during the calendar year. Any elder who does not attend meetings, times of worship, Sunday School or fails to perform assigned duties without a valid reason, will be contacted by two elders to ascertain the problem. If the problem is unable to be resolved within the following month, a replacement may be appointed.

14. Adjournment – A majority of the Elders present, whether or not a quorum is present, may adjourn any Elder's meeting to another time and place. Notice of the time and place of holding an adjourned meeting need not be given to absent Elders if the time and place be fixed at the meeting adjourned, except as provided in the next sentence. If the meeting is adjourned for more than forty-eight (48) hours, notice of any adjournment to another time or place shall be given prior to the time of the adjourned meeting to the Elders who were not present at the time of the adjournment.

15. Action Without Meeting – Any action required or permitted by the Board of Elders may be taken without a meeting if all members of the Board of Elders shall individually or collectively consent in writing or by email to a duly prepared resolution to such action.

Such consent or consents shall have the same effect as a unanimous vote of the Board of Elders and shall be documented by attaching the signed resolution with the minutes of proceedings of the Board of Elders.

16. Rights of Inspection – Every Elder shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect and copy all books, records, and documents of every kind and to inspect the physical properties of the corporation of which such person is an Elder, for a purpose reasonably related to such person’s interest as an Elder.

17. Decisions of the Board of Elders – Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration by unanimous vote in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself. The entire Board of Elders must represent all finalized decisions with a spirit of consensus. “Consensus” means that all on the Board of Elders are able to accept a decision, with no Elder holding the view that the decision is immoral, contrary to a Spirit-led conscience, or grossly inappropriate. “Abstentions” or merely “going along” are not considered acceptable for a consensus decision. If there remains a sharp disagreement with an apparently developing consensus among the Board of Elders, after prayerful consideration and deliberation, adequate sharing, plus exploration of Scripture and its biblical principles and the application of biblical wisdom, the dissenting elder(s) is duty bound to explore and carefully explain the biblical reasoning. If the issue at hand is one with major moral, spiritual, doctrinal, or legal implications, then further time for deliberation will be taken until a God-honoring consensus is established.

18. Committees – Committees of the Board of Elders may be appointed by resolution passed by the whole Board of Elders. Committees may be composed of one or more members of the Board of Elders and shall have such powers as may be expressly delegated to it by resolution of the Board of Elders, except with respect to:

- (a) The filling of vacancies on the Board of Elders or on any committee.
- (b) The amendment or repeal of Bylaws or the adoption of new Bylaws.
- (c) The amendment or repeal of any resolution of the Board of Elders which by its express terms is not so amendable or repealable.
- (d) The appointment of other committees of the Board of Elders or the members thereof.

The Board of Elders shall have the power to prescribe the manner in which proceedings of any such committee shall be conducted. In the absence of any such prescription, such committee shall have the power to prescribe the manner in which its proceedings shall be conducted. Unless the Board of Elders or such committee shall otherwise provide the regular and special meetings and other actions of any such committee shall be governed by their provision of the Article applicable to meetings and actions of the Board of Elders. Minutes shall be kept of each meeting of each committee.

Section D. Deacons

The Deacons shall consist of male member possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and shall be appointed by the Elder Board.

The Deacons shall come under and assist the Elders in the shepherding of the saints, assisting the Pastor-Teacher at the communion and baptismal services, aid in the general spiritual care of the church and perform other duties as delegated and directed by the Board of Elders. The word deacon (diakonos) is defined as “the servants of the church; who executes the commands of another; one who, by virtue of the office assigned to him by the church, cares for the poor and has charge of and distributes benevolence money collected for their use.” Their ministry is to provide official, responsible care for the temporal needs and physical welfare of needy members and friends of the church, and spiritual needs as directed by the Board of Elders (1 Tim 3:8-13).

(1) Deacons shall be chosen from active male members of the church at least 21 years of age who are in good standing, have demonstrated spiritual maturity, proven character, faithful ability to serve and who otherwise meet the standards set forth in 1 Tim 3:8-13.

(2) Qualifications for Servant Leadership as described in 1 Tim 3:8-13 (these qualifications apply to both deacons and deaconesses. He shall be:

- (a) He must be a man of dignity (1 Tim 3:8).
- (b) He must not be double-tongued (1 Tim 3:8).
- (c) He must not be addicted to much wine (1 Tim 3:8)
- (d) He must not be fond of gain (1 Tim 3:8)
- (e) He must be doctrinally sound (1 Tim 3:9)
- (f) He must be active in spiritual service (1 Tim 3:10)
- (g) He must be morally pure (1 Tim 3:10, 12)
- (h) He must lead a godly family (1 Tim 3:12)

The qualifications should be a goal and guideline for every believer. Everyone should seek to have these character qualifications in his life whether he is a recognized, office-holding believer or simply a servant to the Body of Christ.

(3) Attendance of Meetings & Participation in Fellowship and Ministry – Members of the Board of Deacons are to attend and participate in no less than 85% of all meetings throughout the calendar year. In addition, an Deacon must be actively involved in no less than 90% of both Lord’s Day worship services and Sunday School attendance during the calendar year. Any deacon who does not attend meetings, times of worship, Sunday School or fails to perform assigned duties without a valid reason, will be contacted by two elders to ascertain the problem. If the problem is unable to be resolved within the following month, a replacement will be appointed.

(4) The Board of Deacons shall elect its own Chairman. The Chairman shall be responsible for preparation of meeting agendas, coordination of activities with the Elders and officers, and make sure that projects once adopted, are completed in a timely manner.

(5) The Board of Deacons shall meet once each month, or as needed, according to the judgment of the Deacon Chairman or Board of Elders; (60%) sixty percent constitute a quorum.

Section E. Deaconesses

The Deaconesses shall consist of a female member possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and shall be appointed by the Elder Board.

The Deaconess shall come under and assist the Elders in the shepherding of the saints, assisting the Pastor-Teacher at the communion and baptismal services, aid in the general spiritual care of the church and perform other duties as assigned by the Board of Elders. Deaconesses are also the “servants of the church.” Their ministry is to provide official, responsible care for the physical welfare of needy members of the church and friends of the church.

