

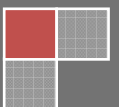
2011

# OFFICIAL MANUAL

*International Gospel Fellowship, Inc.*

This manual contains a copy of the corporations Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws (In Corporate Officer's edition), History, Statement of Faith, Biblical Doctrine, Pledge of Honor, and other pertinent information for the effective operation and ecclesiastic governance of the International Gospel Fellowship, (IGF) Inc. All previous versions of the IGF Official Manual are obsolete.

Authored By: IGF Inc. Corporate Officers  
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## **PREFACE**

This, the official manual of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. serves as the framework for the corporate organization as well as the ecclesiastical bodies (churches and Bible studies) that are a part of this corporation.

Dictated in this manual are the written bonding agents that not only unite our membership as one spiritual organism called and set apart to do the bidding of our God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also outlines the blueprint for the structure and administration of the ecclesiastic bodies in this corporation.

This manual is an official publication of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. which from time to time will be periodically reviewed to accommodate the present needs of the organization as deemed necessary and/or appropriate by the Corporation's officers both civil and ecclesiastic. Items within this manual can be supplemented as approved by the Corporation's Officers. When supplemental content exceeds 25% of the manual's overall content, a revision of this manual will be undertaken.

Doctrines within this manual are in no wise exhaustive or entire with regard to our beliefs, but rather sampling based on our design to standardize certain viewpoints on key biblical matters.

All articles written by non-organizational authors (as indicated by their copyright statement) that have been incorporated into this manual will be deemed as philosophy, view points, and scriptural reference in which we, the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc., promote and uphold as part of our spiritual convictions.

## **CORPORATE OFFICERS**

**CEO & Presiding Bishop:** Photo and brief bio forthcoming

**CFO & Director of W.O.V.:** Photo and brief bio forthcoming

**Director of Education:** Photo and brief bio forthcoming

**Director of Missions:** Photo and brief bio forthcoming

**Men After True Holiness (M.A.T.H.) Director:** Photo and brief bio forthcoming

**Director of Youth:** Photo and brief bio forthcoming

## **HISTORY OF THE IGF**

The International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. birthed on October 18th, 1999, was the result of Bishop Lloyd R. Ocampo, then known as Pastor Ocampo. Having a genuine desire to serve God in spirit and in truth and escape the pretense of religion and the depraved earthly church institution, with its corrupt leadership, Pastor Ocampo was inspired (through prophetic utterance), driven (by unwarranted persecution), and led out by the Holy Ghost from his former church organization, to form the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. (IGF Inc.).

From October 1999 to September 2001, Pastor Ocampo spent much time reestablishing the spiritual foundation of its members by reinforcing the doctrinal stand by which he formed the IGF Inc. and that being that God desires His people to be relational with Him and not religious (John 4:23). Additionally, efforts were implemented to restructure the administrative facet of the IGF Inc. as well.

During this period of rebuilding, many Christian Higher Learning lessons, inspirational books, along with syndicated and non-syndicated online newsletter articles were written by Pastor Lloyd Ocampo which accompanied the 'Created in Christ' weekly radio broadcast from a metro-Atlanta Christian radio station as well as a three-part TV broadcast entitled the same.

At its infancy, the IGF ordained three Elders in January of 2002 and began three separate works under its umbrella within the Continental United States: a Bible study in San Diego, California; a church in Pensacola, Florida as well as in Anchorage, Alaska. In addition, the IGF held two mission field projects with local liaisons in Srikakulam, India as well as, Ghana, Africa.

On April 15th, 2003, another turning point for the IGF ministry and organization occurred -- it was then that the Lord saw graciously to consecrate Pastor Ocampo to the Episcopacy of 'Apostle' and 'Sovereign Bishop' of the IGF Inc. in Jackson, MS. under the hands of Bishop J.L. Payne (Chief Apostle and Presiding Bishop of Christ International Churches, Inc.) along with the CICI College of Bishops.

Under his new designation, Bishop Ocampo again through the leading of the Holy Ghost, was instructed to remain still, for God had many things yet to show him. During this waiting and learning phase, God instructed Bishop Ocampo to release the works that had started under him as he could not give account unto God for them, because God was still yet doing a work that would propel the mainstay membership of the IGF Inc. into another spiritual level.

Currently, the IGF Inc. is experiencing another turning point, the foundation for this organization has been reset, educational programs and systems are in place not only for the spiritual betterment of its membership, but also for the equipping of men and women who are called by God to be adorned with the Gospel for the propagating of His kingdom here in the earth.

## **OUR CREED**

Having been led as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: we do now in the presence of God and angels, most solemnly and faithfully enter into a Covenant with one another as one body in Christ – ‘The International Gospel Fellowship, Inc.’

We therefore, by the aid of the Holy Ghost will walk together in Christian love: strive for the advancement of God’s church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort. We will promote its prosperity and spirituality, sustain its worship ordinances, discipline, doctrine, and pledge of honor, contribute willingly, cheerfully, and regularly to the support of its ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spreading of the Gospel to all nations.

We also endeavor to maintain family and sacred devotions; to dedicate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances, to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealing; to be faithful in our endeavors and exemplary in our department; to avoid all immorality, uncleanness, drunkenness, and drug abuse, lying, witchcraft and satanic worship and to be zealous in our effort to advance the kingdom of God through the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc.

We will endeavor to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy; courtesy in speech; be slow to take offense, and always ready for reconciliation, always mindful of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. Pledge of Honor.

Should we move from this location, we will as soon as possible unite with this same church preferable, if not some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant, and the principles of God's holy word.

## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The objectives and purpose of International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. are:

- To maintain and support the public worship of the Almighty God in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures according to Matthew 28:19-20 and Mark 16:15-20.
- To ordain Elders and ministers and to pray for missionaries who are divinely called and to send them out according to their gifts and calling; who shall be required to teach and preach the Gospel set forth in the Holy Bible according to I Timothy 3:1-15 and 5:17-21, II Timothy 4:2, Ephesians 4:11-14, and Acts 13:1-5.
- To be organized for the fellowship of Christians, regardless of race or national origin, who are spreading the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ at home and abroad, through the sending forth of evangelists and missionaries according to Matthew 28:19-20.
- To carry out the two ordinances instituted by Christ and practiced by the Apostles and early fathers of the primitive Church. The International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. recognizes these ordinances as binding upon the church.
  1. The Lords' Supper (ref: Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-29, Luke 22:19-20, I Corinthians 11:23-34)
  2. Water Baptism (ref: Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 2:38-41, 8:12, 36, 38-39, 19:1-5)

Support of the work of the Church and the financial administration is based upon Holy Scripture which teaches Tithes and Offering. Tithing is found in both the Old and New Testament, and is the best system for supporting the various ministries of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. As believers we are to give not only the tithe but offerings. Genesis 14:18-20, 28:20-22, Leviticus 27:30-34. Malachi. 3:7-12, Matthew 23:23, Luke 11:42, Luke 6:38, I Corinthians 16:1-2, II Corinthians 9:6-13, Acts 20:35



## STATEMENT OF FAITH

- We believe that the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God, infallible and inerrant in the original writings.
- We believe there is only one Living and True God, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; And in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, who was with God in the beginning, (John 1:1-2, 14); and in the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of Truth which proceeds from the Father and Son is equal with the Father and Son, (I John 5:7) and is a gift to the believer. John 14:16-17, Acts 1:8, John 15:26.
- We believe in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ and that He suffered, was crucified, died, and buried, the third day He arose again, He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and His return is imminent in order to judge the quick and dead. Matthew 1:18-25, Acts 2:22-24, 30-32, Mark 16., Luke 24., Acts 7:55-56, Ephesians 1:20-23, Hebrew 1:3-4, Acts 1:11, II Thessalonians 1:7-10.
- We believe in the personality of Satan, adversary of God and man. Genesis 3:1-5, 14-15, Isaiah 14:12-14, Ezekiel 28:12-15, Matthew 4:1-11 II Corinthians 11:14, I Peter 5:8
- We believe that man was created in the image of God, man sinned bringing death to all in his fall. Gen 1:26-27, 2:7, 3:1-19, Romans 5:12, I Corinthians 15-21-22.
- We believe in repentance from sin, in the atonement by the substitutionary death and shed blood of Jesus Christ for the propitiation of the sins of the world. Matthew 4:17, Luke 24:27, Romans 5:6-10, II Corinthians 5:15, I Peter 1:18-19, II Corinthians 5:21.
- We believe that salvation is by grace through personal Faith in Jesus Christ, thereby experiencing the new birth. Ephesians 2:8, John 3:1-17, 1:11-13, I Peter 1:18-23.
- We believe in baptism by immersion in water. Matthew 3:13-17, John 1:29-34, Matt 28-19, Mark 16:15-16 Acts 2:38.
- We believe in sanctification and in the baptism, filling and indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer: we believe in the operation of the gifts in the Church. John 17:17-20, Ephesians 5:26, I Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrew 13:12, I Peter 3:15, Acts 2:4, 1:8, 19:1-6 I Corinthians 12:13, 12:4-14:40
- We believe that the Church is the body of Christ and is composed solely of born again believers. Ephesians 1:22-23, 5:23-27, Revelations 19:7-8.
- We believe the commission of Christ is still incumbent on every believer to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-19 teach and witness Acts 8:1,4
- We look for the resurrection of the body; and life everlasting. Job 19:25-26 John 11:25-26, Acts 4:2, Romans 8:11, I Corinthians 15-12-28, John 3:16
- We acknowledge one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Ephesians 4:5,6.

# BIBLICAL DOCTRINE

## INERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE:

The bible is the written Word of God. It is the revelation of the truths of God conveyed by inspiration through his servants to us. As such, it is infallible and without error. The implications of this statement are:

- A. The Bible refers to original autographs. While the science of textual criticism assures us of a trustworthy text, inerrancy can be claimed only for the original writings (Jeremiah 36:2).
- B. The Bible in actuality is the very Word of God. The Divine Author promoted the original thought in the mind of the writers (Amos 3:8); he then guided their choice of words to express such thoughts (Exodus 4:12, 15); and lastly, He illuminates the mind of the reader of such words in a way that the reader potentially may comprehend the same truth as was originally in the mind of the writer (I Corinthians 2:12; Ephesians 1:17, 18). Thus both thought and language are by revelation and inspiration.
- C. Inspiration is that special act of the Holy Spirit by which He guided the writers of the scriptures. Inspiration Makes full allowance for the divergent backgrounds, abilities, and personalities of the writers, and applies it to all they wrote as it is found in the scriptures.
- D. Inerrancy is defined as being "exempt from error" and infallibility as a near synonym reading "incapable of error, certain." Inerrancy, if there is any difference in the share of reading between the two terms, emphasizes the truth and fullness of scripture while infallibility emphasizes the trustworthiness of scripture. Such inerrancy and infallibility apply to all of scripture and include both inerrancy of revelation and factual inerrancy. It is truth (2 Sam. 7:28, Psalms 119:43, 160; John 17:17, 19, Colossians 1:5).

Historical Considerations: While discussion on the doctrine of inerrancy is primarily a phenomenon of recent years, a survey of church history suggests that the church has long held to a high view of inspiration with the doctrine of inerrancy implicit in that view.

Exegetical Considerations: The starting point for a correct understanding of the doctrine of Inerrancy is the self witness of the Bible. The Bible closely claims for itself divine authority and full inspiration, and implicit reading is the doctrine of inerrancy (Matthew 5:18; John 10:34, 35; Matthew 22:32; Matthew 22:43-45, Galatians 3:16). One of the most forceful statements on the full inspiration of the scriptures is found in II Timothy 3:16. The uniform witness of the scriptures themselves is close: God spoke the concepts (revelations) to the mind of the writer; the Holy Spirit guided the transmission (inspiration) of that concept into the objective form of words; and, through the continual guidance of the Holy Spirit (Illumination), we receive the original revelation as we read the scriptures. II Peter 1:21

## **THE DOCTRINE OF GOD:**

We believe in one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Ref: Ephesians 4:6)

- A. Natural Attributes: God has life: He hears, sees, feels, acts and therefore is a living being. (Ref: John 5:26; Jeremiah 10:10; II Chronicles 16:9)
  
- B. The Divine Trinity: There are three separate and distinct persons in the Godhead (Ref: I Corinthians 8:6, Ephesians 4:6, I Corinthians 11:3, II John 3, John 14:16,26, 15:26, 16:7-15, John 5:31-37, Romans 8:16, I John 3:6)
  - 1. God the Father, the first person of the Trinity,
  - 2. Jesus Christ the son, the second person of the Trinity,
  - 3. The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity.
  
- C. The Eternity of God: God has no beginning and will have no end. Eternity is infinite duration; that is duration without beginning or end
  
- D. The Immutability of God: God, in his nature, attributes and counsels, is unchanging. (Ref: Malachi 3:6, I Samuel 15:29, Psalms 102:26-27, James 1:17, Hebrews 13:8)
  
- E. The Omnipotence of God: Signifying all God's unlimited power. (Ref: Matthew 19:26, Job 42:2, Genesis 18:14, Psalms. 93:3-4, Jeremiah 32:17)
  
- F. The Omnipresence of God: God is present everywhere and there is no point in the universe where he is not. (Ref: Psalms 139:7-10, Acts 17:24-28, Matthew 18:20, Jeremiah 23:23-24)
  
- G. The Holiness of God: His moral nature and character. (Ref: Genesis 35:2, Exodus 3:5, 14:15, 19:20, 28:36, 34:5, Leviticus 11:44-45, I Peter 1:16, Revelations 4:8, Luke 5:8, Hebrews 12:14, Isaiah 6:3)
  
- H. The Love of God: (including mercy and grace) Grace is love at work in redemption; love carrying on in spite of sin; love reaching down to the level of unworthy and guilty man. (Ref: Matthew 5:44,45, John 3:16, I John 3:16,17, I John 4:8,16)
  
- I. The Righteousness and Justice of God: This is manifested in his loving righteousness and hating iniquity. The righteousness of God is manifested in his visiting upon sinners the punishment due to their sins. (II Tim. 4:8, Romans 6:23). His righteousness is manifested in the reward given to the righteous for their faithfulness. (Ref: Psalms 98:1-3, 103:6, 129:1-4, II Thessalonians 1:6,7, Matthew 16:27)

## **THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST:**

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, the eternal Word, and our great God and Savior, was born of The Virgin, Mary. Because of our sins there was a separation between God and man. It was always a necessity to have a sacrifice for sin. God no longer wanting animal sacrifices, therefore was looking for a perfect sacrifice for man's sin. Christ, being the perfect sacrifice, came for the purpose of dying for man's sin. Christ took on human form so that he could be tempted in all points yet without sin. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission for sins. At the age of thirty he began his ministry; preached the Gospel, healed the sick, cast out devils, and trained twelve disciples to carry on the ministry after this death. At the age of thirty-three, Christ died for man's sins. His death, burial, resurrection and ascension resulted in our salvation. He was delivered for our offenses and he was raised for our justification. (Ref: John 1:1, 14, 3:3, 16, Isaiah 7:14; Romans 6:23, Matt 1:20-25, 28:6; Hebrews 2:17; 9-13-15)

- A. Death: The wages of sin is death. Christ who knew no sin became sin for us. He being our substitutionary sacrifice died in our stead. (Ref: Hebrews 9:13-15, Romans 3:25, Romans 6:23 II Corinthians 5:21)
- B. Burial: In fulfillment of prophecy Christ was buried in a literal grave for a period of three days and three nights. At which time he descended into the lower parts of the earth to deliver those righteous souls (those who died in faith prior to our Lord's coming) from the captivity of the Devil. (Ref: Hebrews 2:14-15, 4:9 Matthew 12:40)
- C. Resurrection: The greatest manifestation of God's power was when he raised Jesus from the Grave. His resurrection represents his power over death, hell and the grave. His resurrection assures us a newness of life and immortality with God the Father in Heaven. (Ref: Acts 2:24-32, Romans 6:4, I Thessalonians 4:13-17, I Peter 1:3, I Corinthians 15:51-58)

## **DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:**

The Holy Ghost is the third person in the Trinity (Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; I John 5:7) and is equal with God the Father and Christ the Son (I Corinthians 12:4-6, II Corinthians 13:14). He proceeded from the Father (John 15:26) at the Son's request (John 14:16-17). He is a gift to the believer (Acts 2:38; 8:14-20).

