



Full Gospel Church of God in S.A.

www.fgcsa.co.za

FULL GOSPEL CHURCH OF GOD IS...

The Church of God International was founded in 1886 upon the principles of Christ as they are revealed in the Bible, the Word of God. The Full Gospel Church of God in South-Africa, its doctrine and memorandum of agreement relevant to the amalgamation of 1951 with the Church of God in the United States of America is hereby confirmed.

The Full Gospel Church of God has its foundation of faith and practice in the Scriptures and the vital experience of its constituents is scripturally oriented.

CHRISTIAN

First and foremost, the Church of God is a determinedly Christian church. It is built upon the person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The doctrines and practices of the church are based upon His teachings. The denomination stands firmly for justification by faith, the priesthood of believers, the authority of the Bible, religious freedom, and the separation of church and state.

FOUNDATIONAL

The Church of God subscribes to the following five foundational Christian doctrines:

1. The inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible.
2. The virgin birth and complete deity of Christ.
3. The atoning sacrifice of Christ's death for the sins of the world.
4. The literal resurrection of the body.
5. Christ's second coming in bodily form to earth.

EVANGELICAL

Evangelical is the term used to describe those who affirm the primary doctrines revealed in the Scriptures. These doctrines include the inspiration and authority of the Word of God; the Trinity; the deity and virgin birth of Jesus Christ; salvation by faith in the atoning death of Christ; His bodily resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father; the ministry of the Holy Spirit; the second coming of Christ; and the spiritual unity of believers in Jesus Christ.

PENTECOSTAL

We believe in the Pentecostal experience, an enrichment of the Christian life through the power of the Holy Spirit that empowers believers to be effective witnesses of Christ.

The principle distinctive of the Full Gospel Church of God in SA as a Pentecostal organization is its belief in speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance and that this is the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

CHARISMATIC

The charismata (Gk.) or gifts of the Spirit appeared early in the life and ministry of the Full Gospel Church of God. The gifts can be divided into three categories: the gifts of revelation, the gifts of power and the gifts of utterance or inspiration. The gifts of revelation are the gifts of the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge and the discerning of spirits. The gifts of power are faith, miracles, and gifts of healing. The gifts of utterance and inspiration are prophecy, tongues and interpretation. The Holy Spirit bestows these gifts and those who accept the validity of these gifts are called charismatic.

EVANGELISTIC

From its inception the Full Gospel Church of God has been a revival movement. Evangelism has been in the forefront of all its activities. The church has maintained an aggressive effort to take the message of Christ throughout the world by all means and methods. Every program of the church reflects an evangelistic attitude: revivalism, conferences, worship services, teaching, preaching and its missionary efforts.

ORGANIZED

The magnitude of the Great Commission requires a united effort. This united endeavour is efficiently served by guidance, support, resources and leadership from a common centre. The Full Gospel Church of God is centrally organized. Centralized church government is administration from the national office, with regional councils to lead on local levels. It helps facilitate the fulfilment of the mission of the church.

Benefits of centralized government include the following: uniformity of doctrine and practice; principles that bind together local churches in the same manner; membership commitments in all churches; expansion and extension of fellowship; accountability; cooperative decision-making; and united efforts in evangelism and world outreach.

MINISTERS AND LAITY

There are different levels of ministry through this profession of faith, commitment to the church, training, and fulfilment of credential are required. The Full Gospel Church of God in SA emphasizes the doctrinal position of the priest-hood of all believers and encourages laity to assume a Biblical role in local church ministry.

EDUCATION

Emphasis upon education and training is a priority for the Full Gospel Church of God in SA. Educational opportunities are provided from local congregations through institutions of higher learning at the national level of the church.

A CARING CHURCH

From its beginnings, the Full Gospel Church of God has felt its responsibility to benevolence ministries. The church operates a number of specialized programs and institutions, such as:

- **Homes For Children**
- **Widows / Retired Ministerial Couples / Widowers**
- **Operation Compassion**

Several benevolence ministries and projects operate under the umbrella of Operation Compassion South Africa.