- (1) Deaconesses shall be chosen from active female members of the church at least 21 years of age who are in good standing, have demonstrated spiritual maturity, proven character, faithful ability to serve and who otherwise meet the standards set forth in 1 Tim 3:8-13.
- (2) Qualifications for Servant Leadership as described in 1 Tim 3:8-13 (these qualifications also apply to deaconesses. She shall be:
 - (a) She must be a woman of dignity (1 Tim 3:8).
 - (b) She must not be double-tongued (1 Tim 3:8).
 - (c) She must not be addicted to much wine (1 Tim 3:8)
 - (d) She must not be fond of gain (1 Tim 3:8)
 - (e) She must be doctrinally sound (1 Tim 3:9)
 - (f) She must be active in spiritual service (1 Tim 3:10)
 - (g) She must be morally pure (1 Tim 3:10, 12)
 - (h) She must be a woman of dignity, not malicious gossip, but temperate, faithful in all things (1 Tim 3:11).
 - (i) She must lead [under the authority of her husband] a godly family (1 Tim 3:12)

The qualifications should be a goal and guideline for every believer. Everyone should seek to have these character qualifications in his life whether he or she is a recognized, office-holding believer or simply a servant to the Body of Christ.

(2) Attendance of Meetings & Participation in Fellowship and Ministry – Members of the Board of Deaconesses are to attend and participate in no less than 85% of all meetings throughout the calendar year. In addition, an Deaconess must be actively involved in no less than 90% of both Lord’s Day worship services and Sunday School attendance during the calendar year. Any deacon who does not attend meetings, times of worship, Sunday School or fails to perform assigned duties without a valid reason, will be contacted by two elders to ascertain the problem. If the problem is unable to be resolved within the following month, a replacement will be appointed.

(3) The Board of Deaconesses shall elect its own Chairman. The Chairman shall be responsible for preparation of meeting agendas, coordination of activities with

the Elders and officers, and make sure that projects once adopted, are completed in a timely manner.

(4) The Board of Deaconesses shall meet once each month, or as needed, according to the judgment of the Deaconess Chairman or Board of Elders; (60%) sixty percent constitute a quorum.

Section F. Ushers

The Ushers shall consist of male members of Calvary Bible Church to be appointed by the Board of Elders for an indefinite term. The Ushers shall elect its own Chairman. The Chairman shall be responsible for coordination of their activities. These responsibilities are, acting as church ushers, greeters at the door, church collectors, and assist the Pastor-Teacher in the services in such matters as he deems necessary. They shall also be responsible for the safety and security of all church property during the services. An Usher shall meet the qualifications enumerated for a Deacon (1 Timothy 3:8-13).

ARTICLE XII

OTHER COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

Section A. Councils and Committees

To promote efficient handling of church ministries and matters, the Board of Elders may appoint various councils and committees from within its membership and staff. These councils and committees shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with powers specifically delegated by the Board of Elders. A member of the Board of Elders shall serve on each standing committee so as to provide a communication link to the rest of the Board. Each committee shall present its budget request to the Board of Elder prior to the annual meeting as determined by the Board.

In all cases, the qualifications for Councils and Committees or individual ministry positions are outlined in 1 Timothy 3:8-13:

- (a) The individual must have sufficient trustworthiness, to be worthy of confidence in the eyes of the church to do the ministry which they are called to perform. Keeping in mind that some ministries require more spiritual maturity than others.
- (b) The individual must have a sufficient level of spiritual qualifications for the task. The Board of Elders is authorized to devise appropriate qualifications criteria for all ministries, paying attention to the basic biblical criteria given 1 Timothy 3:8-13. The person must have both sufficient biblical wisdom and spiritual giftedness to perform and fulfill a given ministry (Eph 4:7-16).

ARTICLE XIII

OFFICERS, DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION

Section A. Officers of the Corporation

The Chairman of the Elder Board will be recognized as the President of the Corporation. Another appointed elder shall be recognized as the Secretary of the Corporation. The Elders shall be the Directors of the Corporation.

Section B. Corporation Meetings

Corporation meetings are for the purpose of complying with the State requirements, and to review and carry on temporalities of the church as related to matters over which the Elders have sole jurisdiction, and any additional matters that the congregation may allocate to the Elder Board. Corporation Meetings shall be open to all church members in good standing (18) eighteen years of age or over.

Section C. Election of Corporate Officers

The officers of the corporation, except such officers as may be appointed shall be chosen annually by, and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Elders. Each officer shall hold this office until he shall resign, be removed, or become otherwise disqualified to server, or until his successor shall be elected and qualified.

Section D. Subordinate Officers of the Corporation

The Board of Elders may appoint and may empower the President of the Corporation to appoint, such other officers as the business of the corporation may require, each of whom shall hold office for such period, have such authority, and perform such duties as are provided in the Bylaws or as the Board of Elders may from time to time determine.

Section E. Removal and Resignation

The remainder of the Elders may remove any officer of the corporation at any time, at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Elders.

Any officer may resign at any time without prejudice to the rights, if any, of the corporation under any contract to which the officer is a party, by giving written notice to the Board of Elders, or to the President, or to the Secretary of the corporation. Any such resignation shall take effect at the date of the receipt of such notice or at any later time specified therein; and unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

Section E. Vacancies

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled in the manner prescribed in the By-laws for regular election or appointment to such office, provided that such vacancies shall be filled as they occur and not on an annual basis.

Section F. Inability to Act

In the case of absence or inability to act of any officer of the corporation and of any person herein authorized to act in his place, the Board of Elders may from time to time delegate the powers or duties of such officer to any other officer or other person whom the Board of Elders may select.

Section G. The Chairman of the Elder Board

The Chairman shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the corporation and shall, subject to the control and oversight of the Board of Elders, have general supervision, direction and control of the activities and officers of the corporation. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Elders, which are to be conducted according to Scriptural principles such as set forth in Philippians 2:2-8, and Roberts' Parliamentary Rules of Order. He shall be an ex-officio member of all the standing committees and shall have such powers and duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Elders or the By-laws. In absence of the Pastor-Teacher, the Chairman shall be responsible for the leadership of the church service.