- A. Symbols of the Holy Spirit: Some of the names and symbols used to describe the Holy Ghost is dove, comforter, breath, wind, power, fire, oil, or water, (John 3:5-8; 20:22; Romans 8:16). Although suggestive of something impersonal the Holy Ghost is not an "IT." One should never refer to him in this manner. In Romans 8:16 the word "itself" should be correctly interpreted since it refers to the Spirit which is a personal noun. (Ref: John 14:26)
- B. Personal Characteristics of the Holy Spirit:
  - 1. He searches the deep things of God (I Corinthians 2:10).
  - 2. He cries (Galatians 4:6).
  - 3. He makes intercession (Romans 8:26).

4. He convicts men of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:7-11).
5. He places the believer, by baptism, into the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:13).
6. He enables us to speak the word of God with boldness (Acts 2:4, 4:13, 14, 29).
7. He divides the gifts of God (I Corinthians 12:4-11, Ephesians 4:7-11) that we may be profitable and fit for service.

A Spirit-filled life is therefore a Spirit-controlled life. We are told to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). It is the command of God.

The Holy Ghost comes to indwell the believer (John 14:16-17), to seal the believer (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30), and as the Spirit of Truth to guide the believers. He speaks and shows the truth (John 16:13-14). The Holy Ghost gives us power to witness, power to serve, power to live right, power to love. Power comes by being filled with the Holy Ghost. The filling is for our conduct and service as Christians. The Spirit-filled life is found in doing the will of God (Philippians 2:13).

He is our Paraclete - the Greek word which says the Holy Ghost is our Comforter, or advocate, the one who walks alongside, the one who is called alongside to help; the help itself (John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7; II Corinthians 1:3-4). The Holy Ghost comforts, prays; makes intercessions (Romans 8:26, 27), calls and commissions (Acts 13:2; 20:28) and abides within us. He teaches, instructs and guides us.

We believe in the manifestation of the Holy Ghost, the operation of the gifts in the church (I Corinthians 12:4-11). According to the Word of God, we believe the Holy Ghost is a gift of God, given to the believers. The person who is separated from sin and set apart or dedicated unto God is a sanctified believer through the Holy Ghost and ready for service (I Peter 1:2, II Thessalonians 2:13, Romans 8:2) and the fruit of the Spirit are evidenced in their life (Galatians 5:16-25).

### **THE DOCTRINE OF ANGELS:**

- A. Definition and Usage of "Angel": The word literally means messenger and is used of Christ, angels, and men.
- B. Christ, the second person of the Trinity: Appeared to men as the messenger of God. (Ref: I Corinthians 10:4, 9; 11:3)
- C. He is called the Angel of God: References: Genesis 21:7; 31:11, Exodus 3:2, Judges 6:20
- D. The Angel of the Lord: References: Genesis 16:7-11; 22:11-15, Exodus 15:19, Numbers 22:22-35, 2 King 1:3, I Chronicles 21:12-30
- E. His Angel: References: Genesis 24:7, 40 Exodus 23:20, 33:2 Numbers 20:16
- F. Mine Angel: References: Exodus 23:23; 32:34
- G. Angel of his presence: Reference: Isaiah 63:9
- H. The Nature of Angels: They are heavenly spirit beings with:
  - A. Personal spirit bodies - with bodily parts as hands, feet, eyes, heads, voices, mouths, hair, faces and other parts which men have. (Ref: Genesis 18:2,4,8; 19:1-22, Judges 13:10)

- B. Personal souls with emotions (Luke 13:1-10), passion (Genesis 6:1-04, 19:3), anger (Revelations 12:12), enmity 19 (Gen 3:15), lusts (John 8:44), vengeance (I Peter 5:8), Jesus (I Peter 1:12), pride (Ezekiel 28:17)
  - C. Personal Spirit with intelligence and wisdom – (Ref: II Samuel 14:20, 19:27, Matthew 24:36)
  - D. Ability to speak language (I Corinthians 13:1) and other spirit faculties
  - E. General facts about angels - They are glorious (Luke 9:26), immortal (Luke 20:36), powerful and mighty in body (II Thessalonians 1:7-10, Revelations 18:1, Isaiah 37:36), heavenly spirit being (Psalms 104:4)
- I. The work of Angels: They carry on work daily and meet responsibilities that only beings with personal bodies, souls and spirits are capable of:
- 1. Riding spirit horses (2 King 2:12, 6:13-7)
  - 2. Guard Gates (Revelations 21:12)
  - 3. Wage War in actual bodily combat (Revelations 12:7-9, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10)
  - 4. Rule nations (Daniel 10:13-21; 12)
  - 5. Lead sinners to gospel workers and direct preachers (Act 8:26; 2:13-19)
  - 6. They bind Satan (Revelations 20)
  - 7. Separate the good and the bad (Matthew 9:20, 13:2, 5:40)
- J. The appearance of Angels: They are occasionally pictured in other forms and in other manifestations as with wings, and as a combination of man, beast, and birds as in Ezekiel 1:5 and Isaiah 6:6. But apparently such manifestations only occurred by way of a vision or special revelation from God. No angel literally appeared in such form.

They also seem to always have appeared as youthful or mature men (Mark 16:5), but never as old men, perhaps because they neither age nor die (Luke 20:36).

In the present fascination of our culture, previously referred to as *angelmania*, the common conception of angels is that of winged creatures and most times as female.

Some of the commonly held conceptions are not supported by the scriptural witness. There are no indications of angels appearing in female form. Nor is there explicit reference to them as winged, although Daniel 9:21 and Revelation 14:6 speak of them as flying. The cherubim and seraphim are represented as winged (Exod. 25:20; Isa. 6:2), as are the symbolic creatures of Ezekiel 1:6 (cf. Rev. 4:8). However, we have no assurance that what is true of cherubim and seraphim is true of angels in general. Since there is no explicit reference indicating that angels as a whole are winged, we must regard this as at best an inference, but not a necessary inference, from the biblical passages which describe them as flying.

While angels generally appear as men in Scripture, Zechariah 5:9 may suggest this is not always the case. The two women mentioned in this passage are not specifically called angels, but they are clearly agents of God or forces of Satan, like angels, good or evil.

## THE DOCTRINE OF DEMONS:

The origin of demons spring from the existence of angels. Demon - a malevolent spirit of evil nature. From the root word 'dao,' meaning evil or destructive. (Greek term daimon pronounced 'dah-hee-mon')

### A. The Nature of Demons:

1. They're spirit beings. Spirit = Pneuma - Breath, wind of inspiration. Indicating that demons have power to touch the mental faculty where inspiration springs forth. (Ref: Matthew 17:18, Mark 9:25, Ephesians 6:12)
2. They have an intellect, show emotion, and maintain a free will.
  - a. Mark 1:24 (They knew Jesus).
  - b. Matthew 8:29 (They also know of their doom and torment).
  - c. They have a well-developed system of doctrine (I Timothy 4:1-3).

B. They are immoral and their doctrine leads to immorality. ( I Timothy 4:1-2 )

C. There are two classes of Demons. (2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6 )

1. Those enchained
2. Those loosed

D. Origin of Demons (Revelations 12:3-4a): "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven and did cast them to the earth." One third of the angels left with Lucifer from heaven as they were drawn. The word \*Drew - Surd - to hale or come, persuade by intimidation after making choice.

### E. Activities of Demons:

1. Demons attempt to thwart the purpose of God. (Ref: Daniel 10:10-14, Revelations 16:13-16)
2. Demons extend authority to Satan by doing his bidding. (Ref: Ephesians 6:11-12)
3. Demons may be used of God in carrying out his purposes. (Ref: Samuel 16:14, II Corinthians 12:7)

### F. In General:

1. Demons can inflict disease. (Ref: Matthew 9:33, Luke 13:11, 16)
2. Demons can possess men in total or in part. (Ref: Matthew 4:24)
3. Demons can possess animals. (Ref: Mark 5:13)
4. Demons oppose the spiritual growth of God's children. (Ref: Ephesians 6:12)
5. Demons disseminate false doctrine. (Ref: I Timothy 4:1)

### G. Demon Possession:

Demon possession is when a demon resides in a person's spirit or portions of spirit and should and exerts direct control and influence over that person with certain derangement of mind and body. Christians cannot be possessed but they can be influenced by demons, where portions of their mind, emotions and will are the center of demonic oppression.

#### H. Effect of Demon Possession:

1. Sometimes physical disease. (Ref: Matthew 9:32-33)
2. Sometimes mental derangement. (Ref: Matthew 17:4)
3. Only the unsaved can be possessed
4. Demonic activity usually heightens when:
  - a. Great spiritual truths and enlightenment are the strongest
  - b. Truth and light have been abandoned
5. Demons fear the blood of Jesus
6. They were defeated by Christ on Calvary and fear the name of Christ.

Exercising caution, however, does not mean we should treat the matter of demonology lightly. The Bible clearly recognizes both the activity of demons and their great number. This is even more evident when we recognize that the word devils in our common English version really means "demons." Actually, the word devil (Greek, Diabolos, the slanderer) is appropriate only for Satan. This is not to say, however, that the devil does not work through demons. Satan is a created being, a finite spirit, and is not omnipresent. He does most of his work through demons scattered in various parts of the world. Jesus' work in casting out demons was at least a part of His work of healing those oppressed (exploited, dominated, under the tyrannical rule) of the devil (Acts 10:38). It should be noted that the word oppressed as used here is stronger than in today's usage).

Demons do not want to stay in the presence of true Christians. The Scripture is full of assurance for the believer. "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4). A believer is a person who is delivered from the devil. This is fundamental. It seems evident that the term possessed should not be applied to true believers. What the Bible does show is that Satan and his cohorts are external foes. We are in warfare against Satan's forces and they are looking for opportunities to attack us. (Ephesians 6:12)

Jesus defeated Satan by quoting the Word (Matthew 4). We too must take our stand on God's word and resist Satan and his demons in faith. (1 Peter 5:8, 9; James 4:7)

### **THE DOCTRINE OF MAN:**

#### A. The Origin of Man:

1. Man's body was formed out of dust. (Ref: Genesis 2:7, 3:19)



2. Man is made in God's own image: Bodily shape, figure, model, and form. (Ref: Genesis 1:27, 5:3, 9:6, Exodus 20:4, Leviticus 26:1)
3. In the likeness of God, man possessed personal, rational, and moral faculties. (Ref: Gen 2:19 & 20, Psalms 17:15, Romans 1:23)
4. The whole human race descended from the seed of Adam & Eve. (Ref: Genesis 1:27, Acts 17:26)
5. Both male and female are represented in man. Female was made from the ribs of man. (Ref: Genesis 2:21-22, Genesis 1:21-28, Gen 5:2, Matthew 19:42)

#### B. The Original Man:

1. Adam and Eve being created last represented the highest form of created life, in that man was placed at the head of all God's work - the heavens, including the sun, moon, stars and the earth, and all living things. (Ref: Genesis 1:26-28, Psalms 8:6-8)
2. Adam was made higher than the angels, but by sin he was brought low and made subject to death. (Ref: Romans 3:23)

#### C. Man's Being:

Man consists of three components - Body, soul and spirit (I Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 4:12). "God formed man out of dust" refers to man's physical body. "...breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" refers to man's spirit as it came from God; and "man became a living soul" refers to man's soul. When the body was quickened by the Spirit and brought into existence a living and self-conscious man was formed, Genesis 2:7 "The body is world-conscious". The soul is self-conscious, and the spirit is God-conscious.

#### D. Immortality:

The Bible teaches that after the body of man dies, the soul and spirit continue to live on. (I Corinthians 15) Man charts his own destiny by his conformity or nonconformity to the gospel (Luke 16:15-16; Luke 13:3, 5) Eternal life with God in heaven and on earth is the destiny of those who conform to the truth (John 14:1-3, I Thessalonians 4:13-18, Revelations 5:10, 22:4-5), Eternal hell and punishment are the destiny of those who refuse to obey the truth. (Ref: Luke 12:5, Matthew 25:41, 46, Mark 9:43-49, Revelations 14:9-11, 20:11-15, Isaiah 66:22-24)

### **THE DOCTRINE OF SIN:**

#### A. What is sin?

1. Sin is the transgression of God's law. (Ref: I John 3:4)
2. Refusal to obey, failure to follow commands, insubordination. (Ref: Romans 5:19, II Corinthians 10:6, Ephesians 2:2, 5:6, Col. 3:6, Hebrews 2:2)

#### B. How sin came into the world (Romans 5:12)

1. Adam's disobedience refusal to obey, failure to follow commands brought sin into the world. Man is a descendant of Adam and became a partner of his sin. (Ref: Acts 17:26, Romans 3:23, Psalms 51:5)
2. Fact about sin (Romans 5:12-21; I Corinthians 15:21-22)
  - a. Sin came to the world by one man
  - b. It was not in the world at creation
  - c. Sin caused death to enter the human race

#### C. Results of sin

1. Curse upon the woman. (Ref: Genesis 3:16)
2. Curse upon man and the earth. (Ref: Genesis 3:17)
3. The beginning of discord between man and Satan. (Ref: Genesis 3:15)
4. Broken fellowship with God. (Ref: Genesis 3:8-10)
5. Brought condemnation upon the whole world. (Ref: Romans 3:19)
6. We are all sharpened in iniquity. (Ref: Psalms 51:5)

### **THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION**

Through the fall in the Garden of Eden by Adam and Eve as recorded in Genesis 3:1-19 all of their descendants were born in sin, and separated from the fellowship of God, man's creator. Death reigned through Adam, and he caused sin to enter in the earth and in man. (Ref: Romans 5:12, 14, 17, 20).

Through Christ grace was restored to men Romans (5:15-17), and life reigns through Him (Romans 5:17-18, 21; John 3:16; 10:10). Man received salvation, or deliverance from sin, through confession of Jesus Christ as the one sacrifice pleasing to God (Is. 53:10), and that He has been raised from the dead, and now sits at the right hand of the Father (Romans 10:9). His sins are forgiven by God the Father, and no longer counted against him (Psalms. 103:12). The Holy Spirit of God then takes residence in the spirit of man, and brings to him the life of Christ (Ephesians 1:13).

### **THE DOCTRINE OF THE LAST DAYS**

#### A. The Rapture:

At an appointed time that is only known by God the Father, Christ will descend from heaven and appear in the air with a shout, an archangel's voice will sound, and a trumpet will be blown. I Thessalonians 4:13-17. This event will first wake up the bodies of those who died believing in Christ. They shall be resurrected from their graves, and rise to meet the Lord, and immediately afterward those who are alive will ascend with them.

These resurrected bodies will be reunited with their souls, which Christ will bring with Him, and be presented before the Father by Christ. Ephesians 5:26-27 At that time, the saints will receive their judgment or rewards for their works. I Timothy 4:10; I Corinthians 3:11-15.

They will live in mansions provided by Christ John 14:1-3 in the city of God. Hebrews 11:10; Revelations 3:12.

#### B. The Marriage Supper:

A marriage supper will take place in Heaven between the Lamb and the Holy City. Revelations 19:19 The Lamb's wife (the new Jerusalem) will be made up of the saints of all ages from Abel to the last one in the first resurrection. They will all live in the new Jerusalem.

#### C. The Second Resurrection:

The day of judgment for those who did not accept the Lamb will be at the time of the great white throne judgment at the end of the 1000 years of Christ's reign upon the earth. II Peter 3:7; Revelations 10:11-15 The earth will be cleansed by fire to destroy all rebels who have sided with Satan against Christ. All things affected by the curse of Adam will be removed, and anything that is man made. Hebrews 12:26-27; Romans 8:19-22.

Afterwards, will appear the new Heaven and the new Earth, and the eternal kingdom which will be headed by Jesus Christ, and God the Father.

### **THE DOCTRINE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

The terms kingdom of God and kingdom of heaven are frequently found in Holy Scripture and in contemporary Christian usage.