- **Chaplaincy Ministries**

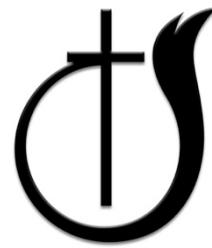
Full Gospel Church of God chaplains serve in full-time and voluntary positions. There are chaplains and counsellors in hospitals, jails, prisons and countless other agencies and institutions.

MISSIONS

The heart of Missions ministry is the implementation of a global strategy of evangelism, church planting and training. Its scriptural purpose is to fulfil the Great Commission of Christ; share Christ's love for the world; minister to the totality of human need; bring men and women to the knowledge of God and His redeeming grace; and obey Christ by confessing Him to the world.

Today, Church of God International/missions is carried out in 185 countries organized in eight geographical regions.

DECLARATION OF FAITH



The Full Gospel Church of God in SA believes the whole Bible to be completely and equally inspired and that it is the written Word of God. The Full Gospel Church of God has adopted the following Declaration of Faith as its standard and official expression of its doctrine.

We Believe:

- In the verbal inspiration of the Bible.
- In one God eternally existing in three persons; namely, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
- That Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of the Father, conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary. That Jesus was crucified, buried, and raised from the dead. That He ascended to heaven and is today at the right hand of the Father as the Intercessor.
- That all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and that repentance is commanded of God for all and necessary for forgiveness of sins.
- That justification, regeneration, and the new birth are wrought by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ.
- In sanctification subsequent to the new birth, through faith in the blood of Christ; through the Word, and by the Holy Ghost.
- Holiness to be God's standard of living for His people.
- In the baptism with the Holy Ghost subsequent to a clean heart.
- In speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance and that it is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost.
- In water baptism by immersion, and all who repent should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
- Divine healing is provided for all in the atonement.
- In the Lord's Supper and washing of the saints' feet.
- In the premillennial second coming of Jesus. First, to resurrect the righteous dead and to catch away the living saints to Him in the air. Second, to reign on the earth a thousand years.
- In the bodily resurrection; eternal life for the righteous, and eternal punishment for the wicked.

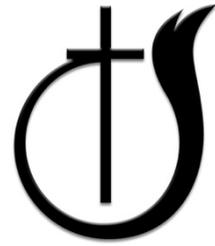
DOCTRINAL COMMITMENTS



The following Doctrinal Commitments represent the core beliefs of the denomination as outlined in Scripture.

- **Repentance.** Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19.
- **Justification.** Romans 5:1; Titus 3:7.
- **Regeneration.** Titus 3:5.
- **New birth.** John 3:3; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 3:9.
- **Sanctification subsequent to justification.** Romans 5:2; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 13:12.
- **Holiness.** Luke 1:75; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; Hebrews 12:14.
- **Water baptism.** Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:9, 10; John 3:22, 23; Acts 8:36, 38.
- **Baptism with the Holy Ghost subsequent to cleansing; the enduement of power for service.** Matthew 3:11; Luke 24:49, 53; Acts 1:4-8.
- **The speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance as the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Ghost.** John 15:26; Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:1-7.
- **The Church.** Exodus 19:5, 6; Psalm 22:22; Matthew 16:13-19; 28:19,20; Acts 1:8; 2:42-47; 7:38; 20:28; Romans 8:14-17; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 12:12-31; 2 Corinthians 6:6-18; Ephesians 2:19-22; 3:9, 21; Philippians 3:10; Hebrews 2:12; 1 Peter 2:9; 1 John 1:6, 7; Revelation 21:2, 9; 22:17.
- **Spiritual gifts.** 1 Corinthians 12:1, 7, 10, 28, 31; 1 Corinthians 14:1.
- **Signs following believers.** Mark 16:17-20; Romans 15:18, 19; Hebrews 2:4.
- **Fruit of the Spirit.** Romans 6:22; Galatians 5:22, 23; Ephesians 5:9; Philippians 1:11.
- **Divine healing provided for all in the Atonement.** Psalm 103:3; Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matthew 8:17; James 5:14-16; 1 Peter 2:24.
- **The Lord's Supper.** Luke 22:17-20; 1 Corinthians 11 : 2 3 - 2 6.
- **Washing the saints' feet.** John 13:4-17; 1 Timothy 5:9, 10.
- **Tithing and giving.** Genesis 14:18-20; 28:20-22; Malachi 3:10; Luke 11:42 ; 1 Corinthians 16:2 ; 2 Corinthians 9:6-9 ; Hebrews 7:1-21.
- **Restitution where possible.** Matthew 3:8; Luke 19:8, 9.
- **Premillennial second coming of Jesus.** First, to resurrect the dead saints and to catch away the living saints to Him in the air. 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 2:1. Second, to reign on the earth a thousand years. Zechariah 14:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Jude 14, 15; Revelation 5:10; 19:11-21; 20:4-6.
- **Resurrection.** John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15; Revelation 20:5, 6.
- **Eternal life for the righteous.** Matthew 25:46; Luke 18:30; John 10:28; Romans 6:22; 1 John 5:11-13.
- **Eternal punishment for the wicked.** No liberation nor annihilation. Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 3:29; 2 Thessalonians 1: 8, 9; Revelation 20:10-15; 21:8.