Section H. Vice Chairman of the Elder Board

In the absence or disability of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman shall perform all 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. The Vice Chairman shall have such others powers and perform such other duties as from time to time may be pre- scribed for him by the Board of Elders or the Bylaws.

Section I. Secretary

The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, a book of minutes at the church office or such other place as the Board of Elders may order, of all meetings of the members, the Board of Elders and its committees, with the time and place of holding, whether regular or special, and if special, how authorized, the notice thereof given, the names of those present at the meetings, the Board of Elders and committees' meetings, and the proceedings thereof. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, at the church office in the State of Tennessee the original and a copy of the corporation's Articles and Bylaws, as amended to date.

The Secretary shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings of the Board of Elders and any committees thereof required by these By-laws or by law to be given, shall keep the seal of the corporation in safe custody, and shall have such other powers and perform such others duties as prescribed by the Board of Elders.

The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, at the principal office of the corporation, a church membership register, or a duplicated membership register, showing names of the members and their addresses.

Section J. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct accounts of the properties and business transactions of the corporation. The books of account shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection by any Elder.

The Treasurer shall deposit all monies and other valuables in the name and to the credit of the corporation with such depositories as may be designated by the Board of Elders. He shall disburse the funds of the corporation as may be ordered by the Board of Elders, shall render to the Chairman and Elders, whenever they request it, an account of all

transactions and of the financial condition of the corporation, and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Elders. He shall make the financial reports at each regular board meeting when requested and at the annual meeting of the members of the church.

ARTICLE XIV

LICENSING AND ORDINATION

Section A. Licensing

The license, as recognized by the State, is issued by the Board of Elders and is given in recognition of a man's call to be an Elder and Shepherd of the Christ's church. Its aim is to allow a man to perform all of the ecclesiastical duties and functions of the church and indicates that he meets the qualifications of being a "clergyman" in the eyes of the State. Licenses will be evaluated and issued on a yearly basis or as designated by the Board of Elders.

Section B. Ordination

Ordination refers to the "mutual recognition by the Board of Elders of a man's call to ministry, preparation as an Elder-Shepherd and qualification to serve." Ordination shall be conferred for life, so long as the man continues to manifest the qualification of the office. Ordination is the action of our congregation to set apart a person for specific ministry (e.g., pastorate, chaplaincy, administration, missions), whereby we confirm the person's eligibility for this ministry, their spiritual giftedness, and acknowledge the Holy Spirit's calling of that person. Through ordination, we demonstrate our confidence in the person and accept responsibility for the candidate's specific ministry, symbolized by the laying on of hands. This follows the pattern seen in Acts wherein the congregation and its leaders singled out various people to accept and accomplish special ministries of leadership and mission. (Examples of the ordination procedure can be seen in Numbers 27:23; Acts 6:1-4; Acts 13:1-3 [sometimes called commissioning]; Acts 14:23; I Timothy 4:14; 5:22; II Timothy 1:6).

Section C. Purpose

To affirm a broad range of authority and responsibility which the congregation is to acknowledge and esteem (I Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17), CBC shall license and ordain men to the gospel ministry.

Section D. Rights of the Ordained Person

In terms of the church, ordination gives one the right to officiate in the capacity which reflects the spiritual gifts and abilities previously recognized by the church leadership with the permission of that congregation. Further, it entitles that person to be eligible for financial support from the congregation consistent with the level of the congregation's financial income (I Cor 9:4-14). In terms of the State's interests, it qualifies that person to perform and certify marriages.

Section E. Qualifications for Ordination

The candidate must affirm Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior. The candidate must have demonstrated spiritual and general maturity and must not be a new believer. (Heb

5:12-14; Eph 4:13-15; I Tim 3:6). The candidate must have demonstrated quality of character and life as outlined in I Tim 3:1-7 and Gal 5:22-23. The candidate must have demonstrated proficiency and fruitfulness in ministry as evidenced by positive changes and effects in the lives of those ministered to and/or by other specific accomplishments. (John 15:16; Matt 7:17-20). The candidate must have demonstrated both possession and proper use of spiritual gifts and abilities consistent with the specific ministry to which the candidate wishes to be ordained (I Cor 12:1-11; Eph 4:11; Rom 12:6).

Section F. Procedures

Calvary Bible Church utilizes a two-step process in assisting a candidate toward ordination.

Step 1: Elder Board Interview & Evaluation

- **Purpose:** To familiarize the Board of Elders with the candidate's life, ministry and call; to guide the candidate's preparation toward ordination, and to provide the Board with an opportunity to encourage or discourage the candidate's pursuit of ordination and ministry.
- **Time Frame:** Will be determined by the Board of Elders as deemed fit for each individual candidate.
- **Initiating:** A candidate must submit a letter requesting a meeting with the Board of Elders. The Elders shall then invite the candidate to a regular meeting of the Board at which the candidate will make a brief statement that includes both the candidate testimony and the candidate interest in ordination and ministry. A unanimous vote of the Board is necessary to continue on with the ordination process.

Section 2. Commissioning

When local-church certification is required for ministry and where ordination would be unnecessary or inappropriate, a person is commissioned by the Board of Elders to minister. This authorization continues as long as the opportunity to minister remains in effect and as long as the person maintains the qualifications for ministry.

Oversight: With the Boards approval, the Pastor-Teacher will appoint a three-person "Ordination Committee" composed of two Elders and one person from the ministerial staff who will be selected by the Pastor-Teacher. This committee assumes responsibility for guiding the candidate through the ordination process and serves as a liaison between the Board of Elders and the candidate. After the appropriate time period, and/or when the committee is satisfied with the candidate's preparation, they will recommend that the Board advance the candidate to the second step in the ordination process.

Step 2: Examination Status

- **Purpose:** This period of time allows the Board of Elders to oversee the evaluation of the candidate's readiness for ordination.
- **Time Frame:** This time period will be relative to each candidate ranging from

one month to six months.

