

Church Membership Session 1 - A Glorious Church

Outline

- I. What we hope to accomplish in our sessions on Church Membership
- II. Defining the purpose and work of the church
- III. What the church does
- IV. Financial implications

I. What we hope to accomplish in our sessions on Church Membership

1. Significance:

We want our members to understand the significance of the church in the world and in their own lives. We do not want the members of our church to have a flawed vision for the church.

2. Alignment

We want our members to be aligned with the Bible and with the Elders on how they view the church. We do not want the members of our church to have a different view of the church than Christ has for His church but rather that we are all aligned. Further, we do not want the members of our church to have a different view of the church than the elders of the Church.

3. Maximal not minimalistic approach

We do not want the members of our church to have a minimalist approach to the church.

4. Create, build and rebuild Culture

We want to clarify and solidify and guide the culture of our church

5. Define ministry opportunities

The gifts of the Spirit; What is your ministry; the next person you meet.

6. Explain Financial stewardship

II. Defining the purpose and work of the church

The first purpose of this church is to glorify God (Eph. 3:21). This purpose is best expressed by preaching and obeying His Word (Eph. 2:10; Titus 2:11-14) and spreading the gospel (Matt. 28:18-20).

Our mission is to embrace the Gospel, display the power of the gospel, manifest the beauty of a church community and spread the joy of salvation through the proclamation of the Gospel throughout the earth.

I. What the church is

1. The Church is the Body of Christ, Rom 12:4-5

⁴ For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. ⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them*: if prophecy, *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; ⁷ or ministry, *let us use it* in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸ he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

We recognize that many of the failures of the church are related to a failure understanding of the true nature of the church as is described in Romans 12:4-8.

2. The Church has a Head

Baptist Confession 1689, Chapter 26, Paragraph 4

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, in whom, by the appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, institution, order or government of the church, is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner

Colossians 1:18 *And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.*

This is not our church.

It is the Lord's church and we must exist in it as stewards.

3. The church is a supernatural family

If you are united with Christ, you are united with others who are 'in Christ.' Rom 12:4-5, ⁴ For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. ⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them*: if

prophecy, *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; ⁷ or ministry, *let us use it* in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸ he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Images in the Bible that describe elements of the church
The church is described as a family, a body, a kingdom of priests, Christ's body, a Bride...

The church is the “whole body of the faithful whether in heaven or on earth,” Bannerman, p 7

Members of the church are in Christ

The people in this family have a personal and supernatural relationship with Jesus Christ

Jesus is present in His church

He is in the church, he walks among the lampstands of church, he guides the church, he is preeminent in the church. Is that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant

3. The church is the Pillar and ground of the truth

1 Timothy 3:14ff *These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; 15 but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. 16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:*

4. The church is both visible and invisible

The invisible church is the true church of the elect. The visible church is composed of those who participate in the activities of the church, have made an outward profession and partake in the external ordinances.

1689 Baptist Confession Chapter 26, Paragraph 2

All persons throughout the world, professing the faith of the gospel, and obedience unto God by Christ according unto it, not destroying their own profession by any errors everting the foundation, or unholiness of conversation, are and may be called visible saints¹; and of such ought all particular congregations to be constituted².

1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: The visible church is divided but the invisible church is not divided

5. The church is not only global, it is local

Single congregations meeting for worship, possessing the government of elders, covenanting together either in houses or meeting places.

1689 Baptist Confession, Chapter 26 Paragraph 5

In the execution of this power wherewith He is so intrusted, the Lord Jesus calls out of the world unto Himself, through the ministry of His Word, by His Spirit, those that are given unto Him by His Father¹, that they may walk before Him in all the ways of obedience, which He prescribeth to them in His Word². Those thus called, He commandeth to walk together in particular societies, or churches, for their mutual edification, and the due performance of that public worship, which He requireth of them in the world³.

6. The church is a mixture of error

Baptist Confession 1689, Chapter 26, Paragraph 3

The purest churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error¹; and some have so degenerated as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan²; nevertheless Christ always hath had, and ever shall have a kingdom in this world, to the end thereof, of such as believe in Him, and make profession of His name³.

1 Corinthians 1:11 For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you.

7. The church is everlasting

The strength of the church, “the gates of hell will not prevail against it.”

8. The church is interrelated with other churches

Church's relationships with other churches

Chapter 26, Paragraph 14

As each church, and all the members of it, are bound to pray continually for the good and prosperity of all the churches of Christ¹, in all places, and upon all occasions to further every one within the bounds of their places and callings, in the exercise of their gifts and graces², so the churches,

when planted by the providence of God, so as they may enjoy opportunity and advantage for it³, ought to hold communion among themselves, for their peace, increase of love, and mutual edification⁴.