#### A. Linguistic Meaning of the term Kingdom

The primary meaning of malkuth (Hebrews) and basileia (Greek) is the authority, reign, or rule of a king. The territory, subjects, and operations of the Kingdom are secondary meanings.

The Kingdom of God is the sphere of God's rule (Psalms 22:18). Yet fallen man participates in the universal rebellion against God and His authority (I John 5:19, Revelations 11:17-18). By faith and obedience man turns from his rebellion, is regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and becomes a part of the Kingdom and its operation. Though human participation in the Kingdom is voluntary, God's Kingdom is present, whether or not people recognize and accept it.

#### B. The Kingdom of God in the Old Testament

Throughout the Old Testament (but especially in the Psalms and the prophets) the idea of God as King ruling over His creation and over Israel is clearly expressed. Although God's immediate kingship is evident in the Old Testament, there is also a strong emphasis on a future fulfillment of God's universal rule. This anticipation often coincides with messianic expectations associated with both the first and second advents (Isaiah 9:6-7, 11:1-12, 24:21-

23, 45:22-23; Zechariah 14:9) Daniel. 4:34 describes God's rule as an everlasting dominion and a kingdom that is from generation to generation.

### C. The Kingdom in the New Testament

While the idea of the universal rule of God permeates the Old Testament, the kingdom of God takes on additional meaning and importance in the teaching and ministry of Jesus. The ministry of Jesus begins with the proclamation, The Kingdom is at hand (Matthew 3:2, 4:17; Mark 1:15).

Thus the kingdom of God is both a present reality and a promise of future fulfillment. The Kingdom is already present on earth in the person and acts of Jesus, by the Holy Spirit. Yet the fullness of the Kingdom awaits a final apocalyptic arrival at the end of this age (Matthew 24:27, 30-31; Luke 21:27-31)

### D. The State of the Kingdom Now

Just as some who followed Jesus "thought that the kingdom should immediately appear" (Luke 19:11) some today are expecting Christians to usher in the fullness of the Kingdom in an earthly rule. The millennium and the ultimate expression of the Kingdom will not come without the physical return of Jesus Christ to the earth (Luke 21:31). The Kingdom is already present, but not yet complete. It is both present and future.

The interim between the first and second advents of Christ (the present age) is marked by violent confrontation between the power of the Kingdom and the power that dominates the world in this present age.

### E. The Holy Spirit and the Kingdom of God

The power of the Kingdom, so manifest in the cross, the resurrection and the ascension, was passed on to all who would be filled with the Spirit. Through the church the Spirit continues the kingdom ministry of Jesus himself.

### F. The Kingdom as a Future Reality

Biblical charismata, anointed proclamation of the word, and confirming signs and wonders are distinguishing marks of the kingdom of God at work now. The kingdom of Satan has already been invaded by Jesus in the power of the Spirit (John 16:11; Colossians 1:13, 2:15). Yet final destruction of Satan and complete victory over all evil is part of a future eschatological consummation (Revelations 20:10)

### G. The Kingdom and the Church

The kingdom of God is not the church. Yet there is an inseparable relationship between the two. The invisible and true church is the spiritual body of which Christ is the head (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18).

The Kingdom of God existed before the beginning of the church and will continue after the work of the church is complete.

#### H. The Kingdom of God and the Kingdoms of Earth

The kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world exist side by side at the present time. However, these kingdoms will not be one and the same until Christ returns and the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ (Revelations 11:15).

The kingdoms of the earth are subject to the influence of Satan (John 12:31, 14:30).

#### I. Thy Kingdom Come

Christ taught His disciples to pray, Thy kingdom come (Matthew 6:10). The Kingdom is already among us in that it has invaded Satan's domain and has assured final victory. The Kingdom comes in a measure whenever a person receives Christ as Savior, is healed or delivered, or is touched in anyway by the divine. Yet the future consummation of the kingdom of God the time when all evil and rebellion will be eliminated is the fervent hope of the Christian.

The Kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever (Revelations 11:15).

### **THE DOCTRINE OF THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit also referred to in the scriptures as: The spirit without measure (John 3:34), The promise of the Spirit (Galatians 3:14), The fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19), and River of Living Water (John 7:38) is the experience when the Holy Spirit, who abides within the Christian's Spirit, floods the human soul with the power of God. This flooding of the human soul came as a result a promise made by God the Father. This promise was repeated by Jesus to his disciples (Luke 24:49) for spiritual service. This same promise also applies to all believers (Matthew 3:11).

The primary evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is the manifestation of the Gift of speaking in Tongues by the believer (Acts 2:4). The Baptism of the Holy Spirit also may impart in the believer the operation of one or more of the Gifts of the Spirit (word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, and interpretation of tongues), as found in I Corinthians 12:8-10.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit may be given at salvation (Acts 9:17-18), before water baptism (Acts 9:17-18), after water baptism (Matthew 3:16-17), or a while after initial salvation (Acts 2:1-11).

The Spirit Baptism may be given by God as the result of the hearing of the word of God (Acts 10:44-48), the laying on of hands by a mature believer (Romans 1:11), the believer desiring and

asking for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 14:1), or by God giving the gifts as he wills (I Corinthians 12:11).

The prerequisites for the Spirit Baptism are:

- A. Having Jesus Christ as your personal savior (salvation)
- B. Having all of your sins forgiven
- C. Having the Holy Spirit abiding within your spirit as a result of salvation
- D. Having denounced ALL forms of witchcraft, precognition (fortune telling), mind reading, astrology, certain physical phenomena (telekinesis, levitation, and astral projection), spiritualism, and techniques of mind expansion (which include drugs and hypnotism)

## **THE DOCTRINE OF DIVINE HEALING**

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement, and is the privilege of all believers. (Ref: Isaiah 53:4, 5 Matthew 8:16, 17; James 5:14-16)

### **A. An Integral Part of the Gospel**

As we observe the ministry of both Jesus and the apostles, it is evident that divine healing was not something peripheral. It was an important witness to Jesus as the revelation of the Father, as the promised Messiah, and as the Atoning Savior sin (see John 10:37, 38.)

The Bible shows a close connection between the healing ministry of Jesus and His saving, forgiving ministry. His power to heal was actually a witness to His authority to forgive sins (Mark 2:5-12). Again and again His healing miracles parallel His preaching of the gospel and show the same compassion (Matthew 4:23; 9:35, 36).

People came from all directions both to hear Him and to be healed (Luke 5:15; 6:17, 18). He never turned any away but healed all who came to him (Matthew 12:15; 14:14), curing all varieties of sickness, disease, deformities, defects, and injury (Matthew 15:30, 31; 21:14). He also delivered people from demons and the problems they caused (Matthew 4:24).

Jesus recognized that sickness is often the result of sin (John 5:14) or of the activity of Satan (Luke 13:16). He recognized also, however, that sickness is not always the direct result of sin (John 9:2, 4). There were times when it was rather an opportunity for God to be glorified (Mark 2:12).

Miracles of healing were an important part of the works God sent Jesus to do (John 9:3, 4). This is in line with the Old Testament revelation of God as the Great Physician, the Lord who heals (Exodus 15:26; Psalms 103:3, where the Hebrew participles used in both cases indicate

it is God's nature to heal). Jesus showed that divine healing is still a vital part of God's nature and plan.

Gifts of healing are included among the manifestations of the Spirit intended to edify or build up the Church (I Corinthians 12:7) and are tied in with the witness of Jesus Christ as Lord (I Corinthians 12:3).

#### B. Provided for in the Atonement

The primary purpose of the atonement was cleansing from sin (Leviticus 16:30; see also Romans 5:11 where "atonement" is the same word translated "reconciliation" in Romans 11:15 and 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19). It is also clear, however, that atonement brought release from the penalty and consequences of sin in order to bring restoration to God's blessing and favor.

Again atonement provides for the consequences of sin. Even where sickness is not the direct result of sin, it is still in the world because of sin. Therefore it is among the works of the devil Jesus came to destroy (I John 3:8) and is thus included in the atonement.

Again, the language of Isaiah 53:4 specifically speaks of physical ills and indicates that Christ in His atonement was concerned about providing for sickness as well as sin. Matt 8:16,17 not only confirms this, but shows that the atonement includes divine healing as a means of meeting the needs of those who come to Jesus.

#### C. The Privilege of all Believers

Just as salvation is by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8), so all God's blessings and gifts are ours by His grace or unmerited favor. We do not earn them. We do not deserve them.

No one in the New Testament demanded healing. People came to Jesus beseeching Him. They did not look on healing as their right, but as a gracious privilege extended to them.

We recognize that there have been abusers today. But we must not let that cause us to retreat from a positive proclamation of the truth of the Scripture. The apostles were able to say, "Such as I have give I thee" (Acts 3:6).

Gifts of healing are among the variety of gifts and manifestations of the Spirit set in the Church as the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:4-11; 28-30). Like the other gifts, these seem to be administered through members of the Body for the edification of those who need them.

### **THE DOCTRINE OF SECURITY OF BELIEVERS**

In view of the Biblical teaching that the security of the believer depends on a living relationship with Christ (John 15:6); in view of the Bible's call to a life of holiness (I Peter 1:16; Hebrews 12:14); in view of the clear teaching that a man may have his name taken out of the Book of Life (Revelations 22:19); and in view of the fact that one who believes for a while can fall away

(Luke 8:13); we disapprove of the unconditional security position which holds that it is impossible for a person once saved to be lost. Salvation is available for every man. (Ref: 2 Peter 3:9; John 3:16; Romans 10:11-13).

- A. Salvation is received and kept by faith. (Ref: Ephesians 2:8; Philippians. 3:9; Hebrews 10:38; 1 Peter 1:5; Romans 3:28; Galatians 2:20,21)
- B. During the maturing process the believer must learn by his mistakes as well as by his victories. Nevertheless, his security is never in doubt as long as his faith in Christ is steadfast, for he is kept by faith.
- C. For He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (Ref: 1 Corinthians 5:21)
- D. Continuing in sin will adversely affect the believer's faith and will ultimately lead them back into a life of sin. (Ref: 1 John 1:8; 3:8; Romans 3:5-8; I Corinthians 3:1-3; Hebrews 3:12-24; 12:1)
  - 1. The Bible makes it clear that in this life Christians do sin and that the Christian's recourse when he has sinned is forgiveness through Christ. (Ref: I John 1:8,9, 2:1)
  - 2. On the other hand, it is unnatural for a Christian to continue in a life of sin. That is, as long as he has the life of Christ within him, he cannot habitually sin. He cannot keep on sinning the way the child of the devil does. Instead, the Christian should grow spiritually and lay aside sin, recognizing that continued sin will adversely affect his faith and will eventually lead them back into sin.
  - 3. The believer is not in a revolving door, moving in and out of the grace of God! He is secure in the hand of God, (Romans 8:38, 19). If He is Born of the Spirit he has become brand new. (Ref: I Corinthians 5:17)
  - 4. The believer must also be careful that he does not take a light attitude toward sin. He dare not use the grace of God as a license to sin (Romans 6:1). Continued sin becomes presumptuous, high-minded, and is evidence of rebellion (Numbers 15:30,31). Believers must be on guard constantly (Hebrews 12:15) and examine ourselves ( II Corinthians 13:5) perpetually.
- F. The believer's salvation is forfeited by rejecting Christ (John 17:12; Hebrews 10:38; 1 Timothy 4:1; 5:12, 15; I John 5:16; II Peter 2:20, Hebrews 20:26, 27; 6:4-6).

God does not let anyone go easily (Romans 10:21). But a believer can be lost if he disregards the continuing checks of the Holy Spirit and reaches the point where he rejects Jesus as his Savior.

It is possible to believe for a while and in time of temptation to fall away (Luke 8:13). It is possible for the weak brother to perish for whom Christ died (I Corinthians 8:11). It is possible for a name to be written in the Book of Life and then removed because of sin (Revelations 22:19).

The bible does recognize the possibility of forfeiting salvation, but it never ceases to offer hope for anyone who wants to respond to the entreaty of the Holy Spirit. Jesus' invitation is



without qualification. He speaks to all when He says. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. (Ref: Matthew 11:28)

## **THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION**

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). The Bible begins with creation, and the fact that God is Creator is always in view from Genesis to Revelation.

Even though the Bible is not primarily a book of science, it is as trustworthy in the area of science when it speaks to any other subject. We can have confidence in what it says concerning the origin of all things because "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine" (2 Tim. 3:16).

Scripture focuses our attention not so much on the act of creation as on God himself as the Creator. Creation is the revelation of an intelligent, loving, personal God. In contrast to pantheism, He is distinct from His creation (Psalms 90:2). In contrast to deism, He continues to be personally interested in His handiwork; for He upholds, sustains, and preserves it (Nehemiah 9:6).

We are to worship and serve Him as the Creator (Isaiah 40:26, 28, 31). The Bible further emphasizes the fact that God is the Creator of all things (Exodus 20:11; Psalms 146:6; Nehemiah 9:6; Acts 14:17; Revelations 4:11, 10:6). This is one of the distinctive elements of the biblical revelation. In contrast to ancient heathenism and modern materialism, the Bible teaches a genuine beginning. Most heathenism was dualistic, (teaching that the universe in some form that existed eternally alongside the gods). In heathen myths the gods are seen as having created something, but always from preexisting materials. The very declaration that God is the Creator sets Him apart from the idols (Psalms 96:5).

Materialists teach that matter and its laws are eternal and are the sum totals of all existence, thus ruling out the idea of God all together.

Another important fact of Biblical revelation is that creation was the cooperative work of the Trinity (Genesis 1:2). Several Other facts are also clear:

- A. The biblical account of creation reveals progress and climax; all this evidence of sequence, balance, correspondence, progress, and climax show careful, intelligent planning.

God exercised His wisdom and control at all times (Psalms 136:5, 148:5, Isaiah 45:12, 48:12, 13) and brought it all to a complete and well-designed end (Genesis 1:31).

- B. It is evident that God carried out His plan in distinct steps. This is indicated by the mention of succeeding days in Creation and by the mention of the evening and morning.

The Bible record of creation thus rules out the evolutionary philosophy which states that all forms of life have come into being by gradual, progressive evolution carried on by resident forces.

- C. It is also evident that no part of God's creation, whether man, angel, or devil, is creative in the sense God is.

The word create (bara) thus emphasizes that God alone is the Creator, and His acts of creation are unique and unprecedented.

- D. God has a purpose in creation. He created for Himself or for His own pleasure (Proverbs 16:4, Revelations 4:11) and for His glory (Isaiah 43:7). He wanted the earth to be inhabited (Isaiah 45:18).

- E. The account of creation is intended to be taken as factual and historical.

In summary then, we see that the Bible points us to God as the Creator in every step of creation. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear (Hebrews 11:3). "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast" (Psalms 33:9).

## **THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY**

The distinctive and all comprehensive doctrine of the Christian faith declares two affirmations: (I John 5:7)

- A. That there is but one God
- B. That the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are each God

The Gospels whole-heartily proclaim them as the threefold source of redemption. The word one means one in unity as well as one in number. There is:

- A. One God the Father (I Corinthians 8:6)
- B. One Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:8)
- C. One Holy Ghost (Acts 5:3, 4)

They are all call God. The Hebrews Elohim is the word for God in Gen 1:1, it is a uniplural noun meaning Gods. Plural persons are used of God, proving plurality of persons. (Ref: Genesis 1:26, Isaiah 6:8, John 14:23)

Scriptures proving people have seen God as one of the individual persons or together as three persons are found in the Bible. (Ref: Daniel 7:9-14, Exodus 24:9-11, Matthew 3:16-17, Act 7:56-60)

Three self-acting persons are referred to as blessing, anointing, sending and doing things for one another. (Ref: Isaiah 11:2, 42:1-7, 48:16, Zechariah 12:10-13)

The three persons are mentioned in the introductions to New Testament books, Romans 1:1-5, I Corinthians 1:3. Christ is the mediator between God and man, not between himself and man, I Timothy 2:5.

