



*changing lives with the truth*

Welcome to Connect – Together Experiencing A Ministry. We are honored that you have taken the time to consider connecting with us. I encourage you to listen attentively to the information we will cover in these classes and then, prayerfully make your decision.

We know that the Lord is building His church and that He has a place for each of us. He has a specific church for you and a specific function within that church. We want to help you find both. Scripture teaches us that God sets each member in the body as it pleases Him. It is our desire to see you walk in the light of His will and fulfill your divine destiny.

After prayerful consideration, if you desire to connect with us, we welcome you into our family. However, if the Lord leads you in a different direction, we encourage you to follow your heart. It is so important to us that the Spirit of God leads you in your decision.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration. We pray God's best for you as you take the next step into His will for your life.

Serving Him

Ralph Fruguglietti  
Senior Pastor

**Victory Christian Church**  
**Foundation of Ministry**

**Our Mission Statement**

Victory Christian Church is a Christ-centered, Spirit-filled family church dedicated to growing great people for God. We are devoted to teaching believers how to **Live In Fullness Everyday**, giving **LIFE** away. As a dynamic vibrant church proclaiming the pure Word of God, our three-fold purpose is:

**1. Equipping:**

Equip every believer to live the lifestyle of a believer through the Word, Worship, and Prayer

**2. Growing:**

Growing strong Christ-centered marriages, families, and a church that fulfills God's plan and purpose, reaching their full potential.

**3. Reaching:**

Reaching out to those who are without Christ and those in need, with love, grace, mercy and compassion.

**Our Statement of Faith:**

**Doctrine of the Bible:** We believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible authoritative Word of God.

**Doctrine of the Trinity:** We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are eternal. These three make one God, which is called the Trinity. They are equal in all respects.

**Doctrine of Jesus Christ:** We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His atoning death through His shed blood, and His bodily Resurrection, and His personal return in power and glory.

**Doctrine of Salvation of Man:** We believe that for salvation for lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential. We believe a person is saved when he repents of his sin and turns in faith by accepting Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. The believer is kept by the power of God and is eternally secure in Christ. Salvation includes the forgiveness of sins past, present, and future, which gives us a perfect standing before God in Jesus Christ.

**Doctrine of Baptism:** We believe it is important, upon confession of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, to be water baptized.

**Doctrine of Communion:** We believe that the Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the church and has been given as a means of for the church to celebrate our covenant with the Lord. This celebration puts us in remembrance of what the Lord has redeemed us from, and what He has redeemed us to.

**Doctrine of the Holy Spirit:** We believe that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is evidenced by manifestation of spiritual gifts and power in public testimony and service.

**Doctrine of the Church:** We believe that the church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with Divine appointments for the fulfillment of the great commission. Each believer is an integral part of the general assembly. We believe the church exists throughout the world and is witnessed and experienced in local autonomous gatherings of believers.

**Doctrine of our Blessed Hope:** We believe in the imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead:** We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the unsaved; those that are saved unto resurrection of life; and those that are unsaved unto the resurrection of damnation.

### **Our Core Values – (Vision Statement)**

1. We believe church should be stirring, passionate, relational, and uplifting. Excellence in ministry communicates our love and concern to those within and without the church. We believe that God is worthy of our very best and therefore a spirit of excellence should be evident in all our ministries.
2. We believe in church as being the place where the uncompromised Word of God is preached and the Spirit of God has the liberty to minister to everyone in a relevant and practical way, and yet still sensitive to the unchurched that are drawn or invited to our church.
3. We believe in exalting God through uplifting praise and worship. Praise and worship is a way for believers to communicate their love for God from a reverent and honorable heart. The liberty for personal and corporate worship should be provided in the church.
4. We believe in a church that is a praying church. Every believer is called to pray for their church, their family, their nation, their community, the unchurched, and for one another. Prayer is the foundation of every successful Christian endeavor.
5. We believe the church is called to meet the needs of hurting people. The church and the world around us are filled with people who need to be

restored, reconciled, and healed. It is the church's responsibility not to turn them away, but to reach out in a spirit of love to offer help.

6. We believe the family is the cornerstone of the church. The church is a place where the needs of the whole family of God can be met, seven days a week, whether married, single, young or elderly. A place where spiritual, emotional, relational, and educational needs can be met.
7. We believe that church should be an environment where loving and caring relationships are developed. Relationships that impact and make eternal differences in lives are accountable, loving, accepting, giving, loyal, and committed.
8. We believe in a church where diversity of race, age, status, education, style, and personality are evident. Church is a place where all God's people can come and find identity, expression, and acceptance.
9. We believe in identifying and developing strong, enthusiastic leaders. Everything rises and falls with leadership. Growing great people for God requires leaders who are committed to mentor, grow, and disciple the church.
10. We believe God's design for a successful church requires the involvement of every person. Effective team ministry happens as each person takes ownership in the vision with his or her time, talents, and resources.
11. We believe in a church that is evangelistic in its outreach to the community. The good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to be proclaimed in our schools, neighborhoods, homes, and business. An evangelistic mind-set in a local church is a sign of a healthy body.
12. We believe personal, purposeful, relational evangelism is a calling upon every believer's life. Evangelism is the lifestyle of a believer who is committed to Christ. Every relationship we have and every place we go is an opportunity to let our light shine.