- **Process of Examination:** The candidate shall submit to the Ordination Committee:
 - A concise, personalized statement of faith.
 - A transcript or proof demonstrating minimal theological and biblical preparation and knowledge (Appendix A).
 - If the candidate does not anticipate serving within the ranks of Calvary Bible Church's Eldership or Pastoral Staff, a letter must be written explaining the reasons for ordination through Calvary Bible Church.

Application for ordination will not be accepted unless the candidate can demonstrate a calling to local church ministry, pastoral ministry or a specific ministry through a missionary agency recognized by Calvary Bible Church.

The committee shall receive and review these documents. If the documentation is satisfactory, the committee will recommend that the Board call an "Ordination Council." The Pastor-Teacher and Ordination Committee will assume responsibility for arranging this council which will usually be convened within two months.

The Ordination Council assumes the responsibility for recommending whether or not CBC should proceed to ordain the candidate. The Ordination Council will normally be made up from members of the CBC Elder and Pastoral Staff, and representatives of doctrinally likeminded churches or ministries whom the candidate would like to invite to participate. The council elects a chairman and a secretary to take minutes.

On behalf of the council, the chairman instructs the candidate to make three basic statements, which can be either verbal or written form determined by the council: the candidate's conversion and evidences of its authenticity; the candidate's call to ministry and evidences pertaining; the candidate's statement of doctrinal conviction and a persuasion. The third statement should be quiet complete, offering not only doctrinal affirmations but supporting Scripture.

The candidate should also be able to respond to questions regarding personal life, spiritual life, practical and systematic theology, doctrinal convictions, and a practical application of Scripture and principles of ministry. Normally, any question within these bounds is permitted. The examination should be sufficient to demonstrate that the candidate is proficient, accurately handling the Word of God in accord with biblical standards of living. Following the examination process the council will determine an overall "Pass or Fail" grade for the candidate. If the candidate fails to pass any part of the examination process, the council will allow that candidate to retake any or all parts of the exam to achieve a "passing" grade. The candidate has (1) one to (30) third days to retake any or all parts of the exam and will be allowed to retake the exam as many times as the Ordination Council deems appropriate. Once all (3) three parts of the ordination process is completed, the council must produce a unanimous vote to "passing" status to any candidate.

The Ordination Council's decision must then be submitted to the Elder Board for final ratification. The Board of Elders will plan the ordination service.

Ordination Service: The Board of Elders will consult with the candidate(s) concerning participants from other churches. In the case of outside speakers or service participants, Calvary Bible Church will not normally assume responsibility for either traveling fees or honoraria. It is the candidate's responsibility to make this plain to the prospective participants. The candidate should also be advised that all participants in the service must be previously approved by the Elder Board. The candidate must understand that CBC is under no obligation to proceed with ordination should the convening council or the Elders fail to approve the candidate at examination time.

Oversight and Review of the Ordained Person: The Board will instruct those ordained by Calvary Bible Church of the following:

- It is assumed that if one joins the CBC ministry staff, that oversight and review will be an ongoing responsibility of the Board of Elders.
- For those not formally a part of CBC's ministry staff, it should be realized that CBC, is accepting a certain responsibility for the ordained person's status. Therefore, those ordained by CBC and not serving on CBC's staff, shall submit a periodic accountability report to the Board of Elders.
- The Board holds the right to withdraw the act of ordination upon receipt of evidence and conviction (by whatever means) of any person who has committed an offense against the Word of God, who promotes false or heretical doctrine, or who lives inconsistently with the moral standards set forth by Scripture or the qualifications of Elders (1 Cor 5:11-13; 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; Gal 2:11-14; 2 Thes 3:6-15). The Board of Elders reserves the right to make discriminating decisions in the area of revoking an individual's ordained status.

Appendix A: Education or minimal biblical and theological knowledge: Specific educational requirements outline basic and essential content knowledge for ministry. It is the task of the Elder Board and Ordination Committee to determine appropriate educational requirements or minimal biblical and theological knowledge for the particular ministry to be undertaken. In certain instances, "life experiences" may be evaluated as a substitute for formal academic course work. For most applying for a compensated Pastoral Ministry position at CBC, a candidate for ordination must possess a baccalaureate degree from an accredited educational institution. A Master of Divinity degree will be the expected level of graduate study to be attained by the candidate.

In particular circumstances, these latter requirements may be modified. However, even when the candidate will be fulfilling a particular staff position which requires specialized training (e.g., music, administration, education, etc.), basic biblical and theological background is expected. The following minimum academic program is generally expected of each candidate, prior to ordination: Bible Survey, Bible Exegesis, Church History, Systematic Theology, Apologetics, Practical Theology, at least one Biblical

language course, and other courses in an area of concentration in ministry (i.e., Pastoral Counseling, Christian Education, Youth Ministry, etc.).

ARTICLE XV SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

Section A. General

In any dispute arising between church members, pastors, or staff pertaining to any matters of spiritual teaching or practices, church finances or title to property purchase with church contributions in which the process of church restoration of Matthew 18 has failed to produce reconciliation, the dispute shall be solely resolved by the Board of Elders of the church, regardless of any other Bylaws stated in this document. A decision shall be reached after prayerful consideration in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself.

ARTICLE XVI OTHER PROVISIONS

Section A. Endorsement of Documents, Contracts

The Board of Elders, except as in the Bylaws otherwise provided, may authorize any officer or officers, or agents, to enter into any contract or execute an instrument in the name of and on behalf of the corporation. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances as so authorized by the Board of Elders, but no officer, agent or employee shall have any power or authority to bind the corporation by any contract or agreement, or to pledge its credit, or to render it liable for any purpose or to any account, otherwise stated in Article IX, Section 2, or any other Bylaw.