MISSION AND VISION



The set of ten commitments from Church of God Cleveland TN – also reflects the Full Gospel Church of God's core values in regard to fulfilling its mission and vision.

COMMITMENTS TO OUR MISSION AND VISION

1. PRAYER

We commit ourselves to making prayer the highest priority of the church demonstrated by:

- Every local church becoming a house of prayer for all nations.
- Emphasizing communication with God as the highest privilege and greatest responsibility of every member.
- Modelling by all church leadership of an active and effective prayer life.
- Uniting with other believers in corporate and intercessory prayer.

(Isa. 56:7; Mark 11:17; Rom. 8:26; 1 Cor. 14:14, 15; I Thess. 5:17; I Tim. 2:1-4, 8; James 5:14, 15)

2. PENTECOSTAL WORSHIP

We commit ourselves to gather regularly as the local expression of the Body of Christ to participate in Pentecostal worship that exalts God, engages the heart, mind and soul, and challenges to deeper commitment and discipleship. This commitment will be demonstrated by:

- Assisting local churches in planning and preparing for meaningful, anointed worship.
- Equipping pastors and other worship leaders to lead authentically expressed, spiritually alive worship.
- Modelling varying styles and forms of worship that glorify God and encouraging outreach and service.
- Emphasizing the importance of Biblical stewardship and the centrality of God's Word as elements of worship.

(John 4:24; Psalm 29:2; Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; Isa. 58; Mat. 25:31-46)

3. WORLD EVANGELIZATION

We commit ourselves to intentionally reaching the unconverted, baptizing them in water, and leading them to unite with the church. This commitment will be demonstrated by:

- Viewing all the nations of the world as our mission field.
- Encouraging our local churches to adopt and intercede for an unreached people group.
- Asking all national churches of the Church of God international to adopt and implement measurable steps to evangelize and disciple unreached people groups inside and outside of their own regions (Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 15:19-24; Revelation 5:9).
- Encouraging every local church to increase a minimum of 10% per year through conversion growth.
- Cultivating a genuine passion for the lost that will compel members to personally communicate the gospel of Jesus and demonstrate His love to those outside the faith.
- Discipling new believers and passing on our faith to the next generation.
- Practicing life-style evangelism.

(Mat. 9:37-38; Mat. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-18; Acts 1:8; Rom. 10:13-15)

4. CHURCH PLANTING

We commit ourselves to identifying, training and resourcing God-called church planters and to intentionally planting new life-giving churches. This commitment will be demonstrated by:

- Focusing designated resources of the local church /regional offices, and the national offices for planting new churches.
- Starting the number of church plants to 2-3 churches number of churches in a state/region/nation annually.
- Emphasizing the health and viability of new church plants as well as the number of churches planted.
- Affirming the different models of church planting for different situations.
- Recognizing church planting as an apostolic ministry for our day.