## Connect Class – Week 1

### Why Connect? – Part 1

At Victory we view connection as a door of opportunity. It is a door that leads to **greater growth, greater identity, and greater fulfillment** in our Christian lives. Our decision to partner with a ministry is really a commitment to unity. As the people of God we desire to unite around a **common faith, a common purpose, and a common vision**.

#### 1. Commitment

Ministry Connection is a step of commitment in which the dedicated Christian expresses through both word and deed, that Jesus Christ is Lord in their life.

**Hebrews 10:24-25:** *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*

We believe God gathers us as He wills and assembles us to fulfill His purposes. Obviously this requires commitment on behalf of those called to Victory. This commitment involves several areas of a Christian's life:

Commitment to God - **Matthew 22:37**

Commitment to the family - **Proverbs 12:7**

Commitment to personal growth – **2 Peter 3:18**

Commitment to ministry – **Matthew 4:19**

The key to a Christian's successful commitment lies in accountability to the local church and its leadership. We don't believe in connecting without activity (**Hebrews 13:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13**).

Without this accountability it is too easy to falter. But with the loving support, encouragement and challenge of the leadership and congregation, each person can not only maintain, but also can grow to their full potential in God.

#### 2. Relationship

This is where Community Groups come in. Community groups are essential to the Christian life because we were created for community. We were built to function in relationship with one another and with God (**Romans 12:5; Hebrews 10:24-25; Philippians 1:19-20**).

At Victory we believe in being connected. When we connect we complement one another with our different and unique talents and abilities as we join together as a team (**Romans 1:11-12**).

### 3. Partnership

**1 Corinthians 12:1-6, 12-21, 27**

**Romans 12:4-11**

Just as each part of the physical body is important to the function of the overall body, so is each part of the body of Christ. Ministry becomes a TEAM effort.

T - Together  
E - Experiencing  
A - A  
M - Ministry

### 4. Stewardship

Stewardship means to set in order, to set in position that God ordered, to bring into Divine order. A Steward is someone who is in a position of authority and responsibility over something that belongs to another.

***Matthew 16:18:*** And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Jesus is the head of the church, the owner of it through the shedding of His own blood. We are the one's He has given the responsibility of His church to care for it, and grow it. We therefore, are stewards of the church and have been given the privilege of stewardship.

***1 Corinthians 9:17:Amplified:*** For if I do this work of my own free will, then I have my pay - my reward; but if it is not of my own free will, but is done under reluctantly and under compulsion, I am still entrusted with a sacred trusteeship and commission.

***Isaiah 1:19:*** If you are willing and obedient you shall eat the good of the land...

#### **Responsibilities of Stewardship:**

Support the Church with: Prayer, Time, Talents, and Treasures

#### 1. Prayer Support:

Prayer for the Pastor:

***2 Thessalonians 3:1-2; Ephesians 6:19; Colossians 4:3-4:Amplified***

Pray for our leadership

Pray for one another

Pray for the Harvest:

***Psalms 2:8; James 5:7***

2. Treasures:

***2 Corinthians 9:6-8; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Philippians 4:10-19; Malachi 3:8-12***

3. Gifts and Talents:

***1 Corinthians 12:27-31; Romans 11:29; 1 Peter 4:10-11; Matthew 25:14-30; 1 John 2:20,27; Acts 3:6***

## **Connect Class – Week 2**

### **Doctrines – What We Believe**

**I. Doctrine of the Bible:** We believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible authoritative Word of God.

The Bible is God's Word to man. It reveals the plan of God for all of mankind. It reveals the nature of God, the sinfulness of man, the plan of salvation in Christ, the prospects of heaven for the saved, and guidelines for the Christian to follow in order to live and act as he should.

### **History of the Bible**

The history of the Bible starts with a phenomenal account of history! It's an ancient collection of writings, comprised of 66 separate books, written over approximately 1,600 years, by at least 40 distinct authors. The Old Testament contains 39 books written from approximately 1500 to 400 BC, and the New Testament contains 27 books written from approximately 40 to 90 AD. The original Old Testament was written mainly in Hebrew, with some Aramaic, while the original New Testament was written in common Greek.

The history of the Bible begins with the Jewish Scriptures. The historical record of the Jews was written down on leather scrolls and tablets over centuries, and the authors included kings, shepherds, prophets and other leaders. The first five books are called the Law, which were written and/or edited primarily by Moses in the early 1400's BC. Thereafter, other scriptural texts were written and collected by the Jewish people during the next 1,000 years. About 450 BC, the Law and the other Jewish Scriptures were arranged by councils of rabbis (Jewish teachers), who then recognized the complete set as the inspired and sacred authority of God. At some time during this period, the books of the Hebrew Bible were arranged by topic, including The Law (*Torah*), the Prophets, and the Writings.