Proofs They Are Not All One Person:

- A. Father in heaven while Jesus was on earth. (Ref: Matthew 3:16-17, John 11:41, John 12:27-39)
- B. Christ sits at the right hand of the Father. (Ref: Colossians 3:1, Acts 7:56)
- C. Jesus confesses men before His Father. (Ref: Matthew 10:32)
- D. Jesus prays to the Father. (Ref: John 14:16, John 11:41, John 17:1)
- E. Both Jesus and Satan refer to a God separate from Jesus. (Ref: Matthew 4: 6-10)
- F. Jesus came from God and was going back to God. (Ref: John 17:5, Philippians 2:5-8, John 16:28)
- G. The Son died not the Father. (Ref: Luke 23:46, Romans 5:6-11)
- H. The Father and the Son spoke to each other in audible voices at the same time and place being heard by many witnesses. (Ref: Matthew 3:16-17, John 12:27-30, 2 Peter 1:17)
- I. The word both is used of the Father and the Son proving two persons. (Ref: John 15:24)
- J. Jesus was resurrected and exalted by the Father so he could not be the Father. (Ref: Ephesians 1:20-22, Philippians 2:9-11)
- K. The Holy Spirit has been seen with the natural eyes as a separate person from the Father and the Son. (Ref: Matthew 3:16-17, John 1:31-34, Rev. 4:5, 5:6)
- L. A clear distinction is made of the names of all three persons. (Ref: Matthew 28:19, II Corinthians 13:14, 1 John 5:7)
- M. The Trinity is seen as working together in all things. (Ref: Revelations 1:4-6, 3:1, 5:6, 22:17)

In the Book of Revelation, the term seven spirits, horns, and eyes are not the seven titles of the Holy Spirit for there are more titles that this that are applied to the Holy Ghost. Since there is but one Spirit (Ephesians 4:4-6), the seven lamps of fire (Revelations 4:5), the seven horns, and the seven eyes are all symbolic of the one Holy Spirit and can only denote His fullness and power. Therefore The Father, The Son, and The Holy Ghost, but they work together as one but have three separate bodies although referred to many times as one because of their unity.

## **DOCTRINAL ISSUES FACING TODAY'S CHURCH**

### **MARRIAGE**

#### **A. The Origin:**

The origin of marriage can be found in Genesis 2:23-24: "The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called "woman," for she was taken out of man.' For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." God created man and then made woman to compliment him.

The word “helper” used to describe Eve in Genesis 2:20 means “to surround, to protect or aid, help.” Eve was created to be alongside Adam as his "other half," to be his aid and his helper. A man and woman, when married, become "one flesh." This oneness is manifested most fully in the physical union of sexual intimacy. The New Testament adds a warning regarding this oneness. "So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate" (Matthew 19:6).

#### B. The Relationship:

There are several epistles written by the apostle Paul that refer to marriage and how believers are to operate within the marriage relationship. One such passage is 1 Corinthians chapter 7, and another is Ephesians 5:22-33. When coupled together, these two passages in study provide biblical principles that form the framework for a God-pleasing marriage relationship.

The Ephesians passage is especially profound in reference to a successful biblical marriage. "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior" (Ephesians 5:22-23). "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Ephesians 5:25). "In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church" (Ephesians 5:28-29). "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh" (Ephesians 5:31).

When a believing husband and wife institute God's principles, a biblical marriage results. A biblically based marriage is one that is in balance, with Christ as the head of the man and the wife together. The biblical concept of marriage is a oneness between two individuals that pictures the oneness of Christ with His church.

#### C. The Sanctioning:

Seeing then, that a marriage between husband and wife is supposed to depict Christ's marriage to the church as well as God's relationship with His people (Jeremiah 3:14), it is even more important for us to observe how this church (namely the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. and its ministers) fosters and promotes marriage within its membership.

Because of scriptural ignorance, many churches and ministers foster and promote marriage between non-believers which is contrary to God's design for a biblical marriage. This will be avoided by ministers belonging to the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. As ministers who must give an account for all they do on behalf of God in the IGF Inc. we must exercise care in what we sanction through the marriage ceremony. We as ministers belonging to the IGF Inc. cannot, with clear conscience recite the words, "...what God has joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6), when we have collaborated to join two parties together who are either unequally yoked (one sinner and one saint), or are

not born again (both sinners). For God does not join sinners together, neither does He join a sinner with one of His children. Although one may stand to argue that God told the prophet Hosea to marry a harlot. Though this be true and can be found in scripture yet it was not the standard or desire of God for His children. God merely used Hosea's and Gomer's (the harlot) failed marital relationship to depict how His people Israel failed to relate to God in the marital relationship the He has with them. We (the ministers of the IGF Inc.) therefore, will be no party to sanctioning marriages of this sort, for to do so would be to speak a lie, tell a lie on God, and falsely use His word.

D. No Forbiddance:

Our non-sanctioning of marital ceremonies does not conflict with our biblical mandate of non-forbiddance to marry. The Bible teaches us in I Timothy 4:1-3 that in the latter times seducing spirits and doctrines of devils will inspire scripturally ignorant ministers to speak lies in hypocrisy, command people to abstain from the eating of meats, as well as forbidding to marry.

We in the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. DO NOT forbid members or non-members from getting married. If couples consisting of two sinners, or one sinner and one saint decide to marry, we will advise them of our convictions relating to our inability to sanction their marriage and suggest marriage through an alternative method (e.g. the Justice of the Peace or other authority).

## **DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE**

A. God Hates It:

To begin with, no matter what view one takes on the issue of divorce, it is important to remember Malachi 2:16: "I hate divorce, says the LORD God of Israel." According to the Bible, marriage is a lifetime commitment. "So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate" (Matthew 19:6). God realizes, though, that since marriages involve two sinful human beings, divorces are going to occur. In the Old Testament, He laid down some laws in order to protect the rights of divorcees, especially women (Deuteronomy 24:1-4). Jesus pointed out that these laws were given because of the hardness of people's hearts, not because they were God's desire (Matthew 19:8).

B. Permissible But Controversial:

The controversy over whether divorce and remarriage is allowed according to the Bible revolves primarily around Jesus' words in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9. The phrase "except for marital unfaithfulness" is the only thing in Scripture that possibly gives God's permission for divorce and remarriage. Many interpreters understand this "exception clause" as referring to "marital unfaithfulness" during the "betrothal" period. In Jewish custom, a man and a woman were considered married even while they were still engaged or "betrothed." According to this view, immorality during this "betrothal" period would then be the only valid reason for a divorce.

However, the Greek word translated “marital unfaithfulness” is a word which can mean any form of sexual immorality. It can mean fornication, prostitution, adultery, etc. Jesus is possibly saying that divorce is permissible if sexual immorality is committed. Sexual relations are an integral part of the marital bond: “the two will become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5; Ephesians 5:31).

C. Remarriage:

Therefore, any breaking of that bond by sexual relations outside of marriage might be a permissible reason for divorce. If so, Jesus also has remarriage in mind in this passage. The phrase “and marries another” (Matthew 19:9) indicates that divorce and remarriage are allowed in an instance of the exception clause, whatever it is interpreted to be. It is important to note that only the innocent party is allowed to remarry. Although it is not stated in the text, the allowance for remarriage after a divorce is God’s mercy for the one who was sinned against, not for the one who committed the sexual immorality. There may be instances where the “guilty party” is allowed to remarry, but it is not taught in this text.

Some understand 1 Corinthians 7:15 as another “exception,” allowing remarriage if an unbelieving spouse divorces a believer. However, the context does not mention remarriage, but only says a believer is not bound to continue a marriage if an unbelieving spouse wants to leave. Others claim that abuse (spousal or child) is a valid reason for divorce even though it is not listed as such in the Bible. While this may very well be the case, it is never wise to presume upon the Word of God.

D. Restoration & Healing are Preferred:

Sometimes lost in the debate over the exception clause is the fact that whatever “marital unfaithfulness” means, it is an allowance for divorce, not a requirement for it. Even when adultery is committed, a couple can, through God’s grace, learn to forgive and begin rebuilding their marriage. God has forgiven us of so much more. Surely we can follow His example and even forgive the sin of adultery (Ephesians 4:32). However, in many instances, a spouse is unrepentant and continues in sexual immorality. That is where Matthew 19:9 can possibly be applied. Many also look to quickly remarry after a divorce when God might desire them to remain single. God sometimes calls people to be single so that their attention is not divided (1 Corinthians 7:32-35). Remarriage after a divorce may be an option in some circumstances, but that does not mean it is the only option.

It is distressing that the divorce rate among professing Christians is nearly as high as that of the unbelieving world. The Bible makes it abundantly clear that God hates divorce (Malachi 2:16) and that reconciliation and forgiveness should be the marks of a believer’s life (Luke 11:4; Ephesians 4:32). However, God recognizes that divorce will occur, even among His children. A divorced and/or remarried believer should not feel any less loved by God, even if the divorce and/or remarriage is not covered under the possible exception clause of Matthew 19:9. God often uses even the sinful disobedience of Christians to accomplish great good.

# Homosexuality: The Christian Perspective

by  
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## **Q. What is homosexuality?**

Homosexuality is the manifestation of sexual desire toward a member of one's own sex or the erotic activity with a member of the same sex. (The Greek word homos means *the same*). A lesbian is a female homosexual. More recently the term "gay" has come into popular use to refer to both sexes who are homosexuals.

## **Q. How does one determine if the practice of homosexuality is right or wrong?**

That depends upon who is answering the question. The Christian point of view is based solely upon the Bible, the divinely inspired Word of God. A truly Christian standard of ethics is the conduct of divine revelation, not of statistical research nor of public opinion. For the Christian, the Bible is the final authority for both belief and behaviour.

## **Q. What explicitly does the Bible teach about homosexuality?**

This question I consider to be basic because, if we accept God's Word on the subject of homosexuality, we benefit from His adequate answer to this problem. I am concerned only with the Christian or biblical view of homosexuality. The Bible has much to say about sex sins in general.

First, there is adultery. Adultery in the natural sense is sexual intercourse of a married person with someone other than his or her own spouse. It is condemned in both the Old and New Testaments (Exodus 20:14; I Cor. 6:9, 10). Christ forbids dwelling upon the thoughts, the free play of one's imagination that leads to adultery (Matthew 5:28).

Second, there is fornication, the illicit sex acts of unmarried persons which is likewise forbidden (I Corinthians 5:1; 6:13, 18; Ephesians 5:3).

Then there is homosexuality which likewise is condemned in Scripture. The Apostle Paul, writing by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, declares that homosexuality "shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (I Corinthians 6:9; 10). Now Paul does not single out the homosexual as a special offender. He includes fornicators, idolators, adulterers, thieves, covetous persons, drunkards, revilers and extortioners. And then he adds the comment that some of the Christians at Corinth had been delivered from these very practices: "And such were some of you: But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God" (I Corinthians 6:11). All of the sins mentioned in this passage are condemned by God, but just as there was hope in Christ for the Corinthians, so is there hope for all of us.

Homosexuality is an illicit lust forbidden by God. He said to His people Israel, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination" (Leviticus 18:22). "If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them" (Leviticus 20:13). In these passages homosexuality is condemned as a prime example of sin, a sexual perversion. The Christian can neither alter God's viewpoint nor depart from it.

In the Bible sodomy is a synonym for homosexuality. God spoke plainly on the matter when He said, "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel" (Deuteronomy 23:17). The whore and the sodomite are in the same category. A sodomite was not an inhabitant of Sodom nor a descendant of an inhabitant of Sodom, but a man who had given himself to homosexuality, the perverted and unnatural vice for which Sodom was known. Let us look at the passages in question:

But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house around, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:

And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.

Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof. (Genesis 19:4-8)

The Hebrew word for "know" in verse 5 is *ya,da`*, a sexual term. It is used frequently to denote sexual intercourse (Genesis 4:1, 17, 25; Matthew 1:24, 25). The message in the context of Genesis 19 is clear. Lot pled with the men to "do not so wickedly." Homosexuality is wickedness and must be recognized as such else there is no hope for the homosexual who is asking for help to be extricated from his perverted way of life.

**Q. You said that sexual intercourse outside of marriage is condemned in the Bible. How do you explain marriage ceremonies in which two persons of the same sex are united by an officiating clergyman or justice of the peace?**

There are cases on record where a marriage license was issued to persons of the same sex. I recall one such incident in Phoenix, Arizona. A marriage license was issued in the Maricopa County clerk's office to two men 39 and 21 years old respectively. The two men are reported to have "married" in a private ceremony.

However, to call a union of two persons of the same sex a "marriage" is a misnomer. In the Bible, marriage is a divinely ordered institution designed to form a permanent union between one man and one woman for one purpose (among others) of procreating or propagating the human



race. That was God's order in the first of such unions (Genesis 1:27, 28; 2:24; Matthew 19:5). If, in His original creation of humans, God had created two persons of the same sex, there would not be a human race in existence today. The whole idea of two persons of the same sex marrying is absurd, unsound, ridiculously unreasonable, stupid. A clergyman might bless a homosexual marriage but God won't.

**Q. A Jesuit Priest, John J. McNeill, reportedly said in a conference (Christianity Today, June 3, 1977), "There is no clear condemnation of homosexual activity to be found anywhere in the Bible." How does a church leader arrive at such a conclusion?**

This particular Jesuit priest, like some other supposedly Christian theologians, have totally ignored the Scriptures as the guidelines for Christian behaviour in regard to homosexuality. McNeill does not speak for the Roman Catholic Church, but for a small segment of priests who, having vowed themselves to celibacy, that is, to abstain from marriage and sexual intercourse, have found sexual gratification in homosexual acts.

However, religious sex perverts are plentiful among protestants. Protestant leaders on both sides of the Atlantic have gradually eased away from the Scriptures. In England men like Bishop John Robinson, in his book *Honest to God* made a play on the term "The New Morality," which in reality was a plea to open the door to immorality making it respectable and thus acceptable. The Bishop went so far as to describe the unscriptural adulterous relationship as "a kind of holy communion." This modern concept of Christian ethics rejects totally the precepts laid down by God in His Word. It is blasphemous and atheistic.

Recently in America ten homosexually oriented religious organizations, comprised of men and women from more than a dozen denominations, and from seventeen states and Canada, met at Kirkbridge, a retreat and study center near Bangor, Pennsylvania. The retreat was entitled, "Gay and Christian." But the two terms, "gay" and "Christian" are mutually exclusive, incompatible, incongruous.

Representing the women at that retreat, Nancy Krody a lesbian, spoke on "The Lesbian Christian Experience." Here again is a misnomer. A practicing Christian, from the biblical viewpoint, will not be a practicing homosexual. Of course, I make the distinction between a professing Christian and a practicing Christian. Calling one's self a Christian does not make one a Christian.

Malcolm Boyd speaks about "The Gay Male Christian Experience." Boyd, a protestant clergyman, says he has been a homosexual secretly for years. Only recently he made a public announcement of his homosexuality. He claims that his public announcement of his homosexuality has brought him back to the church. Boyd does not tell us what he means by the "church"!

Following is one point on which the speakers at Kirkbridge agreed: "A monogamous homosexual relationship characterized by fidelity, honesty and love is possible, desirable, and honoring to God."

Any evil condemned in Scripture cannot be honoring to God. Homosexual religious leaders attempt to smooth over the breaks and rough places with Christian terminology so that a euphoria predominates, but God is not in it. A truly born again person, who loves and understands the Bible as God's revelation to him, will not condone an evil that God condemns. "If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him" (I John 2:29). "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (II Timothy 2:19). Practicing homosexuals are engaged in a divinely forbidden evil.

**Q. Why do homosexuals refer to themselves as "gay"?**

The word "gay" means merry, exuberant, bright, lively. More recently it has been adopted by homosexuals. In its original use it did not have this double meaning. The clever adaptation of the word "gay" by homosexuals has robbed it of its pure meaning, thereby corrupting a once perfectly good word. I never use the word "gay" when referring to homosexuals. There are many bright, exuberant, merry people in this world who are not sexual perverts.