(Mat. 16:18; John 4:35; Acts 2:47; 14:23; Eph. 5:25-28)

5. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We commit ourselves to identifying and developing individuals whom God has called and given leadership gifts and challenging them to become servant-leaders. We will demonstrate our commitment by:

- Creating an environment in which men and women with ministry gifts are developed to serve as servant-leaders.
- Equipping, empowering and releasing lay leaders to serve as ministry partners both inside and outside the local church.

- Providing relevant resources and training opportunities for both clergy and laity.

Encouraging pastors to lead through vision, to communicate the vision to the congregation and to organize the body and each of its ministry groups so the vision can be realized.

(Mark 3:13-15; 2 Tim. 2:2; 2:15; 3:14-17; Eph. 4:11-13)

6. CARE

We commit ourselves to the challenge of being a church that genuinely cares for one another and for those who are lost, hurting and needy. We will demonstrate our commitment by:

- Building loving, caring relationships within families, between members, and within the communities we serve.
- Obeying the Care Commission of Christ in Matthew 25.
- Cultivating compassion and showing mercy to the unloved, the undesirable and the unreached of our society.
- Establishing in each local church some type of outreach ministry that demonstrates our genuine concern and love for the disadvantaged or oppressed.

(Psa. 86:15; Mat. 25; Luke 6:36; Acts 20:28)

7. INTERDEPENDENCE

We commit ourselves to the principle of interdependence, acknowledging our interconnectedness and dependence on all the members of the Body of Christ. We will demonstrate our commitment by:

- Reaching out to others in the Body of Christ for collaboration, resource sharing and learning opportunities.
- Encouraging local churches to build relationships with like-minded and like-hearted churches in their communities to work together to reach the lost.
- Involving clergy in the processes of mentoring, coaching and consulting on the local, state, regional, national and international levels to increase the level of trust and support among ministers.
- Engaging in dialogue and partnership with local, national and international organizations who seek to fulfil the Great Commission of Christ.

(Col. 2:19; 1 Cor. 12:14-31; Gal. 6:1-6)

8. COMMUNICATION

That we commit ourselves to utilizing every available medium and means to effectively maintain open and perpetual communication with our constituency. This commitment will be demonstrated by:

- Understanding that communication is the process of exchanging information, imparting ideas, and sharing the message so it is understood by others.
- Exploring the best media choices available to enable the transforming message of Christ to all mankind and cultural contexts.
- Discovering new ways and means of efficient and effective electronic mediums to maintain continuous connection with our constituency.
- Empowering ministry resources available to the church for immediate response to the needs of the world and the mission engagement of the church.
- Employing every facet of communication to expand the global reach of Christ's message, sustaining open exchange of ministry concepts, encouraging the strengthening and growth of local churches, enlisting and equipping the next generation of leaders, and fulfilling our mission and vision as a movement that is Christ-centred, people-oriented, and need-sensitive in all its ministry endeavours.

9. DISCIPLESHIP

We commit ourselves to the Lord's command to make disciples of all nations, to develop committed and faithful followers of Jesus Christ, and to be people of conviction identifiable by:

1. Their commitment to know what they believe and who they are in Christ;
2. Their competence through spiritual discipline, calling, and empowerment, and;
3. Their character development, which will result in reproducing themselves, disciples making disciples.

This commitment will be demonstrated by:

- Understanding that discipleship must be intentional for all believers upon their acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. If we are to retain them, they must be taught and have someone who will disciple them.
- Asking every church to prioritize discipleship in every facet of their ministry. Everything that is planned and executed in the local church should be identified as part of the discipleship process for those who are involved. The local church must understand that the growth process is ever evolving and must provide a framework by which growth can happen.
- Providing resources and discipleship experiences that will assist pastors and church leaders in the discipleship process, understanding that models may vary, but the outcome will be committed Christ followers.
- Understanding that passing the faith to the next generation will require making disciples of all ages. Discipleship must begin at the earliest age and continue.