Subject to the provision of applicable law, any note, mortgage, evidence of indebtedness, contract, conveyance, or other instrument in writing and any assignment or endorsement thereof executed or entered into between this corporation and any other person, when signed jointly by the President, Secretary, and the Treasurer of this corporation shall not be valid and binding on this corporation in the absence of actual knowledge on the part of the other person(s) that the signing officers had no authority to execute the same, except as otherwise stated in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE XVII FISCAL CONCERNS

Section A. Contributions and Receipts

The corporation shall receive all monies and/or other properties transferred to it for the purposes for which the corporation was formed (as shown by the Articles of Incorporation and in keeping with IRS regulations). However, nothing contained herein shall require the Board of Elders to accept or receive any money or property of any kind if it shall determine in its discretion that receipt of such money or property is contrary to the expressed purposes of the corporation as shown by said Articles.

In keeping with IRS regulations:

- (1) Tax deductible receipts may be granted for legitimate charitable contributions.
- (2) Those designated for a stated purpose will be honored if possible as a matter of ethics, but contributors must realize that there is no absolute legal obligation to do so, and the contribution may be redirected (not returned) if the church determines not to fulfill the designee's preference. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of the local church ministry and Great Commission ministry at Calvary Bible Church.
- (3) Contributions designated or intended as a personal gift for a stated person are not able to be legally received, if the contributor intends to convey a tax-free gift or gain any tax-deductible advantage.
- (4) CBC considers giving to be an act of private worship, so we will not make the records of individual giving available to the congregation nor anyone lacking a legitimate need to know. Information about an individual's giving will not be made available to our paid pastors without good reason, in order to help protect their ministry from financial influence.

Section B. Funds

CBC will establish a General Fund to be regulated by budget. The Board of Elders may establish other funds and accounts, to be regulated by the By-laws and policies of this document. No fund or account may be established for any program, by any person, or by any sub-group of our church, without specific approval of the Board of Elders, adequate governing policy, and final authority residing with our congregation through the Elders. The books of all funds will be carefully maintained by the Finance Committee; may be open (excluding contributions) to any member with the appropriate written request submitted for the Board of Elders Approval; will be reviewed regularly by the board of Elders through financial reports and will be reviewed and reported to the congregation annually.

Section C. Budget

The Board of Elders is authorized to propose an annual budget, which becomes policy to be followed (not overspent) once adopted by the congregation in so far as contributions allow. The budget may be amended by the Board of Elders proposal and congregational approval. We agree that our budget limits spending and funds programs, but never requires spending nor creates programs. A budget figure alone does not set a salary, nor does it guarantee expenditure. The Board of Elders is authorized to establish a "contingency fund" amount, to be used in case of unavoidable emergency, or to accommodate any legitimate error in budget, planning, providing the amount is available in our accounts and does not conflict with other policies. Any other unbudgeted expenditure requires congregational approval upon proposal by the Board of Elders.

Section D. Disbursements

The corporation shall hold, manage, and disburse any funds or properties received by it from any source in manner that is consistent with the expressed purposed of this corporation.

The general nature and the objects of the corporation shall be religious, charitable, and such other, as are generally carried on by conservative, Protestant Churches of the United States; to organize, maintain, operate and conduct such Churches, departments or agencies, so as to carry out the above mentioned purposes; to own, control, lease, purchase or take by gift, devise, bequest or otherwise, and to convey, dispose, encumber, lease and to do all things and exercise all powers which a natural person might do and exercise control over real and personal property of every nature and kind whatsoever. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, directors, officers or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of Section 501(c)(3) purposes. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be for the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempt to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (include the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.

Section E. Fiscal Accountability

All accounts will be reviewed in detail on an annual basis after the close of the fiscal year by two individuals appointed by the Board of Elders (but not serving on the Board of Elders or the Finance Committee). Annually, the Board of Elders will appoint someone outside the congregation to review the books and contributions records to make sure that ethics, regulations, and policies are being followed.

ARTICLE XVIII CORPORATE RECORDS AND REPORTS

Section A. Records

The corporation shall maintain adequate and correct accounts, books and records of its business and properties. All such books, records, and accounts shall be kept at its principal place of business in the State of Tennessee, as fixed by the Board of Elders from time to time, otherwise stated in these By-laws.

Section B. Inspection of Books and Records

Every Elder shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect all books, records, documents of every kind, and the physical properties of the corporation, and also of its subsidiary organizations, if any.

A member shall be entitled to inspect and copy any of the following church records, provided the Board of Elders finds that the member has a legitimate purpose. This shall be done at a reasonable time and location, specified by the Board of Elders, and upon reasonable notice of at least 5 business days. The Board of Elders reserve the right to limit access to any records that contain confidential information and/or financial records or giving about a particular person or persons, otherwise stated in this document.

ARTICLE XIX

BIBLICAL COUNSELING

(1) All Christians struggle with sin and the effect it has on their lives and relationships (Romans 3:23; 7:7-25; Galatians 5:19-23). Whenever a Christian is unable to overcome sinful attitudes of behaviors through private efforts, God commands that he should seek assistance from other members, and especially from the Elders, who have responsibility of providing pastoral counseling and oversight (Rom 15:14; Gal 6:1-2; Col 3:16; 2 Tim 3:16-4:2; Heb 10:24-25; 13:17). Therefore, CBC encourages and enjoins its members to make confession and to seek wise counsel from each other, as clearly provided in James 5:16, and from the Elders.

(2) CBC believes that the Bible provides thorough guidance and instruction for faith and life. Therefore, our counseling shall be based on Scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry.

(3) Some church members who serve as recognized pastoral or lay counselors on behalf of the church may also work in professional field's outside the church. In this situation it is understood that as counselors of the church, they provide biblical counseling.

ARTICLE XX CONFIDENTIALITY

(1) The Bible teaches that Christians should carefully guard any personal and private information that others reveal to them (Prov 11:13). Protecting confidences is a sign of Christian love and respect (Matt 7:12). It also discourages gossip (Prov 16:28; 17:9; 20:19; 26:20), invites confession (Prov 28:13; James 5:16), and encourages people to seek counseling (Rom 15:14). Since these goals are essential to the ministry of the gospel and the work of this church, all members are expected to refrain from gossip and to respect the confidences of others. In particular, our Elders shall carefully protect all information that they receive through pastoral counseling, subject to the following guidelines.