Ephesians 6:18 *praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints--*

III. What the church does

The Ten Pillars of Hope Baptist Church

Our mission is to bring glory to God as we equip the saints for worship, service, an evangelism through the following priorities. We hereby commit ourselves to the following principles and practices:

1. The Centrality of the Gospel – All activities and messages of the church have their source in the gospel of Christ – that sinners are justified by faith alone, that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers by God's decree alone, and that this righteousness is the only righteousness that justifies and that faith that is genuine is evidenced by works (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Rev. 14:6-7).

2. Expository Preaching – We believe that a steady diet of expositional preaching is the most effective way to build up the body of Christ. Preaching and teaching through books of the Bible will be the primary emphasis of this ministry (Deut. 6:4-9; Ezra 7:10; Neh. 8:1-12; Matt. 4:4; 1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 3:14-4:5; Titus 1:3, 9; Heb. 4:12; 1 Peter 1:22-2:3).

3. Fervent Prayer – Every aspect of the church's life and ministry ought to be undergirded with regular, fervent prayer. Elements of a godly prayer life (individually and corporately) include: adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and intercession (Neh. 1; Psalm 51; Matt. 6:5-15; Luke 19:46; Phil. 1:3-11; Col. 1:3-12; James 5:13-18).

4. Authentic Worship – Authentic worship of the living God is marked by biblical truth, personal and corporate genuineness and spiritual depth. Elements of corporate worship include prayer, singing, Scripture reading, preaching, believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper (Psalm 24, 33, 42, 95;

Isa. 6:1-8; Matt. 4:10; John 4:24; Rom. 12:1-2; Heb. 13:15; Rev. 4-5; 1 Cor. 11:23-34).

5. Loving Community – We will cultivate Christian love, rejoicing, unity and community in the family of God through mentoring relationships, benevolence and Biblical instruction (Acts 2:44-47; 6:1-7; Eph. 4:1-16; 1 Tim. 5:3-8; 2 Tim. 2:2; Titus 2:3-5; James 1:27).

6. Church Discipline – We will exercise biblical church discipline (administered in a spirit of obedience and humility) and do believe that this practice glorifies God, promotes the fear of God in the church, protects the purity of the church and offers a means of repentance and restoration to the wayward (Prov. 28:13; Matt. 5:23-24; 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:6-8; 11:17-34; Gal. 6:1-5; Eph. 5:25-27; 1 Tim. 5:20).

7. Personal Evangelism – We will equip and send the church into the community to bring the message of the cross to our own households, neighborhoods, workplaces and the world (Matt. 28:19-20; John 20:31; Acts 4:12; Rom. 10:14-15; 1 Peter 3:15).

8. Church Planting – We will make intentional efforts to reach the world for Christ by praying, giving, going and planting as we rejoice in God's plan for the Church to be a blessing to the nations (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 13-14, 16-21).

9. The Sufficiency of Scripture – We will regard Scripture as sufficient for life and godliness, so that it must be consulted for all things. We will use it for reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness to speak into the lives of those in the congregation as well as those we come into contact with (2 Tim. 3:16,17).

10. The Regulative Principle – We will regulate church life by Scripture alone, recognizing that God has instituted in the Scriptures everything He requires for worship in the Church and that everything else is prohibited. Therefore, the only permissible elements of worship are those that are instituted by command, precept, example, or by good and necessary consequence, and that whatever is not warranted by Scripture is forbidden (Lev. 10:1-3; Jer. 7:30-31; Matt. 28:18-20). This is another way of saying

that Christ has authority over His church through the Word of God (Matt. 16:18; Rom. 1:16; 10:17).

In the midst of these priorities, we also devoted to reforming the family to biblical standards.

Family Reformation - We will equip families by communicating the biblical elements of family life, strengthening marriages, equipping fathers and mothers for spiritual leadership, encouraging and training for Biblical manhood and womanhood, ministering to and incorporating singles who are living independently, providing resources to married and single parents and their children (Gen 1-3; Deut 6:4-9; Prov 1-31; Eph 5:21-6:4; 1 Tim 1-5; 1 Peter 3:1-7).

IV. Financial implications:

To fulfill these things we collect funds and distribute them for the edification of the body and the evangelization of the world.

We allocate funds to get the word of God out as far and wide as we can... as stewards we have responsibility to bear fruit, and expand our tents.

Identification of current missions and evangelism priorities

Our next session:

Church culture: Our church covenant

There is no culture designed to be more beautiful than the culture of the Church of Jesus Christ