(Matthew 5:43-48; 22:37-38; 28:19-20; John 14:15, 21-23; 15:10; Acts 1:8; 2:1-11, 41-47; Romans 12:1-2; 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Galatians 5:22-25; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-23; 2 John 6.)

10. EDUCATION

We commit ourselves to education as a vital part of all phases of the Spirit-filled Christian life. Education is to be nurtured by the church: locally in rural areas, towns, and cities; regionally in counties, states, and geographical regions; internationally in every country with a Church of God presence; and globally on every continent of the world. We will demonstrate our commitment by:

- Developing and fostering means of self-education with access to educational resources.
- Recognizing local-church institutions which provide education in church and/or school formats.
- Affirming in public places those who minister in education.
- Sponsoring educational institutions of higher learning to equip laity, ministers, institutions, and ministries.
- Providing curriculum and materials which affirm the doctrines, practices, mission, vision, and commitments of the Full Gospel Church of God.

PRACTICAL COMMITMENTS:



SPIRITUAL EXAMPLE

We will demonstrate our commitment to Christ through our practice of the spiritual disciplines; we will demonstrate our commitment to the body of Christ through our loyalty to God and commitment to His church; and we will demonstrate our commitment to the work of Christ through our being good stewards.

PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Spiritual disciplines involve such practices as prayer, praise, worship, confession, fasting, meditation and study. Through prayer we express our trust in Jehovah God, the giver of all good things and acknowledge our dependence on Him for our needs and for the needs of others (Matthew 6:5-15; Luke 11: 1- 13; James 5:13-18). Through both private and public worship we bless God, have communion with Him, and are provided daily with spiritual enrichment and growth in grace. Through periods of fasting we draw close to God, meditate on the passion of Christ, and discipline ourselves to submit to the control of the Holy Spirit in all areas of our life (Matthew 6:16-18; 9:14-17; Acts 14:23).

Through confession of our sins to God we are assured of divine forgiveness (1 John 1:9-2:2). The sharing of our confession with other believers provides the opportunity to request prayer and to bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2; James 5:16). Through meditation on and study of the Word of God we enhance our own spiritual growth and prepare ourselves to help guide and instruct others in scriptural truths (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2; 2 Timothy 2:15, 23-26).

LOYALTY TO GOD AND COMMITMENT TO THE CHURCH

The life of Christian discipleship calls for the fulfilment of our duties to the body of Christ. We are to unite regularly with other members of the church for the purpose of magnifying and praising God and hearing His Word (Matthew 18:20; John 4:23; Acts 2:42, 46, 47; 12:24; Hebrews 10:25).

Sunday is the Christian day of worship. As the Lord's Day, it commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead (Matthew 28:1) and should be employed for worship, fellowship, Christian service, teaching, evangelism, and proclamation (Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5, 6; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Colossians 2:16, 17).

We are to provide for the financial needs of the church by the giving of tithes (Malachi 3:10; Matthew 23:23) and offerings (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-24; 9:1-15).

It is our duty to respect and to submit to those whom the Lord Jesus has placed over us in the church (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:7, 17). Our exercise of authority must be as a spiritual example rather than as a lord over God's flock (Matthew 20:25-28; 1 Peter 5:1-3). Furthermore, our submission must be a manifestation of the spiritual grace of humility (Ephesians 5:21; 1 Peter 5:5, 6).

Finally, we are to avoid affiliation with oath-bound societies. Such societies may appear to have spiritual character, but by being oath-bound and secretive, they contradict Christian spirituality (John 18:20; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18). Christians must not belong to

any body or society that requires or practices an allegiance that supersedes or excludes their fellowship in Christ (Matthew 12:47-49; John 17:21-23).