(2) Although confidentiality is to be respected as much as possible, there are times when it is appropriate to reveal certain information to others. In particular, when the Elders of the church believe it is biblically necessary, they may disclose confidential information to appropriate people in the following circumstances:

(a) When an Elder is uncertain of how to counsel a person about a particular problem and needs to seek advice from other Elders in this church or, if the person attends another church, from the leaders of that church (Prov 11:14; 13:10; 15:22; 20:18; Matt 18:15-17).

(b) When the person who disclosed the information or any other person is in imminent danger of serious harm unless others intervene (Prov 24:11-12).

(c) When a person refuses to repent of sin and it becomes necessary to institute disciplinary proceedings (Matt 18:15-20), or seek the assistance of individuals or agencies outside this church (Rom 13:1-5).

(d) When required by law; e.g., to report suspected child abuse (Mark 9:36-37, 42; Matt 18:1-14).

(3) Scripture commands that confidential information is to be shared with others only when a problem cannot be resolved through the efforts of a small group of people within the church (Matthew 18:15-17). Therefore, except as provided in Article XIV, section B, an Elder may not disclose confidential information to anyone inside or outside this church without the approval of the Board of Elders or the consent of the person who originally disclosed the information. The Board of Elders may approve such disclosure only when it finds that all internal efforts to resolve a problem have been exhausted (1 Cor 6:1- 8), and the problem cannot be satisfactorily resolved without the assistance of individuals or agencies outside this church (Rom 13:1- 5), or when the Board of Elders deems it appropriate for the giving of testimony in a court of law, the reporting of physical or sexual abuse, or other cooperation with civil authorities.

(4) The Elders may, but need not, provide counselees with written notice of these confidentiality provisions, but these provisions shall be in effect regardless of whether such notice is given.

ARTICLE XXI

INDEMNIFICATION OF OFFICERS

(1) The Board of Elders may choose to indemnify and advance the church-related expenses of any officer, employee, volunteer or agent of the church.

(2) Subject to the provisions of paragraph c. of this section, the church shall indemnify any Elder or Deacon or former Elder or Deacon of the church against claims, liabilities, expenses, and costs necessarily incurred by him in connection with the defense, compromise, or settlement of any action, suit or proceeding, civil or criminal, in which such person is made a party by reason of being or having been an Elder or Deacon, to the extent not otherwise compensated, indemnified or reimbursed by insurance, if:

(a) The conduct of the Elder or Deacon was in good faith;

(b) The Elder or Deacon reasonably believed that his conduct was in the best interests of the church, or at least not opposed to its best interests; and

(c) In the case of any criminal proceeding, the Elder or Deacon had no reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful.

(3) The church may not indemnify an Elder or Deacon in connection with a proceeding brought against him by or in the right of the church, in which he was adjudged liable to the church, or where the Elder or Deacon is charged with receiving an improper personal benefit and he is adjudged on that basis.

ARTICLE XXII

BY-LAWS

Section A. Amendments

Upon recommendation of the Elder Board, any article or section of this constitution (except Article IV) may be revised or amended by a (2/3rds) two-thirds vote of the

members of the congregation who are present at an annual meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose, provided the proposed changes have been made public for two consecutive weeks in advance of said meeting. Article IV may be amended only if the proposed changes are approved by an 80 % vote after they have been published in the church bulletin for two consecutive weeks in advance.

(1) Record of Amendments – Whenever an amendment or new By-law is adopted, it shall be copied in the book of minutes with the original By-laws in the appropriate place. If any By-law is repealed, the fact of repeal with the date of the meeting at which the repeal was enacted or written assent was filed shall be stated in said book

Section B. Adoption

The adoption of this constitution by a (2/3rd) two-thirds vote of the members of the congregation who are present at an annual meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose shall put it into effect immediately, after which any constitution previously adopted shall be null and void.

Section C. Non-profit status

This church will only carry on activities permitted for an organization exempt from Federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Section D. Division

In the event of organic division of the church membership, the church property shall belong to those members who abide by this constitution.

Section E. Dissolution

In the event of the dissolution of this corporation, none of its assets shall be divided among its members. After all its debts have been satisfied, a majority vote of remaining members shall transfer all assets only to other non-profit Christian ministries that are in agreement with the beliefs of this church and have tax exempt status under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE XXIII

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section A. Instruments in Writing

All checks, drafts, demands for money and notes of the corporation and all written contracts of the corporation shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, as the Board of Elders or by approval of a (2/3rd) two-thirds congregational vote, when otherwise stated by the Bylaws.

I, the undersigned, being the Senior Pastor of Calvary Bible Church of Joelton and Nashville, Tennessee, do hereby certify that the above By-laws were adopted as the By-laws hereof on the (date), by the Board of Elders of said corporation in a regularly called meeting on the same date, to wit, (date). Said By-laws are, as of the date of this certification, the duly adopted and exiting By-laws of this Corporation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this (date). Hereby updated and revised on this, (date).

Signature

Appendix A

Full Doctrinal Statement

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We teach that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus the sixty-six books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We teach that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13), verbally inspired in every word (2 Timothy 3:16), absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed. We teach the literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture, which affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17).

We teach that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We teach that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20-21) without error in the whole or in the part (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16).

We teach that, whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal, grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17; 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15; 1 John 2:20). It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.

GOD

We teach that there is but one living and true God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4), an infinite, all-knowing Spirit (John 4:24), perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

God the Father

We teach that God the Father, the first person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6). He is the creator of all things (Genesis 1:1-31; Ephesians 3:9). As the only absolute and omnipotent ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator, He is Father to all men (Ephesians 4:6), but He is Spiritual Father only to believers (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chronicles 29:11). In His sovereignty, He is neither author nor approver of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38-47), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Ephesians 1:4-6); He saves from sin all those who come to Him through Jesus Christ; He adopts as His own all those who come to Him, and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9).

God the Son

We teach that Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father (John 10:30; 14:9).

We teach that God the Father created “the heavens and the earth and all that is in them” according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operations (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2).