**Q. You made reference to First Corinthians 6:9-11. What is the meaning of the word "effeminate" in verse 9?**

There are certain words in every language that can be used in a good or bad sense. In the context of this verse the use of "effeminate" is obviously in a bad sense. It is listed among other evils which are condemned. It describes feminine qualities inappropriate to a man. It is normal and natural for a woman to be sexually attracted to a man; it is abnormal and unnatural for a man to be sexually attracted to another man. Many male homosexuals are effeminate, but not all. Nor are all lesbians unduly masculine.

**Q. Are there other Scriptures in the New Testament which deal with homosexuality?**

Yes. Romans 1:24-27; I Timothy 1:10 and Jude 7. If one takes these Scriptures seriously, homosexuality will be recognized as an evil. The Romans passage is unmistakably clear. Paul attributes the moral depravity of men and women to their rejection of "the truth of God" (1:25). They refused "to retain God in their knowledge" (1:28), thereby dethroning God and deifying themselves. The Old Testament had clearly condemned homosexuality but in Paul's day there were those persons who rejected its teaching. Because of their rejection of God's commands He punished their sin by delivering them over to it.

The philosophy of substituting God's Word with one's own reasoning commenced with Satan. He introduced it at the outset of the human race by suggesting to Eve that she ignore God's orders, assuring her that in so doing she would become like God with the power to discern good and evil (Genesis 3:1-5). That was Satan's big lie. Paul said that when any person rejects God's truth, his mind becomes "reprobate," meaning perverted, void of sound judgment. The perverted mind, having rejected God's truth, is not capable of discerning good and evil.

In Romans 1:26-31 twenty-three punishable sins are listed with homosexuality leading the list. Paul wrote, "For this cause God gave them up into vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the

natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet" (Romans 1:26, 27). These verses are telling us that homosexuals suffer in their body and personality the inevitable consequences of their wrong doing. Notice that the behaviour of the homosexual is described as a "vile affection" (1:26). The Greek word translated "vile" (*atimia*) means filthy, dirty, evil, dishonourable. The word "affection" in Greek is *pathos*, used by the Greeks of either a good or bad desire. Here in the context of Romans it is used in a bad sense. The "vile affection" is a degrading passion, a shameful lust. Both the desire (lusting after) and the act of homosexuality are condemned in the Bible as sin.

**Q. There are those persons who say that homosexuality, even though a perverted form of the normal, God-ordained practice of sex, is a genetic problem, constitutionally inherited. Is there evidence to support this view?**

I read in a periodical that in June, 1963 a panel of specialists in medicine, psychiatry, law, sociology and theology participated in a conference on homosexuality called by the Swiss Evangelical Church Union. That group reached the conclusion that homosexuality is not constitutionally inherited, it is not a part of one's genetic makeup. The ill-founded and unverifiable myth that homosexuality results from genetic causes is gradually fading away.

There are possibly a number of different ways in which homosexual practices could begin. When boys and girls reach puberty and the genital organs develop, it is not uncommon for boys to experiment with boys, and girls with girls. In prisons where men and women are denied access to persons of the opposite sex for long periods of time, some are introduced to homosexuality for the first time.

A young Christian woman came to our office in Detroit for counseling. She became involved in lesbianism when her marriage began to fail. She was introduced to her first homosexual experience by a divorcee who was her neighbor. After six months of practicing lesbianism she was convicted of her sin and sought help. We were able to show her from the Bible that she was sinning and that God stood ready and willing to forgive and cleanse her. She confessed and forsook her sin, and continues to this day to live a happy, normal Christian life.

Homosexuality must be accepted for what God says it is-- sin. Some homosexuals will attempt to circumvent the plain teaching of the Bible with the insipid reply that they are the way God made them. There is not the slightest bit of evidence in Scripture to support this false concept. God never created man with a so-called "homosexual need." No baby is born a homosexual. Every baby is born male or female. In every place the Bible refers to homosexuality, the emphasis is upon the perversion of sexuality. The practicing homosexual is guilty of "leaving the natural use of the woman" (Romans 1:27), meaning that his behaviour is "against nature" as in the case of the lesbian (Romans 1:26). Inasmuch as homosexuality is opposed to the regular law and order of nature, the genetic concept must be ruled out completely. If homosexuality were a genetic problem, there would be little hope for the homosexual simply because there is no way that the genes in a person can be changed.

**Q. Are there contributing factors to homosexuality for which a homosexual might not be responsible?**

Yes, I believe there are. I have not done much research in this area, however, studies made by others showed varied deviations from the average or normal parent-child relationship. For example, clinical cases show that some homosexuals have not had a normal or natural relationship with the parent of the same sex. In some instances there has been a wide gap between father and son. There are those boys who have been neglected by their unaffectionate fathers. The boy who has not had a good and wholesome relationship with his father could have an unfulfilled need for a father relationship with a man. Now that need will not start out as a sexual one, but there are cases on record in which the sexual relationship has developed. I know one case of a homosexual adult who seduced a 13 year old boy whose father had forsaken him. Before the boy's contact with the older man he had no knowledge whatever of homosexuality. The older man seduced the boy.

Lesbianism has been known to follow this same pattern. Some mother-daughter relationships are not conducive to a normal social and sexual development. One young woman came to her pastor seeking help. She had gotten involved with a lesbian in the community where she lived, a woman twenty-one years her senior. The girl's parents had a defective marriage which ended in divorce when the daughter was ten years old. Her mother became bitter and resentful against all men. She convinced her daughter that men were not to be trusted, and that man's one goal was to exploit women sexually. The daughter grew up with a fear of men, a fear totally unwarranted. She was an easy victim of the seductive older lesbian. The good and wise pastor showed the counselee from the Bible that homosexuality was sinful and that God condemned it. She confessed her sin to God and received Jesus Christ as her Savior and Lord. Today she is happily married to a fine Christian man.

**Q. Do you believe that the homosexual controversy is causing problems for the churches of America?**

Evil in any form is a problem in the church. It always has been. The greater problem, however, is the church's failure to discipline evil when it arises. Karl Menninger's book, *Whatever Became of Sin?*, deals directly with that point. There are ministers, priests, and rabbis who never talk about sin. There was a time when the minister of God's Word preached the whole counsel of God. Today many pulpits are silent on the sin question. Sin has become fashionable and therefore acceptable. When sin gets its victim into serious difficulty, the psychiatrist and psychologist tell him he is sick. The church must face the fact of sin squarely.

**Q. Does the Bible tell us how the church should deal with sexual sins?**

In Old Testament times in Israel God dealt severely with homosexuals. He warned His people through Moses, "If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them" (Leviticus 20:13). Every Jew knew that homosexuality was an abomination, a disgusting practice to be loathed, hated. This was God's attitude toward that evil practice. He hated it to the extent that He considered it worthy of punishment by death. Now God loved His people Israel dearly, and it was from His great heart of love that He chastened them. The Epistle to the Hebrews says,

"For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth" (Hebrews 12:7). When God issued His law forbidding homosexuality, and the punishment for those persons who violated that law, He did so in order to prevent them from sinning. However, when anyone broke the law, the offender paid the penalty due him. God is a holy God who hates and judges sin. Parents who love their children will not refrain from warning them of prevailing evils, nor will they fail to chasten them when they disobey. The church today not only tolerates sin but in some instances condones it. God does neither.

In the New Testament the principle of discipline was applied with apostolic authority. In the church at Corinth the young man who was committing fornication with his step-mother was excommunicated. Paul instructed the church to take that action "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . and with the power (i.e. the authority) of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 5:1-8). In Romans 1:21-32 where Paul shows the Gentile world in its downward plunge into sin, including the sin of homosexuality, verse 32 concludes with the words, "who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death . . ." Worthy of death, yes. But today we are not under law but under grace. People used to hear and heed the Gospel-truth, the message that God is holy, man is a sinner, and that through faith in the substitutionary death and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, sinful people can be born again and thereby delivered from the guilt and penalty and practice of their sins.

**Q. Do you have any suggestions or recommendations for the church?**

Nothing is more foundationally essential for the church and the world than a return to the truth. Recently I read where someone said we are suffering from a famine of the worst kind, "a truth-famine." Our modern culture is in a degenerating, deteriorating stage caused by a departure from the truth. And I must say unequivocally that truth does not exist independently of God, and His written Word the Bible, and His Son Jesus Christ. Truth is in no sense of man's imagination or contrivance. Man in his fallen state does not know truth, and that is why he continues to go on sinning. A civilization without the truth is doomed to oblivion. Every ancient civilization that ignored God and His laws has crumbled. Our present civilization is well on the road to doom. We cannot survive independently of God and His Word.

The Church must return to the truth, the whole truth, the sum total of truth founded and grounded upon Him Who said, "I am the truth" (John 14:6). In our Lord's high priestly prayer for His own He prayed, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth" (John 17:17). There must be in our churches the clear exposition of the Scriptures and a continuing exaltation of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ if our civilization is to be saved from the disasters that overcame past civilizations. Any civilization with a philosophy or a doctrine which denies the real truth cannot survive.

**Q. Do you see any prophetic significance in the recent homosexual upsurge?**

Yes, I do. However, I would suggest caution on this point. It is not uncommon for preachers to attach a prophetic meaning to every earthquake, riot, war, moral scandal or political disaster, labeling all such events as "signs of the times."

The modern homosexual upsweep is one phase of a declining trend in morals. When the disciples asked our Lord, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the consummation of the age?" He told them that "iniquity shall abound" (Matthew 24:3, 12). There is today a permissiveness and a promiscuity in sexual behaviour unprecedented in the history of America. There is little restraint upon the widespread of material containing pictures and writing depicting erotic behaviour intended to cause sexual excitement. This would be included in our Lord's prophecy about abounding iniquity.

There is also a prophetic statement in Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy which has some bearing upon the subject we are discussing. Paul said, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection . . . " (II Timothy 3:1-3). Homosexuality is an unnatural affection, practiced by persons "that defile themselves with mankind" (I Timothy 1:10), translated in the New American Standard Version "homosexuals," and in the New International Version, "perverts." I conclude, in the light of these Scriptures, that the rise of homosexuality is very definitely a trend which indicates the approaching end of the age.

**Q. Have you personally counseled with homosexuals?**

Yes, in two pastorates over a period of twenty-five years. In each instance the homosexual was a man in his thirties who had seduced teen-aged boys. The seduction of younger persons is a pattern most homosexuals follow. They seem to prefer gratifying their lust with youth. This is a pattern typical of men who marry several wives. Men who do not respect their marriage vows pursue women younger than themselves. One man of wealth was reportedly married and divorced six times. Most of his wives were young enough to be his daughters. The two homosexual men who applied for a marriage license in the Maricopa County Clerk's Office in Arizona were 39 and 21 years old, quite a variation in ages.

**Q. Do you attach any significance to the age factor you mentioned?**

Yes, I do. I see a potential threat to young people who are exposed to homosexuals. Older practicing homosexuals are a threat to the youth.

**Q. Do you care to make any comments on the Anita Bryant crusade in Dade County, Florida?**

In my judgment Anita Bryant was justified in the action she pursued. She did not want her children exposed to the influence of a practicing homosexual in the public school classroom. Inasmuch as homosexuality is classified in the Bible as an evil, to insist that children be exposed to homosexual teachers in the public schools would be an infringement upon the rights of parents and their children. Under no condition would I permit my children to be subjected to the influence of a sex pervert. As an American citizen I consider that choice to be my right. Anita Bryant laid her career on the line in the bold and courageous stand she took. She should not have to fight the battle alone. Christians should support her.

### **Q. What should be the Christian's attitude toward the homosexual?**

We must always keep before us the fact that homosexuals, like all of us sinners, are the objects of God's love. The Bible says, "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Jesus Christ "is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (I John 2:2). The Christian who shares God's love for lost sinners will seek to reach the homosexual with the gospel of Christ, which "is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth" (Romans 1:16). As a Christian I should hate all sin but I can find no justification for hating the sinner. The homosexual is a precious soul for whom Christ died. We Christians can show him the best way of life by pointing him to Christ. Our Lord said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). We are obligated to take the gospel to all.

### **Q. How can we help Christians who get involved in the practice of homosexuality?**

We can help them by seeking to draw their attention to what God says in His Word. In a kind and loving spirit we can show them that they are wrong. However, the homosexual must admit to the fact that he is living in sin and that he has the desire to be made free from it. Without a genuine conviction of God's displeasure and a strong desire to do God's will, there is no hope. A truly born again person cannot continue to practice sin without reaping the results of miserable unhappiness brought on by loss of fellowship with God, the fear of retribution and the anxiety produced by guilt. The homosexual must ask himself, "Is the temporary gratification of the flesh worth all the penalty and losses I must suffer?"

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Dr. Strauss taught Old Testament history for eight years at Philadelphia Bible Institute, and served as pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church, Bristol, Pennsylvania, from 1939 to 1957. He was pastor of Highland Park Baptist Church (Highland Park, Michigan) until the end of 1963 when he resigned to devote full time to an itinerant Bible conference and evangelistic ministry both in the States and abroad. Dr. Strauss was writing his 19th book at age 86 when he went home to be with the Lord in June 1997. This pamphlet was originally made available through the Biola Hour radio ministry. His written materials are used by permission.

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## **PRE-MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS**

**By: Northwest Luther / Permission for use granted**

*In a bygone era, when people were still ashamed to talk about it (Ephesians 5:12), it was called cohabitation. Today's terms are more unashamedly descriptive: living together, shacking up, living in. Still, these more picturesque terms are mere euphemisms for what is going on behind closed doors. Not even the open-minded and open-mouthed Me Generation has the courage to come right out and say, "My friend and I are fornicating.")*

Intimate sexual relationships outside of marriage are not only taking place among the young and foolish pleasure seekers in our society. Some middle-aged divorced persons want new companionship without commitment. Elderly widowers and widows may want partnership without pooling their financial resources for retirement. The reasons and excuses given by those who live together without marriage vary according to circumstance. But the *modus operandi* of this crime against God is always the same: people want to get something without giving up anything.

### **Use of a Good Gift**

We have learned from Scripture that human sexuality is a good gift from a good God. But along with all of his gifts God lovingly sends instructions for proper and happy use. Money, for instance, is a gift of God. His instructions? Do not covet, cheat, bribe, or steal, but give gladly and generously for your own family, your church, and society's needs. Health, too, is a gift of God. Instructions for beneficial use? Treat your body as God's temple, work hard and honestly and get enough sleep.

So it is also with God's good gift of human sexuality. Sexual intimacy, like all of God's gifts, is used profitably only when we realize that we are stewards of the gift. That means we use the gift as our Master has directed. And God has directed that sexual intimacy be used only inside the bond of marriage.

### **God Gives Loving Instructions**

In Genesis 2:24 God says that sexual intimacy is to take place only after a man and a woman have established a permanent relationship through mutual commitment. First, "a man will leave his father and mother." Leaving one's parents and breaking previous family ties does not take place in a vacuum. It will rarely be done secretly, without parents and family members knowing about it. Within the spiritual family of a Christian congregation one will also want his brothers and sisters in Christ to know that he intends to begin a new family unit.

The second thing which takes place before sexual intimacy is that a man will "be united to his wife." The man commits himself to living with his wife for a lifetime. Before he asks or demands sexual satisfaction from her, he gives himself unconditionally to her. He gives before he takes. Jesus says that this is a permanent promise, not a conditional one (Matthew 19:6). Our marriage vows reflect this commitment with the words, "Till death do us part" (Romans 7:2).



And then, after the announcement to family and after the unconditional promises of both partners to live with each other until death -- and only then -- do husband and wife practice the sexual intimacy which is now a part of their "one flesh" relationship.

For a man or a woman to expect pleasure and companionship from another without first giving the promise of faithfulness is a sin against God's instructions about the enjoyment of sexual intimacy. It will always be short term pleasure with long term pain. It is a presumptuous selfishness which makes a spiritual understanding of the popular term "making love" impossible. Taking before giving cannot be love.

### **God Defines Love For Us**

At the heart of sinful premarital and extramarital relationships is society's perversion of the Bible's definition of love. Christians learn the meaning of love in Sunday school: "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son" (John 3:16). God defined love by giving himself without the promise of return. "God demonstrated his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). God did not experiment with love or try it out for a while to see how we would respond. He did not send his only Son to earth on a trial basis. He gave before he received. In fact, although he knew ahead of time that his love would often be ignored, rejected, and put to the test, "Christ loved the church and give himself up for her" (Ephesians 5:25).