BEING GOOD STEWARDS

In the Scriptures, the virtues of thrift and simplicity are honored, but the vices of waste and ostentation are solemnly prohibited (Isaiah 55:2; Matthew 6:19-23). The living of a godly and sober life requires the wise and frugal use of our temporal blessings, including time, talent and money. As good stewards we are to make the most of our time, whether for recreation or for work (Ephesians 5:16; Colossians 4:5). The idle use of leisure time degrades (2 Thessalonians 3:6-13; 1 Timothy 5:13), but the edifying use of it brings inner renewal. All our work and play should honor the name of God (1 Corinthians 10:31). As good stewards we must use fully our spiritual gifts (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, 27-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4 : 9 - 11) and natural talents (Matthew 25:14-30) for the glory of God. As good stewards we must recognize that the wise use of money is an essential part of the Christian's economy of life. God has committed temporal blessings to our trust (Matthew 7:11; James 1:17).

MORAL PURITY

We will engage in those activities which glorify God in our body and which avoid the fulfilment of the lust of the flesh. We will read, watch and listen to those things which are of positive benefit to our spiritual well-being.

GLORIFYING GOD IN OUR BODY

Our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost and we are to glorify God in our body (Romans 12:1, 2; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 10:31). We are to walk in the Spirit and not fulfil the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:16). Examples of fleshly behaviour which do not glorify God are noted in several passages of Scripture (Romans 1:24; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:8). Sinful practices which are made prominent and condemned in these scriptures include homosexuality, adultery, worldly attitudes (such as hatred, envy, jealousy), corrupt communication (such as gossip, angry outbursts, filthy words), stealing, murder, drunkenness and witchcraft. Witchcraft has to do with the practices of the occult, which are forbidden by God and lead to the worship of Satan.

READING, WATCHING AND LISTENING

The literature we read, the programs we watch and the music we listen to profoundly affect the way we feel, think and behave. It is imperative, then, that the Christian read, watch and listen to those things which inspire, instruct and challenge to a higher plane of living. Therefore, literature, programs and music which are worldly in content or pornographic in nature must be avoided. A Christian is not to attend (or watch on television) movies or theatrical performances of a demoralizing nature (Romans 13:14; Philippians 4:8).

BENEFITING SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING

The use of leisure time in the life of a Christian should be characterized by those activities which edify both the individual and the body of Christ (Romans 6:13; 1 Corinthians 10:31,32). We are to avoid places and practices which are of this world. Consequently, a Christian must not be a part of any other types of entertainment which appeal to the fleshly nature and/or bring discredit to the Christian testimony (2 Corinthians 6:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:21, 22; 1 John 2:15-17).

PERSONAL INTEGRITY

We will live in a manner that inspires trust and confidence, bearing the fruit of the Spirit and seeking to manifest the character of Christ in all our behaviour.

TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

A Christian should be trustworthy, dependable and a person of his word (Matthew 5:37; 1 Peter 2:11, 12). Therefore, the swearing of oaths is contrary to a Christian's trustworthiness and should be avoided (Matthew 5:34-37; James 5:12). Christ, by precept and example, taught that we love our enemy and prefer our brother (Matthew 5:43-48; Romans 12:10; Philippians 2:3, 1 John 3:16). We should behave in a way that will point others to Christ (Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 11:1).

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

If we live in the Spirit, we will manifest the fruit (attitudes and actions) of the Spirit and will not fulfil the lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5:16, 22-25; 1 John 1:7). Trustful relationships with others are a natural outgrowth of our positive relationship with the Lord (Psalm 1:1-3; Matthew 22:37-40). A lack of fruit-bearing in our lives will be judged (Matthew 7:16-20; Luke 13:6-9; John 15:1-8).

CHARACTER OF CHRIST

Love for others is the hallmark of the Christ-life (John 13:34, 35; 15:9-13; 1 John 4:7-11). In His relationship with His Father, Jesus displayed submission (Luke 22:42; John 4:34; 5:30). In His relationship with others, He demonstrated acceptance (John 8:11), compassion (Matthew 9:36; Mark 6:34) and forgiveness (Matthew 9:2; Luke 5:20). We cannot bear the fruit of the Spirit and manifest the character of Christ without being spiritually joined to Christ (John 15:4, 5) and without having the seed of the Word planted in our heart (John 15:3, 1 Peter 1:22, 23).