We teach that in the incarnation (God becoming man) Christ surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of divine essence, either in degree or kind. In His incarnation, the eternally existing second person of the Trinity accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God-man (Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9).

We teach that Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness (Micah 5:2; John 5:23; 14:9-10; Colossians 2:9).

We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ was virgin born (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23, 25; Luke 1:26-35); that He was God incarnate (John 1:1,14); and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, and rule over God’s kingdom (Psalm 2:7-9; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:29; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 7:25-26; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

We teach that, in the incarnation, the second person of the Trinity laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God, assumed the place of a Son, and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes (Philippians 2:5-8).

We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive (John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25; 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24).

We teach that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (Romans 3:25; 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18).

We teach that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Romans 4:25; 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1).

We teach that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Jesus’ bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (John 5:26-29; 14:19; Romans 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23).

We teach that Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, which is His body, unto Himself at the rapture, and returning with His church in glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20).

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ is the one through whom God will judge all mankind (John 5:22-23):

- a. Believers (1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10);
- b. Living inhabitants of the earth at His glorious return (Matthew 25:31-46); and
- c. Unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11-15).

As the mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5), the head of His body the church (Ephesians 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18), and the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-33), He is the final judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior (Matthew 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-31).

God the Holy Spirit

We teach that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, eternal, underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity including intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13), emotions (Ephesians 4:30), will (1 Corinthians 12:11), eternality (Hebrews 9:14), omnipresence (Psalm 139:7-10), omniscience (Isaiah 40:13-

14), omnipotence (Romans 15:13), and truthfulness (John 16:13). In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 28:25-26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; and Jeremiah 31:31-34 with Hebrews 10:15-17).

We teach that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognize His sovereign activity in creation (Genesis 1:2), the incarnation (Matthew 1:18), the written revelation (2 Peter 1:20-21), and the work of salvation (John 3:5-7).

We teach that a unique work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost when He came from the Father as promised by Christ (John 14:16-17; 15:26), to initiate and complete the building of the body of Christ, which is His church (1 Corinthians 12:13). The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ; and transforming believers into the image of Christ (John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5; 2:4; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption (Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine teacher who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible. Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit (John 16:13; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 John 2:20, 27).

We teach that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

We teach, in this respect, that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today and that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church 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).

MAN

We teach that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Genesis 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9).

We teach that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world (Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11).

We teach that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence; incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death; became subject to the wrath of God; and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-19; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 1 John 1:8).

We teach that because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration (Psalm 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9-18, 23; 5:10-12).

SALVATION

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).

Regeneration

We teach that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24), when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct. Good works will be its proper evidence and fruit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 5:17-21), and will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit in his life through faithful obedience to the Word of God (Galatians 5:22-25; Ephesians 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12b; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4-10). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). Such a conformity is climaxed in the believer's glorification at Christ's coming (Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3).

Election

We teach that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 2 Peter 1:1-2).

We teach that sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:22-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 22:17). Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines. All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith, and all who come in faith the Father will receive (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8).

We teach that the unmerited favor that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part nor to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will, but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy (Ephesians 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 2 Peter 1:2).

We teach that election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign, but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love (Romans 9:11-16). This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:25-28; 2 Timothy 1:9).

Justification

We teach that justification before God is an act of God (Romans 8:33) by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6-7) and confess Him as sovereign Lord (Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11). This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man (Romans 3:20; 4:6) and involves the placing of our sins on Christ (Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:21). By this means God is enabled to "be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26).

Sanctification

We teach that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. This sanctification has to do with the believer's standing, not his present walk or condition (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach that there is also by the work of the Holy Spirit a progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the standing the believer positionally enjoys through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:17, 19; Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23).

In this respect, we teach that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. Eradication of sin is not possible, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

Security

We teach that all the redeemed once saved are kept by God’s power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24).

We teach that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God’s Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality (Romans 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13, 25-26; Titus 2:11-14).

We teach that as a result of regeneration, believers receive a “divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4); a new self (Ephesians 4:24); a new mind (1 Corinthians 2:16); a new will (Romans 6:13); a new nature (Romans 6:6); and become a “new creature” (2 Corinthians 5:17). Consequently, genuine salvation is transformation of the inner person (Galatians 2:20) and is therefore not defective or short-lived, but rather a faith which will endure forever (John 6:37-44; Philippians 1:6; cf. Hebrews 11).

We teach that although some genuine believers may stumble and fall, nevertheless, because of the radical transformation imparted by the grace of a sovereign God, they will persevere in the faith (1 Corinthians 1:8). Those who completely reject the Lord provide irrefutable evidence that they were never truly born again (1 John 2:19), being “tares” among the “wheat” (Matthew 13:24-30). God’s power is never limited, especially in His ability to accomplish what He has sovereignly decreed in divine election. The security of a believer is based upon the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Securing Work of the Father

We teach that believers are secure because the Father has chosen them to salvation from eternity past (Ephesians 1:4), having predestined them to come to the status of sonship in Christ (Ephesians 1:5). Thus, the ones the Father foreknew, predestined, called and justified are the same ones He will bring to future glorification (Romans 8:29-30). Therefore, if a genuine believer could be lost, man would in fact be capable of thwarting the purposes and power of God the Father, rendering His decrees subject to the will of man and therefore utterly untrustworthy and useless.

Securing Work of the Son

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ has redeemed the believer (Ephesians 1:7), appeased the wrath of God toward the believer (Romans 3:25), justified the believer (Romans 5:1), provided forgiveness for the believer (Colossians 2:13), and sanctified the believer (1 Corinthians 1:2). Moreover, the Son prays for believers to be with Him (John 17:24); He continues to be their Advocate at God’s bar of justice (1 John 2:12) and He continues to make intercession as the believer’s High Priest (Hebrews 7:25). Therefore, if a genuine believer could be lost, it would imply that Christ’s work as the Mediator for believers is deficient and ineffective.