God's love is true love. To love as God has loved is to commit yourself unconditionally to another. This kind of love which is expressed in the marriage vow alone elevates sexual intimacy above animal mating. Sex outside of marriage is purely pagan fornication, a perversion of the "one flesh" concept of Scripture (1 Corinthians 6:16). The bed before the promise is sin. But when two people love each other as God first loved us, they commit themselves. They have "true love." Human sexuality is an expression of their commitment instead of a selfish demand for pleasure. They show that they are stewards of God's gift because they enjoy it as the Master has directed it.

### **What You Can Do**

The statistics are discouraging. Recent polls by evangelicals among their own young people are shocking. We are disheartened by the whisperings in our own congregations. But what may keep many of us from witnessing against the coarse sins of premarital sexual intimacy in society is our own guilty conscience.

Nobody I know has a spiritual track record free of sexual stumbling. There are the sins of youth, the lusts of discontent in middle age, and the wearied toleration of the world's ways in old age. We hear fellow Christians say, "That's just the way it is today. You may as well learn to live with it." Few forms of media advertising and entertainment fail to appeal to a selfish use of our sexuality. If God has graciously kept our words and actions pure, our sexually sinful flesh has prevented the Spirit from dominating our thoughts.

So, we cannot approach those who live in sin as though we have none ourselves. But we must approach them, and our own guilty consciences must not block the way. Before we can lay down the law to fornicators, we must lay our own sexual sins at the cross of Christ. Jesus died for the adultery of David (2 Samuel 12:13) and of the woman caught in the act (John 8:11). And, thank God, he died also for my sexual sins and yours. His blood not only cleanses our consciences from sin, it gives us the reason not to continue committing those sins (Hebrews 9:14) and to witness against those who do (Ephesians 5:11).

### **Take a Spiritual Approach**

There are no specifics in Scripture for dealing with all of the difficult family and social situations which may arise because a man and a woman are living together without marriage. Sin always causes confusion and hurt. But there are some very important guides God offers us in his word. Your witness to the sinner will not be clear unless you are first of all clear yourself on the issue. Study your Bible. Review your catechism. Make your witness on the basis of what God says, so that you cannot be accused of merely presenting your personal moral preference. If you stand firm on the word you will not be taken in by the many rational arguments for this sin -- that everybody's doing it, or that it is no longer forbidden by civil law. After discussing sexual sins St. Paul writes, "Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient" (Ephesians 5:6). There are always many good reasons for sin (Genesis 3:6), but before God there are no excuses (Romans 1:18-20).

More important is your desire to approach your sinning brother spiritually (Galatians 6:1). Saying nothing at all will usually leave the impression that you condone the sin (Ephesians 5:7,11). Anger and ill-chosen words may drive the sinner farther from God (James 1:19,20; 3:2). A spiritual approach means you have the good of the sinner's soul as your primary concern. You speak about his sin, not to "straighten him out," but to lead him to repentance and faith in the Savior who rescued you. A spiritual approach is a loving approach. Even when you are laying down the law, the sinner will see that you are committed to giving him something for his own good rather than taking from him.

God will bless your witness in response to your prayers and in line with his will. God will forgive and give strength before he expects any change or response from the sinner. When we share that concept of God's committed love, the sinner will learn what true love is and begin to practice sexual intimacy as a gift of God.

### **SPOUSAL ABUSE:**

We should do all we possibly can to save a marriage before ending it. The effects of a broken home lasts for many years. However, in the case of abuse, we must also consider that our bodies and minds are the temple of God. One shouldn't remain in an abusive home if they can help it. Physical, mental or emotional abuse in any marriage is UNACCEPTABLE to God. If one is truly converted to God and His way of life, they will become God's temple. He will live in them and walk among them in Spirit, be their God, and they will be His people. The New Covenant spoken of in a number of places in the Bible is the contract of living God's Way. God looks at the temple of our hearts and minds and welcomes those who by their conscience have been keeping themselves separate (as much as possible) from sin and Satan the devil (the ruler and deceiver of this present evil world - Revelation 12:9).

*"And what union can there be between God's temple and idols? For you are God's temple, the home of the living God, and God has said of you, "I will live in them and walk among them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people." (2Corinthians 6:16, The Living Bible)*

This is why God says,

*"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." (2 Corinthians 6:17, KJV)*

*"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." (1Corinthians 3:16-17, KJV)*

No one should ever tolerate an abusive relationship or living situation. If the offending spouse was a believer at one time, they have become an unbeliever because of their behavior. If the offender is not willing to seek counseling and make a sincere, concerted effort to change their habits and the situation at home, the offended spouse should not remain in this type of environment where they will be abused. Prayer about the situation and separation from the person is certainly warranted.

#### **CHILD ABUSE:**

A. What does the Bible say about child abuse?

*"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4, KJV)*

*"Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." (Colossians 3:21, KJV)*

Both of these are addressed to the fathers in the household and by extension to anyone in authority over that child. Those in authority are commanded, not suggested, to not provoke a child until he is violently angry or in a rage of frustration. If a child is provoked, even for his own good (as some would argue), this is permitted but that is not what God demands.

As parents we must always teach in love and discipline with justice. This does not mean an adult should be passive and not correct a child for bad and unacceptable behavior because that too is a sign of being unloving and abusive. Even God chastens or corrects us because he loves us:

*"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. (Hebrews 12:7-11)*

One of the primary problems for each generation is to figure out what IS abuse. In the modern English dictionaries the definition is to attack verbally, to misuse or mistreat someone. This can be manifested in verbal insults, physical battery (although spanking done in love and for the good of the child is permitted), emotional and psychological mistreatment because of lies and hypocrisy, and spiritual deception. It also includes neglecting very important parts of being a human being such as withholding items of survival like food, water, and heat. Love and nurturing are vital parts in aiding humans to grow up properly. This was demonstrated when institutionalized babies became adults. They did not receive personal, one-on-one attention from a caregiver and were unable to love in return. Unfortunately, this world is full of this kind of treatment and for some it seems as though it is normal. But it is not acceptable to God.

We are first told not to murder or kill our brother. This was the first lesson of mankind in the story of Cain and Abel. We are expected to be our brother's keeper and in the case of rape we are to step in and prevent this from happening if we are truly loving God and following his Law (Deuteronomy 22:25-27). The Bible is full of stories of humans abusing each other. God certainly does not like this behavior amongst his own children (us) and would never approve of abuse for any reason. He is a being of law and order. He is Love and Truth and Mercy.

In conclusion, the Bible clearly states that we should NEVER condone or be a part of child abuse or any other kind of abuse against our fellow men and women, regardless of their age. Such attitudes and actions come from the "works of the flesh," our human and demon inspired nature apart from God, which Paul refers to in Galatians (Galatians 5:14-15, 19-21).

## **CHURCH ORDINANCES**

Christian ordinances are defined as institutions of divine authority relating to the worship of God under the Christian dispensation. All ordinances must have been instituted by Christ and validated by scriptural authority. Mere participation in church ordinances, even though holy and sacred, will save no man. Only faith and trust in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ brings salvation. The following ordinances were enjoined by Christ for perpetual observance in the church:

### **WATER BAPTISM:**

Water baptism is one of the two rituals given to Christians by command of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19). It is a public declaration that the individual has already confessed their sins (Acts 8:36-38, Acts 16:31-33), and accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Baptism in water does not save the soul but faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, that which baptism is a figure of does save the soul (Romans 6:3-5).

Baptism does not save one from the filth or moral depravity of the flesh (I Peter 3:21), but is the answer of a good conscience toward God.

- A. How One is Baptized: Water Baptism is a complete immersion of one's body into water. (Ref: Matthew 3:16; Matthew 19:20, Mark 1:10, Acts 8:38-39)
- B. Who Baptizes: Baptism is a church ordinance. Therefore the Pastor and/or designee(s) administer baptism. Any minister, church official or lay person involved should themselves be true "born again" believers through Jesus Christ. (Ref: Luke 7:28-29, John 4:1-2)

- C. Who is Baptized: Any believer, or convert, who has confessed their sins and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as personal savior. (Ref: Acts 8:36-38)

### **HOLY COMMUNION (The Last Supper):**

The Lord's Supper: The Last Supper, the Lord's Table, Communion or Eucharist. The Lord's Supper was initiated at the close of the Passover Supper. The Passover Supper represented the old covenant under the Mosaic Law. Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper representing the new covenant which came by grace and truth. (Ref: Matthew 26:26-30; Luke 22:7-20; I Corinthians 10; 11:20-31). We therefore partake of the Lord's Supper in memory of His suffering and death (Ref: Luke 22:15-20).

#### A. Significance:

1. It is a reminder of Christ's suffering death and sacrifice for the believer.
2. For the Christian, it is an act of obedience to the words of Christ, and signifies the believer's commemoration and participation in the crucified Christ.
3. For the believer, it is an enactment of faith and union with Christ.
4. Participation in the Communion service symbolizes a bond of unity within the Christian Community (church).
5. The Supper also points the Christian toward the triumph and glory of Christ's second coming.

#### B. The Elements:

1. The Bread: The bread is symbolic of the body of Christ (Matthew 26:26; Luke 20:10; I Corinthians 11:23-24, Isaiah 52:14, Isaiah 53:4-5, I Peter 2:24). Unleavened bread or "bread of bitterness" was undoubtedly used at the first Communion as this was one of the substances served at the Passover supper. The absence of leaven represented a separateness unto God in purity and holiness.
2. The Cup: The cup is symbolic of the blood of Christ (Matthew 26:27-28; Luke 22:20; I Corinthians 11:25, Hebrews 15:22). It symbolizes His blood that seals the new covenant which is based upon better promises. At the supper, the disciples drank of the fruit of the vine.
3. Who Serves Communion: The Pastor may serve Communion with the assistance of other ordained ministers, (Deacons and spiritual laity may be used if no other ministers are available). Communion is not to be served at private homes or private gatherings unless for some reason approved by the church. Communion may be served to the sick or infirmed in hospitals, homes, care centers, or prisons by the Pastor or authorized persons.
4. To whom it is served: A believer ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. Anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself (I Corinthians 11:27-30).
5. When served: Thought should be given as to the best time to serve the Lord's Supper so that its significance may be properly appreciated by the congregation.

### **FEET WASHING:**

In the Gospel of John (John 13:1-17), Jesus sets an example of humility to rebuke the disciples of strife over leadership. Literal practice of washing of feet was not practiced among Christians. No reference is made of it in any New Testament book.

#### A. Significance:

1. The act of washing feet was given to inspire self denying acts of kindness to all in need.

2. By this act, Christ definitely aligns greatness (authority, title, responsibility) with the necessary characteristic of humility.
3. By participating, the believer identifies with the humility of Christ and demonstrates his obedience to Christ's words.

B. Who Washes Feet:

All those who have partaken of the preceding Communion service should be eligible for participation in the feet washing service. For purposes of decorum, the congregation should divide into two groups - male and female.

International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. Amended Articles of Incorporation

**ARTICLE 1- NAME**

The name of the corporation is International Gospel Fellowship, Inc.

**ARTICLE 2 - PURPOSE OF CORPORATION**

The Corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious and educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

**ARTICLE 3 - PROHIBITIONS**

No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, 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 the purposes set forth in Article Second hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. corporation shall be carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the Corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (A) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (B) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

**ARTICLE 4 – OFFICERS**

The officers of the Corporation shall be appointed by the Presiding Bishop of this Corporation and confirmed by the officer review and approval board.

**ARTICLE 5 - TERM OF EXISTENCE**

This Corporation shall have perpetual existence.

**ARTICLE 6 - CAPITAL STOCK**

This Corporation shall have no capital stock and shall be composed of members rather than stockholders.

## **ARTICLE 7 - QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP**

The categories of membership, qualifications for membership and the manner of admission shall be as set forth in and regulated by the Bylaws of the Corporation.

## **ARTICLE 8- VOTING RIGHTS**

Members of the Corporation will have such voting rights as are provided in the Bylaws of the Corporation.

## **ARTICLE 9- LIABILITIES FOR DEBTS**

Neither the members nor the officers of the Corporation shall be liable for the debts of the Corporation.

## **ARTICLE 10 - REGISTERED OFFICE AND REGISTERED AGENT**

The name and address of the registered agent of this Corporation is:

Bishop Lloyd R. Ocampo, CEO & Presiding Bishop  
3725 Golfe Links Drive  
Snellville, GA. 30039

## **ARTICLE 11 - PRINCIPAL OFFICE**

The address of the principal office and the mailing address of this Corporation is:

IGF Administrative Office  
3725 Golfe Links Drive  
Snellville, GA. 30039

## **ARTICLE 12 - INCORPORATORS**

The name and address of the incorporators of this Corporation are:

Bishop Lloyd R. Ocampo, CEO & Presiding Bishop  
ADDRESS UNDISCLOSED

Elder Portia Y. Ocampo, CFO & WOV Director  
ADDRESS UNDISCLOSED

Pricilla Goode, Director of Education  
ADDRESS UNDISCLOSED

Minister Elizabeth Marlow, Director of Missions  
ADDRESS UNDISCLOSED



Patricia Goode, Secretary-Designate  
ADDRESS UNDISCLOSED

### **ARTICLE 13 – AMENDMENT**

These Articles of Incorporation may be amended in the manner provided by law. Every amendment shall be approved by the Corporation's officers, proposed and voted on by them and/or any voting members, unless all the officers and all the voting members sign a written statement manifesting their intention that a certain amendment of these Articles of Incorporation be made.

### **\*\*\*ARTICLE 14 – INDEMNIFICATION**

The Corporation shall indemnify an officer of the Corporation who was wholly successful, on the merits or otherwise, in the defense of any proceeding to which the officer was a party of the Corporation against reasonable attorney fees and expenses incurred by the officer in connection with the proceeding. The Corporation may indemnify an individual made a party to a proceeding because the individual is or was an officer, employee or agent of the Corporation against liability if authorized in the specific case after determination, in the manner required by the Corporation's officers, that indemnification of the officer, employee or agent, as the case may be, is permissible in the circumstances because the officer, employee or agent has met the standard of conduct set forth by the Corporation's officers, employees and agents of the Corporation shall apply when such persons are serving at the Corporation's request while an officer, employee or agent of the Corporation as the case may be, as an officer, partner, trustee, employee or agent of another foreign or domestic corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other enterprise, whether or not for profit, as well as in their official capacity with the Corporation. The Corporation also may pay for or reimburse the reasonable attorney fees and expenses incurred by an officer, employee or agent of the Corporation who is a party to a proceeding in advance of final disposition of the proceeding. The Corporation also may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of an individual arising from the individual's status as an officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation, whether or not the Corporation would have power to indemnify the individual against the same liability under the law.

All references in these Articles of Incorporation are deemed to include any amendment or successor thereto. Nothing contained in these Articles of Incorporation shall limit or preclude the exercise of any right relating to indemnification or advance of attorney fees and expenses to any person who is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation or the ability of the Corporation otherwise to indemnify or advance expenses to any such person by contract or in any other manner. If any word, clause or sentence of the foregoing provisions regarding indemnification or advancement of the attorney fees or expenses shall be held invalid as contrary to law or public policy, it shall be severable and the provisions remaining shall not be otherwise affected. All references in these Articles of Incorporation to "officer," "employee", and "agent" shall include the heirs, estates, administrators, executors, and personal representatives of such persons.

**ARTICLE 15 - COVENANT NOT TO SUE**

The Corporation agrees that it will never institute any action or suit at law or in equity against any officer of the Corporation, nor institute, prosecute, or in any way aid in the institution or prosecution of any claim, demand, action, or cause of action for damages, costs, loss of services, expenses, or compensation for or on account of any damage, loss or injury to person or property, or both, whether developed or undeveloped, resulting or to result, known or unknown, past, present, or future, arising out of an officer of the Corporation's service to the Corporation.