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY

We will give priority to fulfilling family responsibilities, to preserving the sanctity of marriage and to maintaining divine order in the home.

PRIORITY OF THE FAMILY

The family is the basic unit of human relationship and as such is foundational to both society and the church (Genesis 2:18-24). The divine origin of the family, along with its foundational character, makes it imperative that we give priority to ministry to the family, both from a personal and corporate standpoint. The practice of Christian disciplines and virtues should begin in the home (Deuteronomy 6:6, 7). Therefore, our families should establish some pattern for family devotions and should endeavour to provide a Christian environment in the home (1 Timothy 3:3, 4; 5:8).

SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE

Marriage is ordained of God and is a spiritual union in which a man and a woman are joined by God to live together as one (Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:7). Because of the divine character of marriage, it is a lifelong commitment with the only clear biblical allowance for divorce being fornication (Matthew 5:32; 19:9). Sexual involvement, either before marriage or with someone other than the marriage partner, is strictly forbidden in Scripture (Exodus 20:14; 1 Corinthians 6:15-18). Understanding the sanctity of marriage, partners should strive to maintain a happy, harmonious and holy relationship. Should divorce occur, the church should be quick to provide love, understanding and counsel to those involved. The remarriage of divorced persons should be undertaken only after a thorough understanding of and submission to the scriptural instructions concerning this issue (Matthew 19:7-9; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 7:2, 10, 11). Should a Christian desire to remain single, this decision should be respected and should be seen as a viable scriptural alternative (1 Corinthians 7:8, 32-34).

DIVINE ORDER IN THE HOME

When God created man, He created them male and female (Genesis 1:27). He gave them distinctly different characteristics (1 Corinthians 11: 14, 15; 1 Peter 3:7) as well as different responsibilities (Genesis 3:16-19; 1 Peter 3:1-7). In God's order, the husband is head of the home (Ephesians 5:22-31; Colossians 3:18, 19), parents are to nurture and admonish their children (Ephesians 6:4, Colossians 3:21), and children are to obey and honour their parents (Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20). In order for harmony to exist in the home, God's order of responsibility must be observed.

BEHAVIORAL TEMPERANCE

We will practice temperance in behaviour and will abstain from activities and attitudes which are offensive to our fellowman or which lead to addiction or enslavement.

TEMPERANCE

One of the cardinal Christian virtues is temperance or self-control (1 Corinthians 9:25; Titus 1:8, 2:2). It is listed as fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:23). We are admonished to practice moderation and balance in our behaviour (Philippians 4:5).

The Scripture indicates that it is within our prerogative to control our thinking (Philippians 4:8), our anger (Ephesians 4:26) and our communication (Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 3:8). To exercise self-discipline reflects the power of God in our life (1 Corinthians 9:27; 2 Peter 1:5-11).

OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOUR

The Bible speaks clearly that we are to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others as a demonstration of our love for them (Matthew 22:39; Romans 12:9-21, 13:10; Philippians 2:3-5). At times it is necessary for us to control our behaviour so as not to bring offense to others (Romans 14:13-21; 1 Corinthians 8:9-13). As we know Christ after the Spirit, we are also to know others in the same manner so we will not judge them after their outward behaviour alone (2 Corinthians 5:16). A respect and tolerance for differences in others should characterize our relationships (Romans 14:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 8:8; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13; 1 Timothy 4:1-5).

ADDICTION AND ENSLAVEMENT

One of the primary benefits of our liberty in Christ is freedom from the domination of negative forces (John 8:32, 36; Romans 6:14; 8:2). We are counselled not to put ourselves again under bondage (Galatians 5:1). Therefore, a Christian must totally abstain from all alcoholic beverages and other habit-forming and mood-altering chemical substances and refrain from the use of tobacco in any form, marijuana and all other addictive substances, and further, must refrain from any activity (such as gambling or gluttony) which defiles the body as the temple of God or which dominates and enslaves the spirit that has been made free in Christ (Proverbs 20:1; 23:20-35; Isaiah 28:7; 1 Corinthians 3:17; 5:11; 6:10; 2 Corinthians 7:1; James 1:21).

