

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

New Covenant Christian Fellowship

Foundation

Believers were never meant to live in isolation. Being united with Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit also means that we are united with one another. While this unity exists among all true believers in the world, it must necessarily find expression among communities of believers, commonly known as local churches. These local churches are more than casual or random gatherings. They are intentional and purposeful expressions of Christian unity through intimate, dedicated relationship. As a local church, we are committed to the following core purposes:

Pillar and Foundation of the Truth

As the only light and life of men, Jesus Christ came into this world of sin and darkness to bear witness to the truth. As a local church of Jesus Christ, it is our ongoing task to continue this witness to the truth of God in our generation. Hence, the truth as it is in Jesus is the basis of our existence and unity; it must be at the center of all that we are and all that we do. We must love the truth, be sanctified by the truth, walk in the truth, fellowship in the truth, worship in spirit and truth, uphold the truth and proclaim the truth in love. Since the holy scriptures are inerrant truth, the comprehensive teaching and preaching of the word of God is essential for all ministry. All of the truth which God has revealed in His word is profitable to every believer and is attainable through the ordinary means of prayer, bible study and meditation in dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Making Disciples

Jesus Christ has directly commissioned His churches to make disciples. In the New Testament a disciple is more than just a pupil or a learner, a disciple is an adherent, a personally committed follower of another. In the Gospel, God calls us to attach ourselves to the risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and to follow him according to His word. We are to keep His commandments, imitate His life, forsake the world, suffer hardship, persecution and even death where necessary. Jesus Christ Himself must have our unfettered love, our supreme allegiance, our absolute trust and our unqualified obedience. Every relationship and every pursuit in life must be subordinated to the claims of Jesus Christ and the demands of the kingdom of God. One must count the cost of discipleship and be constantly willing to pay the price.

Discipleship is the authentic commitment of genuine Christianity and is therefore neither optional nor secondary. Discipleship begins with our first commitment to Jesus Christ and ends in eternity. Since discipleship is a lifelong commitment to Jesus Christ, it transcends any concept of evangelistic programming or modern church growth methodologies. It is the task of Holy Spirit gifted leadership to make and develop disciples through the regular ministry of teaching, exhorting, admonishing, watching and prayer. It is the responsibility of every member of the body to exemplify and reinforce discipleship among one another through mutual exhortation, encouragement, admonishment, prayer and provoking one another to love and good works.

While truth is at the center of Christianity, faith is ultimately trust in a Person we know, not in a set of doctrines we believe. Discipleship is attachment to Jesus Christ alone, not to leaders, programs or even churches.

Brotherhood

Every genuine Christian is in spiritual union with the risen Christ, born of the Holy Spirit and adopted as a true child of God. As such we are not only the body of Christ but are members of the family of God, having one heavenly Father and sharing a common brotherhood in Jesus. It is the very heart of God that we should know and understand and express this brotherhood in every part of our lives. It is as brothers and sisters in Christ that we have fellowship together with the Father and the Son. It is as brothers and sisters in Christ that we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Our brotherhood in Christ is the bond which unites us – it defines and permeates everything.

Brotherhood is dynamic and deep and real and abiding. With it comes privilege, blessing and obligation. It must find expression in fervent love, tenderhearted affection, sympathetic friendship, transparent humility, selflessness, mutual submission, peace, longsuffering, forbearance, and preferring one another. It must extend to cheerful hospitality and the sharing of personal possessions where the necessities of the saints are known.

While we all may have differing gifts and functions in the local body, we are all brethren in Christ. It is the task of leadership to promote this brotherhood as the basis of church relationship and regard for one another. Leaders must pursue this task recognizing that they themselves are first and foremost brothers among the body. It is the responsibility of every member of the body to share in, foster and preserve this brotherhood.

Church membership is more than role books and voting privileges and participation in programs – it can only be established, recognized and experienced in the deep bonds of brotherhood in Christ. Closed hearted distant individualism is incompatible with this brotherhood.

Mutual Edification

Edification is a term derived from “house” or “building”. It carries the imagery of construction, building up, organizing, founding or establishing. Metaphorically, edification denotes the positive strengthening, reinforcing and improving of an individual or group in the realm of belief and integrity. The New Testament picture of a local church is decidedly one of a body of believers who are actively involved in strengthening one another in truth, faith, hope, and love; admonishing and correcting each other where necessary; bearing one another’s burdens; confessing sins one to another; exhorting and encouraging each other to steadfastness.

This edification is accomplished in the framework of specific gatherings for the exercise of public spiritual gifts and public prayer, of mutual hospitality for fellowship and personal prayer, of admonishing one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, and the pursuit of good works.

It is the responsibility of every believer to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord, to develop and exercise their spiritual gifts within the body, and to avidly pursue this mutual edification among the brethren. Self-will, pride, self-centeredness, self-absorption, detachment, closed heartedness and isolationism are contrary to and hinder this edification.