**ARTICLE 16 - DISSOLUTION**

Upon dissolution, all of the corporation's assets shall, after all of its liabilities and obligations have been discharged or adequate provision made therefore, be distributed to any association or associations organized for purposes similar to the purpose of the corporation as may be designated by a majority of the officers of the corporation then holding office, provided that such organization is an organization qualified under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

**International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. Amended Articles of Incorporation**

This document is an amendment to the Articles of Incorporation 0100568 dated December 29, 2000. The Corporation's officers of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. convened a business meeting on July 21, 2011 and approved the amended Articles of Incorporation for International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. dated August 1, 2011.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have executed to set their hands and seals, this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2011.

\_\_\_\_\_  
CEO & Presiding Bishop

\_\_\_\_\_  
CFO & WOV Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Missions

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary-Designate

## IGF MEMBER'S PLEDGE OF HONOR

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am fully persuaded that it is the will of God for me to be a member of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. (IGF Inc.). I sincerely believe that I am here by direction of the Holy Spirit and that God desires to do a unique work in my life that includes a deeper understanding of His word and works, the development of a stronger personal relationship with God, the further maturing of my Christian character, the strengthening of personal disciplines in my life, the sharpening of my ministry skills and the development of unity with other members and fellow-laborers throughout the body of Christ both locally and away from my home church.

Because of this, as a member of the IGF Inc., I make the following pledges on this day \_\_\_\_\_ :

### Intimacy:

*I Pledge to deepen my relationship with God and make knowing Him through personal relationship my first priority.*

### Character:

*I pledge to let God shape my character and transform me into His image – dying daily to self and living unto God as the light of His word is revealed to me day by day.*

### Authority:

*I pledge to submit to all delegated authorities appointed over me as unto the Lord according to the holy scriptures.*

### Study:

*I pledge to study to show myself approved and grow in my knowledge of the word of God.*

### Stewardship:

*I pledge to be responsible in the area of my finances and all my financial commitments.*

### Health:

*I pledge to maintain my body as God's temple and practice sound eating, sleeping and exercise habits so as not to defile the temple of the Holy Ghost who abides within me.*

### Faithfulness:

*I pledge to be prompt and faithful in my attendance to all assigned duties and designated functions of the church to which I am a member.*

### Purity:

*I pledge to avoid immoral or illegal activities or engage in any behavior that is contrary to biblical conduct and ethics.*

### Fellowship:

*I pledge to be an encouragement to all believers and build solid relationships with others to form unity and not division in the Body of Christ.*

### Focus:

*I pledge to abstain from anything that would rob me of the time needed to gain the maximum effectiveness to be the laborer God called me to be.*

### Excellence:

*I pledge to communicate a spirit of excellence in my speech, conduct, appearance, and attitude.*

I further understand that by signing below I accept and will comply with the IGF's Member's Pledge of Honor to the best of my ability and the divine aid of the Holy Spirit to remain eligible while being a member of the IGF Inc. For this cause will I continually examine myself to ensure eligibility and immediately submit in repentance unto God should I stand in violation of any pledge herein. Should proper restitution not be made between me and God for any violation of these pledges, I will not hold the IGF Inc. and its leadership responsible for any actions and judgments resulting in any derogatory or legal consequences that may result from my actions. I further acknowledge that any willful violation of these pledges with no intent of repentance toward God will automatically render my status as a member null and void and any office I occupy becomes vacated.

# **DEPARTMENTS OF THE CORPORATION**

## **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:**

### A. Purpose and Objective:

The purpose of the International Gospel Fellowship (IGF), Inc. Department of Education is to develop and establish educational systems and programs for the spiritual development and societal betterment of the Corporation's membership. Such systems and programs may include Christian Higher Learning Departments within each church belonging to the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc., home school community learning programs, K-12 primary education systems, ministerial licensing courses and/or a ministerial college for ordination qualification.

### B. Responsibilities:

The responsibilities of the IGF Inc. Department of Education are not limited to, but will observe the following:

1. The Department of Education shall exercise oversight over all of the Corporations educational programs and schools.
2. Ensure educational programs and systems are in compliance with state Departments of Education (if necessary) as well as ensuring these programs and systems are within Federal compliance (if necessary).
3. Acquire needed accreditations (if necessary)
4. Develop administrative and operational procedures for educational programs and systems.
5. Periodically review and audit administrative and operational adherence of educational programs and systems.

### C. Authority:

The IGF Inc. Department of Education shall exercise the authority to approve or disapprove of any proposed educational programs and systems. The Department of Education shall have the authority to initiate the discontinuance of any existing educational system and/or program if the system and/or program is found to have been in a state of non-compliance with state or federal requirements without correction or intent to be corrected.

## **MEN AFTER TRUE HOLINESS (M.A.T.H.):**

### A. Purpose & Objective:

The purpose of the M.A.T.H. Department is to cultivate the male membership of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. into what should become them according to the written word of God as it concerns men; to further contribute to the transformation of men into their Christian identity; to strengthen this brotherhood and provide a fellowship whereby the men can acknowledge their calling and destiny to contribute to the up-building of the Kingdom of God; to provide strength to marriages from the husband's perspective by educating men to what it means to be a husband according to the Bible; to provide godly guidance in the nurturing and admonishment of children from a father's perspective by educating men to what it means to be a father according to the Bible; and to provide

encouragement, strength, guidance, and leadership to the single men on how to possess themselves in holiness and honor before the Lord as a single man.

#### **WOMEN OF VIRTUE (W.O.V.):**

##### **A. Purpose & Objective:**

The purpose of the W.O.V. Department is to cultivate the female membership of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. into what should become them according to the written word of God as it concerns women; to further contribute to the transformation of women into their Christian identity; to strengthen this sisterhood and provide a fellowship whereby the women can acknowledge their calling and destiny to contribute to the up-building of the Kingdom of God; to provide strength to marriages from the wife's perspective by educating women to what it means to be a wife according to the Bible; to provide godly guidance in the nurturing and admonishment of children from a mother's perspective by educating women to what it means to be a mother according to the Bible; and to provide encouragement, strength, guidance, and leadership to the single women on how to possess themselves in holiness and honor before the Lord as a single woman.

#### **DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONS:**

##### **A. Purpose & Objective:**

1. Develop and implement systems, programs, and means whereby the Gospel of our Lord is propagated both domestically and abroad.
  - a. Domestically: To provide outreach to the local community by way of senior facility visitations, aid and assistance to homeless shelters, food lines, and other charitable venues; to raise funds for the local ministry in support of outreach programs and church funding.
  - b. Abroad: UNDEFINED
2. To raise funds in support of local and international missions by developing special programs, seminars, and fund raisers to meet the needs of these Gospel outlets.
3. Enhance the spiritual growth and development of each missionary in mission work.

#### **YOUTH DEPARTMENT:**

##### **A. Purpose & Objective:**

The purpose of the Youth Department is to cultivate the youth membership of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. into what should become them according to the written word of God as it concerns youth; to further contribute to the transformation of youth into their Christian identity; to strengthen this segment of our membership and provide a fellowship whereby the youth can acknowledge their calling and destiny to contribute to the up-building of the Kingdom of God; to provide strength to provide encouragement, strength, guidance, and leadership to the youth on how to possess themselves in holiness and honor before the Lord as a youth called by God.

## **LOCAL CHURCH OF THE IGF INC.**

### **ESTABLISHMENT:**

- A. Local churches may be established nationally (U.S.A.) and internationally (abroad) in the name of the “International Gospel Fellowship, Inc.” The officials of the local church may consist of a duly appointed Pastor, assistant pastor (optional) or minister(s), secretary, treasurer, deacons, and trustees. The following are departments and auxiliaries that may be established in the local church:
1. Men After True Holiness (M.A.T.H.) Department – a men’s ministry / department
  2. Women of Virtue (W.O.V.) Department – a women’s ministry / department
  3. Youth Department – a youth ministry / department (church can assign a name for the youth department)
  4. Missionary Department
  5. Usher Board
  6. and others as deemed necessary by the local church
- B. A local church shall be issued a certificate of membership by the Presiding Bishop and shall have full membership status in the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. This full member church shall not have the legal right or privilege to withdraw or sever its relations with the General Church (International Gospel Fellowship, Inc.) except by and with the approval of the Church Membership Review Board.
- C. Upon receiving full membership status, a local church may adopt the Bylaws provided the same shall not be in conflict with the IGF’s Statement of Purpose, Statement of Faith, Biblical Doctrine, Organizational Creed, Pledge of Honor, Corporate Bylaws, or Manual of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. (this manual).

### **PROPERTY:**

- A. All real property purchased and/or deeded in the name of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. and its subsidiaries shall remain the property of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. Should a local congregation decide that they no longer want to be a part of, stay in fellowship with, disband or dissolve for whatever reason, all real property remains with the corporation.
- B. All trustees of local churches shall be members of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. Trustees of local unincorporated churches and their successors in office shall hold title to all real and personal property for the use and benefit of the members of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc.
- C. Real Estate or other property may be acquired by purchase, gift, devise, or otherwise, by local churches. Where real or personal property is acquired by deed, The instrument of conveyance shall contain the following clause, to wit:

*“The said property is held in trust for the use and benefit of the members of the International Gospel Fellowship Inc. with headquarters in the city of Snellville, Gwinnett County, Georgia, and subject to the Charter, Constitution, Laws and Manual of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc., now in full force and effect, or as they may be hereafter amended, changed or modified by the Corporation’s officers of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc.”*

- D. The officers and trustees of a local church shall not mortgage church property in order to pay or meet current expenses of the church.
- E. No deed, conveyance or mortgage or real estate of a local church shall be binding on the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. unless the execution of the said instrument has been approved in writing by the Presiding Bishop/and Corporation’s officers over said local church.
- F. Trustees, Deacons and other officers of a local church shall make an annual report to the congregation.

**CHURCH MEMBERSHIP:**

Church membership in the local church can be by the following requirements: Anyone seeking membership in this church should be in full accordance with the teaching of the same as set forth in the doctrinal statement. A person may become a member of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. or any of its local churches by:

- A. Having accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.
- B. By successfully undergoing an observation period where the Pastor can confirm natural adherence to items dictated on the Member’s Pledge of Honor.
- C. By executing, accepting, and formally acknowledging the Member’s Pledge of Honor before the congregation.

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# Member's Pledge of Honor

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am fully persuaded that it is the will of God for me to be a member in NAME OF CHURCH, IGF Inc. I sincerely believe that I am here by direction of the Holy Spirit and that God desires to do a unique work in my life that includes a deeper understanding of His word and works, the development of a stronger personal relationship with God, the further maturing of my Christian character, the strengthening of personal disciplines in my life, the sharpening of my ministry skills and the development of unity with other members and fellow-laborers throughout the body of Christ both locally and away from my home church.

Because of this, as a member in NAME OF CHURCH, of the IGF Inc., I make the following pledges on this day \_\_\_\_\_ :

## Intimacy:

*I Pledge to deepen my relationship with God and make knowing Him through personal relationship my first priority.*

## Character:

*I pledge to let God shape my character and transform me into His image – dying daily to self and living unto God as the light of His word is revealed to me day by day.*

## Authority:

*I pledge to submit to all delegated authorities appointed over me as unto the Lord according to the holy scriptures.*

## Study:

*I pledge to study to show myself approved and grow in my knowledge of the word of God.*

## Stewardship:

*I pledge to be responsible in the area of my finances and all my financial commitments.*

## Health:

*I pledge to maintain my body as God's temple and practice sound eating, sleeping and exercise habits so as not to defile the temple of the Holy Ghost who abides within me.*

## Faithfulness:

*I pledge to be prompt and faithful in my attendance to all assigned duties and designated functions of the church to which I am a member.*

## Purity:

*I pledge to avoid immoral or illegal activities or engage in any behavior that is contrary to biblical conduct and ethics.*

## Fellowship:

*I pledge to be an encouragement to all believers and build solid relationships with others to form unity and not division in the Body of Christ.*

## Focus:

*I pledge to abstain from anything that would rob me of the time needed to gain the maximum effectiveness to be the laborer God called me to be.*

## Excellence:

*I pledge to communicate a spirit of excellence in my speech, conduct, appearance, and attitude.*

I further understand that by signing below I accept and will comply with the NAME OF CHURCH, IGF Inc. Member's Pledge of Honor to the best of my ability and the divine aid of the Holy Spirit to remain eligible while being a member in NAME OF CHURCH, IGF Inc. For this cause will I continually examine myself to ensure eligibility and immediately submit in repentance unto God should I stand in violation of any pledge herein. Should proper restitution not be made between me and God for any violation of these pledges, I will not hold the NAME OF CHURCH, IGF Inc. and its leadership responsible for any actions and judgments resulting in any derogatory or legal consequences that may result from my actions. I further acknowledge that any willful violation of these pledges with no intent of repentance toward God will automatically render my status as a member null and void and any office I occupy becomes vacated.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## **BIBLE STUDIES:**

- A. Bible studies may be established nationally (U.S.A.) and internationally (abroad) in the name of the “International Gospel Fellowship, Inc.” and under the direct oversight of the local church from which the Bible study leader originates or as designated by the Presiding Bishop. The officials of the Bible study may consist of a licensed minister of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc., and departmental liaisons (e.g. Men After True Holiness, Women of Virtue, Missionary Department, Youth Department) which serve as the study’s focal points for these functions of the IGF.
- B. A Bible study shall be issued a certificate of appointment by the supervising pastor with the consent of the Presiding Bishop and shall be fully recognized as a body extension of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc.

## **DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BIBLE STUDY LEADER**

- A. Conduct regularly appointed Bible studies
- B. Function as liaison between study participants and supervising church
- C. Operate under the direct guidance of the supervising pastor
- D. Avoid functioning as a pastor before your time
- E. Always defer to the supervising pastor when you cannot answer questions
- F. Collect love offerings for the benefit of the study’s fellowship events or activities, and/or for the transitioning of the study into a local church. NOTE: love offerings taken up by Bible studies will be collected and accounted for by the trustees of the supervising church for the furtherance and benefit of the Bible study. Request for funds by the Bible study leader will be coordinated with and approved by the supervising pastor for dispersal.

## **TRANSITIONING TO A CHURCH**

When a Bible study’s membership is large enough, has the financial wherewithal to establish a church, and the willingness to make the transition, a Bible study may become a church. Simply because the participation to a Bible study is large enough does not automatically warrant the transition to become a local church. The financial wherewithal as well as the participation’s willingness should set the tone for whether the transition should take place.

When these factors give way for the transition, the Bible study leader is recommended for ordination as an Elder, ordained at the designated conference, and appointed as the local pastor for the new church. Simultaneously, appropriate appointments within the Bible study participation’s membership are made (e.g. interim church administrator, interim trustees, interim secretary, etc.) until a final review and approval of these appointments has been confirmed by supervising church’s Church Board along with the Presiding Bishop.

# MINISTERIAL ORDER

## BISHOP:

### A. History

The word elders in the O.T. meant the heads or rulers of the tribes, cities and nations (Deuteronomy 1:13). In the Gospels and Acts it generally refers to the Sanhedrin (Matthew 15:2; 16:21; Acts 4:5,8, 23). In the Early church elders were the ministers and deacons or preaching elders and business elders of the local churches (Acts 11:30; 15:23; 16:4; 20:17, 28; I Timothy 5:17 Titus 1:5; James 5:14). The elders of Acts 20:17 were overseer of 20:38. The elders of I Timothy 5:17, Titus 1:5; I Peter 5:1-2, were preaching elders or bishops. Apostles were elders (Acts 11:30; I Peter 5:1; II John 1:3 III John 1), but all elders were not apostles (Acts 15:2). Those who hold the office of bishop in the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. fulfill the roll of Apostles of the early church. They oversee the general church (Philippians 1:1).

### B. Qualifications:

Any ordained Elder who is a member of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. The Ordained Elder must be:

1. A member of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. and in good standing.
2. An individual of honesty, maturity, integrity, and of good report. (Ref: I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:7-9, I Peter 5:1-4)
3. Loyal to the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc., and all those who are appointed over them in the house of God. They are concerned about the ministry of the word and advancement of the church. They are faithful, possess good moral standing, ethically sound, educated and competent to fulfill the below mentioned responsibilities.