MODEST APPEARANCE

We will demonstrate the scriptural principle of modesty by appearing and dressing in a manner that will enhance our Christian testimony and will avoid pride, elaborateness or sensuality.

MODESTY

According to the biblical idea, modesty is an inner spiritual grace that recoils from anything unseemly and impure, is chaste in thought and conduct, and is free of crudeness

and indecency in dress and behaviour (Ephesians 4:25, 29, 31; 5:1-8; 1 Timothy 2:9, 10). Therefore, modesty includes our appearance, dress, speech and conduct and can be applied to all situations. The essential issue is, does our style of life please or displease God?"

APPEARANCE AND DRESS

Our life, character and self-image are reflected by our apparel and mode of dress. The admonition of Scripture, "Be not conformed to this world," reminds us that our manner of dress must be modest and decent (Romans 12:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:22, 23). It is not displeasing to God for us to dress well and be well groomed. However, above all we must seek spiritual beauty, which does not come from outward adornment with jewellery, expensive clothes or cosmetics, but from good works, chaste conversation, and a meek and quiet spirit (Philippians 4:8; 1 Peter 3:3-5).

PRIDE, ELABORATENESS, SENSUALITY

As godly people we are to abstain from all lusts of the flesh and avoid dressing in a manner that encourages immoral thoughts, attitudes and lifestyles (Galatians 5:13-21; 1 Peter 2:11, 2 Peter 1:4). Our beauty does not depend on elaborate, showy dress extravagant, costly attire or on the use of jewellery or cosmetics, but on our relationship with Christ. External adornment, whether clothing or jewellery, as an outward display of personal worth, is contrary to a spiritual attitude (James 2:1-4).

SOCIAL OBLIGATION

It should be our objective to fulfil our obligations to society by being good citizens, by correcting social injustices, and by protecting the sanctity of life.

BEING GOOD CITIZENS

As Christians we are members of the kingdom of God as well as a social order of this world. Obedience to God requires us to act in a responsible manner as citizens of our country (Mark 12:13-17; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17). Therefore, we should support civil law and order; hold our leaders in respect and pray for them; participate in school, community and governmental activities; exercise our voting rights; and speak out on clear-cut moral issues. God's law is supreme, but we are to obey the laws of our country insofar as they are not in conflict with obedience to God (Acts 5:29). When it becomes necessary to disagree with practices and requirements of government, we should do so out of a concern for the promotion of righteousness and not out of delight in discord and controversy.

CORRECTING SOCIAL INJUSTICES

Love for others and the recognition of the equal worth of all men in the sight of God (Acts 10:34; 17:26) should compel us to take steps to improve the situation of those who are

underprivileged, neglected, hungry, homeless and victimized by prejudice, persecution and oppression (Matthew 22:39; Romans 13:8-10; 1 John 3:17). In all of our dealings, we must be sensitive to human needs (Luke 10:30-37; James 1:27) and guard against racial and economic discrimination. Every person should have freedom to worship and participate in the life of the church regardless of race, colour, sex, social class or nationality.

PROTECTING THE SANCTITY OF LIFE

God alone confers life (Genesis 1:1-31); therefore, we are responsible to God to care for our physical life and that of others. If the circumstances require, we must be prepared to risk our life in the service of our neighbour (John 15:13); but the general rule is that we must respect our physical life and employ every worthy means to maintain it.

Since God alone confers life, God alone must decide when it is to be ended (Psalm 31:14, 15).

Because a human foetus is sacred and blessed of God, we believe that we have the responsibility to protect the life of the unborn (Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:41).

It is our firm conviction that abortion and euthanasia of aged, mentally incompetent, terminally ill and otherwise handicapped, for reasons of personal convenience, social adjustment or economic advantage, are morally wrong.

Furthermore, we believe it is our Christian responsibility to care for the earth and its resources. In the beginning God gave man dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:26-30).

This does not, however, give us license to pollute our natural environment or to waste the resources of the earth.