It is the responsibility of leadership to equip the brethren with spiritual wisdom, knowledge and understanding so that they can grow and mature in Christ and discern their spiritual gifts. While leaders must participate in this mutual edification as fellow believers and brethren, their focus is to watch, equip and promote this reciprocal edification among the brethren. It is the members of the body who must ultimately exercise and express it.

This mutual edification demands the consistent involvement in each others lives. There is no substitute.

Worship and Praise

Worship is the sober recognition of the worthiness of God to receive glory and honor; the hearty appreciation of His exaltedness, power, dominion and authority; the genuine acknowledgement of our commitment, trust, adoration and love. Worship is to glory in God and exalt Him for all that He is and all that has done. Praise is the expression of this worship through prayer, thanksgiving, song and declaration both privately and publicly. Praise involves the whole person – body, mind and heart.

The most significant aspects of worship and praise are God-centeredness and truth. While we are free to incorporate a rich variety of musical instrumentation and style, we must not focus on outward presentation, show, talent or enthusiasm. Worship is not the response of our emotions to a contrived religious atmosphere, it is the spontaneous response of our hearts to the glory, greatness and love of the living God.

Worship and praise is a central means for edifying and encouraging one another. Common worship, praise and adoration reinforce our unity around one God and Father and one Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, it is the responsibility of the body to instruct and admonish one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. It is the responsibility of leadership to promote involvement in worship and to ensure that it follows the basic guidelines of spirit and truth.

Maintaining sober-minded biblical worship is vital because the church will ultimately believe, pursue and proclaim what it sings.

Prayer and Proclamation

Through the cross of Calvary Jesus Christ defeated Satan and triumphed over principalities and powers. In fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy and as a reward of His suffering Jesus Christ has been given all authority in heaven and earth to bring God's eternal purposes of redemption to pass in human history. This is accomplished by bringing the gospel of salvation to all nations. It demands an effort and spiritual warfare of immense proportions. In the face of every opposition Jesus Christ has built and will continue to build His Church in every generation.

The Church of Jesus Christ participates in this endeavor and this spiritual warfare by means of prayer and the proclamation of the gospel. As Christians, we must not only put on defensive spiritual armor, we must also take up the offensive spiritual weaponry of the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, along with all prayer and supplication. We must recognize and trust that these weapons alone are truly mighty through God and wholly effective in accomplishing the mission.

As a body of believers it is essential that we continue in dynamic prayer together. It is the most important activity in which we engage. Unceasing prayer and supplication must be made for all men, for worldly rulers, for all the saints worldwide and for those commissioned with preaching the gospel that doors may be opened and hearts may be turned to God in Christ. We must labor in prayer as a body at all times with all steadfastness and perseverance, in fullness of faith and never losing heart regardless of the intensity of the opposition.

By proclamation, we mean the presentation of the Gospel of repentance and faith to an unbelieving world. While all may not have specific gifts of preaching, every member of the body participates in this proclamation through personal witness, prayer, and support for genuine gospel ministries. By these means we all labor together in a common cause and share in the ultimate victory of the kingdom of God.

Evangelism and Missions

Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. After being anointed by God as Messiah at the river Jordan, Jesus spent the next three and a half years proclaiming the good news of salvation from village to village throughout Palestine. The last words of Jesus before ascending to heaven were centered upon bringing the free offer of the Gospel to men, women boys and girls of every tribe tongue people and nation. He has commissioned His church in every generation to take the Gospel to all men near and far, baptizing those who respond in repentance and faith, and teaching them to observe His commandments. This is the very heart of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In fulfillment of this commission, it is the responsibility of every individual Christian to be salt and light in the real world of sin and darkness. This includes a peaceful and honorable lifestyle, perseverance in good works and kindness as well as personal witness and testimony. This should also include cultivating an understanding of one's surrounding culture in order to effectively interact with it in wisdom and knowledge.

In fulfillment of this commission, it is the responsibility of leadership to pursue the work of evangelism. Those who labor in the word must regularly call upon the unsaved listeners to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

In fulfillment of this commission, leaders must also promote within the body a balanced understanding of and involvement with evangelism and missions. The body, as individuals and together, must explore legitimate methods and opportunities for bringing the gospel to the unsaved. The body must also participate in supporting proven mission works through prayer, financial aid and personal relationship. According to our ability, the body must send out and support those whom God has called to plant churches in other areas.

Developing Leaders

Good leadership is vital to the well being of a body of believers. The traits of good leadership begin with proven character: God-centered spiritual depth and maturity, a balanced and stable disposition, moral integrity and open-hearted love. This character must be coupled with spiritual insight, knowledge and clarity in the scriptures as well as an ability to teach and exhort from the scriptures. This blend of qualifications is not arrived at easily or quickly. It normally entails a long term molding process which requires dedication, focus and determination. It is the responsibility of a body of believers to discern and invest in faithful men whom God is calling into leadership. It is the responsibility of current leadership to mentor these candidates through character formation, biblical instruction and by providing opportunities for ministry.

Summary

In all of these things, our ultimate purpose is to bear fruit in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit to the glory of God our Father.