Securing Work of the Holy Spirit

We teach that the Holy Spirit has regenerated the believer, giving him life (Titus 3:5); indwells the believer forever (John 14:17); sealed the believer for the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30), the sealing being a down payment, guaranteeing a believer’s future inheritance; and baptized the believer into union with

Christ and into the body of believers (1 Corinthians 12:13). Therefore, if a genuine believer could be lost, all of these divine works would become invalid and must be rescinded and reversed.

Separation

We teach that separation from sin is clearly called for throughout the Old and New Testaments, and that the Scriptures clearly indicate that in the last days apostasy and worldliness shall increase (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5).

We teach that out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us, and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our adoring love to God and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior. We also believe that separation from any association with religious apostasy and worldly and sinful practices is commanded of us by God (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).

We teach that believers should be separated unto our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; Hebrews 12:1-2) and affirm that the Christian life is a life of obedient righteousness demonstrated by a beatitude attitude (Matthew 5:2-12) and a continual pursuit of holiness (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:1-10).

THE CHURCH

We teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), the bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8), of which Christ is the head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18).

We teach that the formation of the church, the body of Christ, began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

We teach that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age (Ephesians 2:11-3:6). The church is distinct from Israel (1 Corinthians 10:32), a mystery not revealed until this age (Ephesians 3:1-6; 5:32).

We teach that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1) and that the members of the one scriptural body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (1 Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25).

We teach that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18) and that the church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (males, who are also called bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11) and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

We teach that these leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ (1 Timothy 5:17-22) and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

We teach the importance of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2), mutual accountability of all believers to each other (Matthew 18:5-14), as well as the need for discipline of sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture (Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16).

We teach the autonomy of the local church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations (Titus 1:5). We teach that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. Local churches, however, through their pastors and their interpretation and

application of Scripture, should be the sole judges of the measure and method of their cooperation (Acts 15:19-31; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

We teach that the purpose of the church is to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21) by building itself up in the faith (Ephesians 4:13-16), by instruction of the Word (2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-17), by fellowship (Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3), by keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42), and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:42).

We teach that all saints are called to the work of service (1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4:12; Revelation 22:12).

We teach that the church needs to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. First, He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:7-12) and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the body of Christ (Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

We teach that there were two kinds of gifts given to the early church: miraculous gifts of divine revelation and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message (Hebrews 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12); and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another. With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message, and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message (1 Corinthians 13:8-12). Miraculous gifts can even be counterfeited by Satan so as to deceive even believers (1 Corinthians 13:13-14:12; Revelation 13:13-14). The only gifts in operation today are those non-revelatory equipping gifts given for edification (Romans 12:6-8).

We teach that no one possesses the gift of healing today but that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted (Luke 18:1-6; John 5:7-9; 2 Corinthians 12:6-10; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15).

We teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38-42). Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:1-11). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42).

We teach that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:28-32). We also believe that whereas the elements of communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual Communion with the risen Christ who is present in a unique way, fellowshiping with His people (1 Corinthians 10:16).

ANGELS

Holy Angels

We teach that angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshipped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they were created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-7, 14; 2:6-7; Revelation 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:9).

Fallen Angels

We teach that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19), by taking numerous angels with him in his fall (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1-14), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Genesis 3:1-15).

We teach that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Isaiah 14:13-14; Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 12:9-10), the prince of this world who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of

Jesus Christ (Romans 16:20), and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

LAST THINGS (ESCHATOLOGY)

Death

We teach that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness (Revelation 6:9-11), that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8), that there is a separation of soul and body (Philippians 1:21-24), and that, for the redeemed, such separation will continue until the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17) which initiates the first resurrection (Revelation 20:4-6), when our soul and body will be reunited to be glorified forever with our Lord (Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54). Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:8).

We teach the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life (John 6:39; Romans 8:10-11, 19-23; 2 Corinthians 4:14), and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13-15).

We teach that the souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment until the second resurrection (Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:13-15), when the soul and the resurrection body will be united (John 5:28-29). They shall then appear at the Great White Throne judgment (Revelation 20:11-15) and shall be cast into hell, the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41-46), cut off from the life of God forever (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

The Rapture of the Church

We teach the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ before the seven-year tribulation (1 Thessalonians 4:16; Titus 2:13) to translate His church from this earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-5:11) and, between this event and His glorious return with His saints, to reward believers according to their works (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

The Tribulation Period

We teach that immediately following the removal of the church from the earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:27; 12:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; Revelation 16), and that these judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth (Matthew 24:27-31; 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12). At that time the Old Testament and tribulation saints will be raised and the living will be judged (Daniel 12:2-3; Revelation 20:4-6). This period includes the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24:15-31; 25:31-46).

The Second Coming and the Millennial Reign

We teach that after the tribulation period, Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David (Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:10-11; 2:29-30) and establish His Messianic kingdom for a thousand years on the earth (Revelation 20:1-7). During this time, the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth (Ezekiel 37:21-28; Daniel 7:17-22; Revelation 19:11-16). This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and by the removal of Satan from the world (Daniel 7:17-27; Revelation 20:1-7).

We teach that the kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel (Isaiah 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:1-17) to restore them to the land which they forfeited through their disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15-68). The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside (Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:1-26) but will again be awakened through repentance to enter into the land of blessing (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-32; Romans 11:25-29).

We teach that this time of our Lord's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life (Isaiah 11; 65:17-25; Ezekiel 36:33-38), and will be brought to an end with the release of Satan (Revelation 20:7).

The Judgment of the Lost

We teach that following the release of Satan after the thousand year reign of Christ (Revelation 20:7), Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city, at which time Satan and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven (Revelation 20:9). Following this, Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10), whereupon Christ, who is the judge of all men (John 5:22), will resurrect and judge the great and small at the Great White Throne judgment.

We teach that this resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection, whereupon receiving their judgment (Romans 14:10-13), they will be committed to an eternal, conscious punishment in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15).

ETERNITY

We teach that after the closing of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:7-15), the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved (2 Peter 3:10) and replaced with a new earth wherein only righteousness dwells (Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 20:15, 21-22). Following this, the heavenly city will come down out of heaven (Revelation 21:2) and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another (John 17:3; Revelation 21-22). Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28), that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (1 Corinthians 15:28).

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