### C. Responsibilities:

1. Oversees a number of church and Bible studies within a given geographic assignment (e.g. The Presiding Bishop oversees all churches within the organization and a Regional Bishop oversees all churches within a particular region).
2. Assists churches through financial aid from the Corporate Treasury as he or she deems necessary by the approval of the General Ministerial Board and corporate CFO.
3. Work for the expansion of the church into new areas.
4. Visit those works already established to assure their continuance.
5. Presides on the General Ministerial Board of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc.
6. May Pastor a congregation which becomes the headquarters church for the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc.
7. Trains new Pastors, District Elders, and others - to strengthen the ecclesiastic structure of the organization.
8. Oversees and presides over an annual conference for the corporation.

## **REGIONAL SUPERINTENDENT:**

### **A. Qualifications:**

Any ordained Elder who is a member of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. The Ordained Elder must be:

4. A member of the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. and in good standing.
5. An individual of honesty, maturity, integrity, and of good report. (Ref: I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:7-9, I Peter 5:1-4)
6. Loyal to the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc., and all those who are appointed over them in the house of God. They are concerned about the ministry of the word and advancement of the church. They are faithful, possess good moral standing, ethically sound, educated and competent to fulfill the below mentioned responsibilities.

### **B. Appointment and Term:**

The appointee shall be designated during the annual conference or designated meeting for a term of two years.

### **C. Responsibilities:**

1. Preside over all churches in their assigned region.
2. Shall be responsible for holding an annual regional meeting.
3. Responsible for the growth, development, and unity of the churches within the region.
4. Concur with all appointments and licenses within their jurisdiction.

## **ELDER:**

### **A. History:**

The word Elder comes from the Greek word (presbuteroi). In the Old Testament the word meant the heads or rulers of tribes, cities and nations (Deuteronomy 1:13). In the gospels and Acts of the Apostles (the book of Acts) it generally referred to the Sanhedrin (Matthew 15:2, 16:21; 21:23; 26:3; Acts 4:5, 8, 23). In the early church, Elders were the ministers and deacons or preaching elders and business elders of the local churches (Acts 14:23).

In the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc., elders are ordained and appointed during the organization's annual conference or other designated meeting. Final approval comes from the Presiding Bishop.

### **B. Requirements:**

An ordained minister appointed to serve as an Evangelist, Pastor, or a work as deemed necessary by the Presiding Bishop shall use the title of Elder.

### **C. Responsibilities:**

1. Fulfill the specific responsibilities of the office appointed.
2. Available to serve in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ as appointed.

## **PASTOR:**

### A. History:

The Greek word for Pastor is the same as the word for shepherd (poimen). The role of the pastor therefore is to see that the spiritual needs of the flock of God (the congregation) are met (John 21:15-17; Acts 20:38).

Pastors are given two other designations in the New Testament - Elders and Bishops. When these leaders are called elders (presbuteroi, from which we get our English word presbyters), the emphasis is upon their spiritual maturity. These men are also referred to as Bishops (episkipoi), which means overseer). But because this term has a connotation quite different from that in the New Testament - namely that a Bishop is a minister who has oversight of other ministers - it is better to avoid calling the Bishop by the title Pastor.

The qualifications for a Pastor or Elder are clearly set forth in the word of God: "A Bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that rules well his own house having his children under subjection with all gravity; for if a man knows not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God? Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." (1 Timothy 3:27). There are similar qualifications listed in Titus 1:7-9. In the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc., if these qualifications are met, a Pastor is appointed during the annual conference or other designated meeting.

### B. Requirements:

Must be a minister of the Gospel inspired by the Holy Spirit to begin a new church or appointed by the Presiding Bishop. Must be an ordained Elder or up for ordination during the next annual conference or other designated meeting. A pastor also uses the title of Elder.

### C. Responsibilities:

1. Is assigned to a specific church and body of believers by the Presiding Bishop to oversee and care for that body.
2. Acts as head administrator of the church's finances and business affairs.
3. Trains the local ministers of the congregation in the work of the ministry.
4. Feeds the flock of God.
5. Must make sure the doors of the church are opened according to the specified times of services.
6. Teach the congregation to be loyal to all ecclesiastic authorities appointed over them and submissive to civil authorities as unto the Lord.
7. Visits the sick or delegates the visitation of the sick belonging to the congregation.
8. Meet Organizational financial responsibilities.

## **ASSISTANT PASTOR:**

### A. History:

The Greek word for Pastor is the same as the word for shepherd (poimen). The role of the pastor, therefore is to see that the spiritual needs of his flock - the congregation are met (John 21:15-17; Acts 20:38).

Pastors are given two other designations in the New Testament - Elders and Bishops. When these leaders are called elders (presbuteroi, from which we get our English word presbyters), the emphasis is upon their spiritual maturity. These men are also referred to as Bishops (episkipoi), which means overseer). But because this term has a connotation quite different from that in the New Testament - namely that a Bishop is a minister who has oversight of other ministers - it is better to avoid calling the Bishop by the Title Pastor.

The Qualifications for an Assistant Pastor or Elder are clearly set forth in the Word of God: "A Bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house having his children under subjection with all gravity; for if a man knows not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God? Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." (1 Timothy 3:27). There are similar qualifications listed in Titus 1:7-9. In the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc., if these qualifications are met, an Assistant Pastor is appointed during the annual conference or other designated meeting.

**B. Requirements:**

A Minister of the Gospel chosen by the Pastor with the approval of the Presiding Bishop shall use the title of Minister or Elder if ordained.

**C. Responsibilities:**

1. Appointed or selected by a local pastor to assist in that ministry.
2. In the absence of the pastor, fulfills all pastoral responsibilities.

**EVANGELIST:**

**A. History:**

An Evangelist is one who proclaims the gospel (from the Greek word evangelion - "good news"). Therefore an Evangelist is one who spreads the good news of Jesus Christ. As the Apostle Paul expresses it, the Gospel message centers on the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:1-7). The special function of the Evangelist is to reach the unsaved men with the message that Christ died for our sins and was raised for our justification (Romans 4:24,25).

**B. Requirements:**

Must be a minister who meets several years of faithful, meritorious service. Uses the title of Evangelist.

**C. Responsibilities:**

1. Teach and preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Know the Doctrine of the Church.
3. Hold revival meetings when called upon by a Pastor.
4. Hold revival meetings when called upon by the Presiding Bishop.

#### **LOCAL MINISTER:**

##### **A. History:**

It should be clear that a minister is an apprentice under their pastor. They should be convinced of their calling before they are granted a license. Their conduct should be as becoming holiness as well as their conversation. Let the minister be willing to "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:10). They should be one who serves faithfully in attendance, tithing and offering and obedient to their pastor and those who have rule over them, shows strict adherence to the Member's Pledge of Honor for at least one year before being recommended to attend the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc. School of Ministerial Excellence (SME). Upon successful completion of the SME the ministerial candidate will be granted a ministers license during the annual conference or other designated meeting.

A licensed minister shall have authority to preach, start a Bible study under the supervision and guidance of their pastor, conduct worship services, visit jails and hospitals and may serve under their pastor as the need arises.

##### **B. Requirements:**

To use the title of Minister, this person must be a member of a local church and in good standing, obedient to the Pastor, fulfills all responsibilities given them, attends and supports local church services and functions, adheres to the Member's Pledge of Honor, is a person of good Christian conduct as becoming Holiness, and successfully completes the IGF's School of Ministerial Excellence.

##### **C. Responsibilities:**

1. Is part of the ministerial staff for his or her local church
2. Supports the local ministry and the Pastor by assisting in various functions of the ministry or during a church service (e.g. devotional leader, opening prayer or scripture, takes offering, ministers the word, assists in baptisms, and teach Higher Learning).
3. Functions in church offices as appointed by the Pastor or elected by the church body (e.g. Trustee, Choir President(s), Superintendent of Higher Learning, Local and Regional Missionary President, Local Youth Coordinator and Regional Director of Youth).
4. May be assigned to support a new convert for an appointed time by the Pastor.
5. May conduct or moderate over an entire service in the absence of the Pastor, and/or Assistant Pastor.
6. May visit the sick if requested by the pastor.

#### **DEACON/TRUSTEE:**

##### **A. History:**

In the early church the elders were the ministers and business elders of the church. Today this office is generally referred to as deacon or trustee. Along with the pastor, they attend to the business of the local church (Acts 6:1-6).

B. Requirements:

Must meet requirements of Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-13.

**LOCAL AND REGIONAL MISSIONARIES:**

A. History:

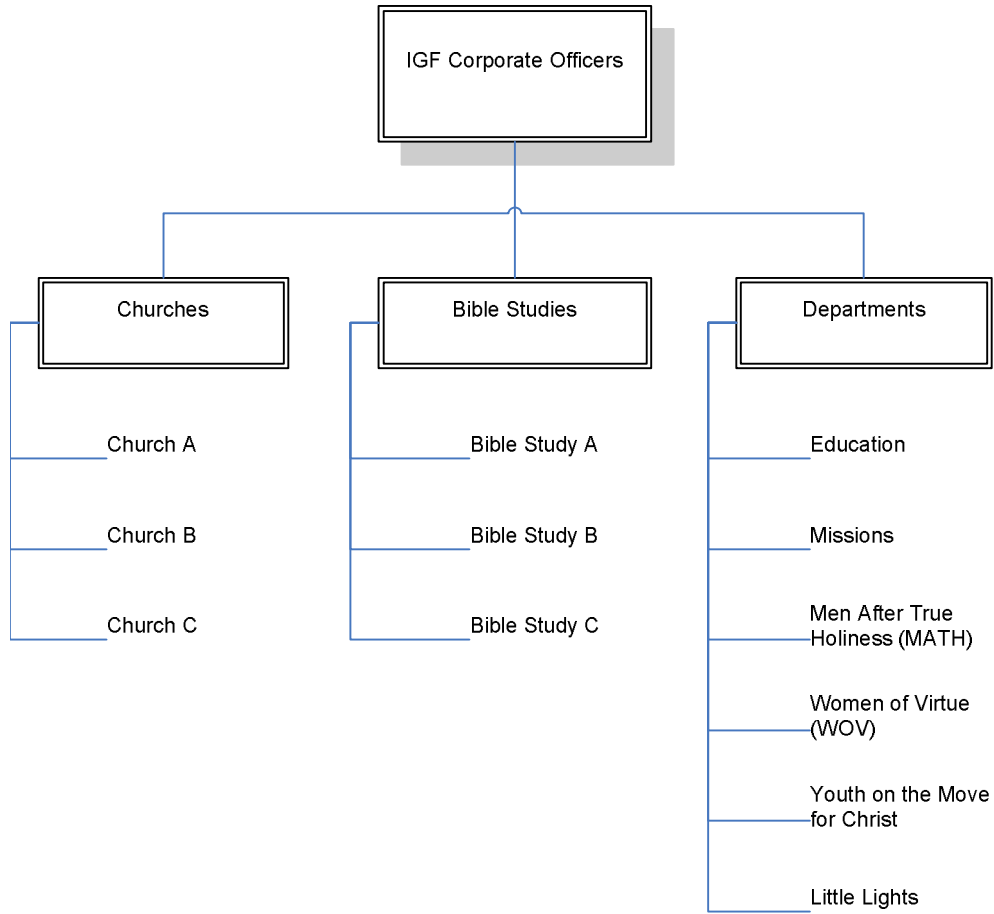
Within the International Gospel Fellowship, Inc., we recognize those men and women who have a specific calling to work to propagate the faith and Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and to perform Christian humanitarian work. These can fall into two categories.

These are men and women in the church who feel a desire and are led by the Lord to minister in various capacities of helps to the afflicted, lost, etc. and work within an organized missionary work. They do not necessarily preach sermons, but are free to address groups with inspirational messages. They have not acknowledged a specific calling to preach or teach, but are used to do whatever called upon within the administration of church missionary work.

B. Requirements:

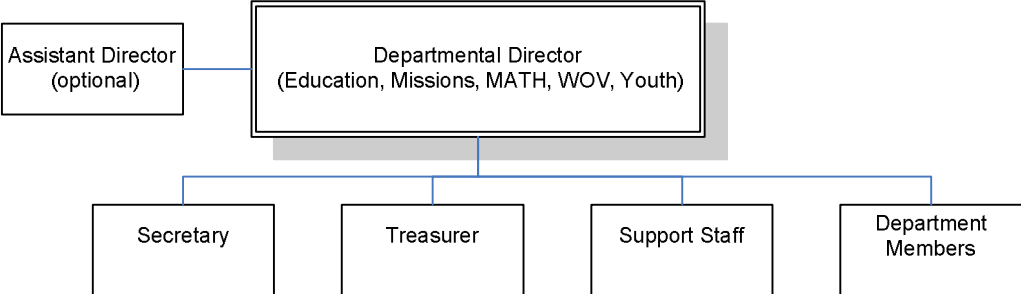
A member that is in good standing, obedient to the Pastor and to all those appointed over them, faithful in attendance and support of the local church, one of good Christian conduct as becoming Holiness shall use the title of Missionary.

# CORPORATE LEVEL HIERARCHICAL CHART

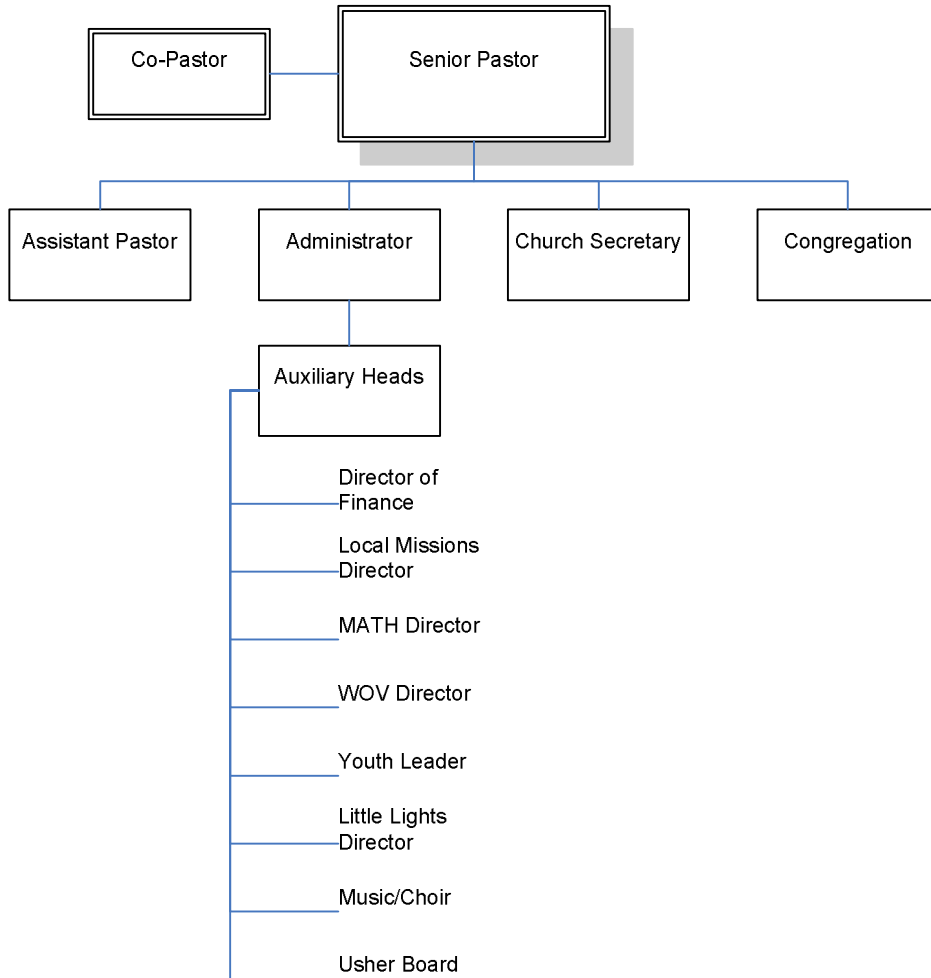




# DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL HIERARCHICAL CHART



# CHURCH LEVEL HIERARCHICAL CHART



# BIBLE STUDY LEVEL HIERARCHICAL CHART