Beginning as early as 250 BC, the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek by Jewish scholars in Alexandria, Egypt. This translation became known as the Septuagint, meaning 70, and referring to the tradition that 70 (probably 72) men comprised the translation team. It was during this process that the order of the books was changed to the order we have in today's Bible: Historical (Genesis - Esther), poetic (Job - Song of Songs), and prophetic (Isaiah - Malachi). <sup>2</sup>

Although the Jewish Scriptures were copied by hand, they were extremely accurate copy to copy. The Jews had a phenomenal system of scribes, who developed intricate and ritualistic methods for counting letters, words and paragraphs to insure that no copying errors were made. These scribes dedicated their entire lives to preserving the accuracy of the holy books. A single copy error would require the immediate destruction of the entire scroll. In fact, Jewish scribal



tradition was maintained until the invention of the printing press in the mid-1400's AD. As far as manuscript accuracy, the recent discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has confirmed the remarkable reliability of this scribal system over thousands of years.

Starting in about 40 AD, and continuing to about 90 AD, the eye-witnesses to the life of Jesus, including Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter and Jude, wrote the Gospels, letters and books that became the Bible's New Testament. These authors quote from 31 books of the Old Testament, and widely circulate their material so that by about 150 AD, early Christians were referring to the entire set of writings as the "New Covenant." During the 200s AD, the original writings were translated from Greek into Latin, Coptic (Egypt) and Syriac (Syria), and widely disseminated as "inspired scripture" throughout the Roman Empire (and beyond). In 397 AD, in an effort to protect the scriptures from various heresies and offshoot religious movements, the current 27 books of the New Testament were formally and finally confirmed and "canonized".

### **How We Got The Bible**

In the Old Testament God spoke to people through His prophets, which were the preachers of that day. But today in New Testament times, God speaks to us primarily through His Word, the Bible.

***Hebrews 1:1-2:*** *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;*

In these last days God will speak to us by His Son, who is called in the Bible, the WORD of GOD (***John 1:1; John 1:14; Revelation 19:13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17***).

Every word and every thought in the Bible is put there and approved by God Himself.

***Matthew 24:35:*** *Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away* - says it will always stand, never to be done away with.

### **Importance of the Bible to You**

God talks with us and teaches us as we read His Word.

***2 Timothy 3:16:*** *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*

This is called the doctrine of the "Inspiration of Scripture". It means every word that the writer wrote down was exactly what God wanted written. This is also

called the doctrine of "verbal plenary inspiration", or in other words every word was inspired of God and was without error. At Victory we believe in the inerrancy of Scripture.

**Verbal** – The very words of the Bible, not just the concepts, but the actual words of the Bible were inspired by God.

**Plenary** – Means all of Scripture

**Inspiration** – It was all inspired by God – God breathed

### 1. The Bible is Our Food

***Matthew 4:4:*** *But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"*

### 2. The Bible is Our Light – Brings Illumination

***John 1:1-5:*** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. <sup>4</sup> In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.*

***Psalms 119:105:*** *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

### 3. The Bible is Our Spiritual Weapon

***Ephesians 6:11,17:*** *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

*<sup>17</sup> And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*

**II. Doctrine of the Trinity:** We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are eternal. These three make one God, which is called the Trinity. They are equal in all respects.

### **What is the Trinity?**

The Trinity is one God who eternally exists as three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, who are each fully and equally God.

The Bible is clear from beginning to end that there is one God (***Deuteronomy 4:35; Deuteronomy 32:39; Psalm 86:10; Isaiah 43:10; Isaiah 45:5; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Timothy 2:5***).

The doctrine of the Trinity is the way that theologians have articulated two truths. #1, there is one God, and #2, that the Father, Son, and Spirit are God.

1. The Father is God:

**John 6:27 NLT:** But don't be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you. For God the Father has given me the seal of his approval.

**1 Corinthians 8:6 NLT:** But we know that there is only one God, the Father, who created everything, and we live for him

2. Jesus, the Son is God. Now, this becomes more debated.

**John 1:1:** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**John 1:14:** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

**John 8:58 NLT:** Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I Am!"

**John 20:28:** And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

**Romans 9:5 NLT:** "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are their ancestors, and Christ himself was an Israelite as far as his human nature is concerned. And he is God, the one who rules over everything and is worthy of eternal praise! Amen."

**Titus 2:13:** "looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ".

**1 John 5:20 NLT:** "And we know that the Son of God has come, and he has given us understanding so that we can know the true God. And now we live in fellowship with the true God because we live in fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ. He is the only true God, and he is eternal life."

3. The Holy Spirit is God

**2 Corinthians 3:17-18:** Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. <sup>18</sup> But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

**Acts 5:3-4:** But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? <sup>4</sup> While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

## Connection Class – Week 3

### Doctrines – What We Believe

**III. Doctrine of Jesus Christ:** We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His atoning death through His shed blood, and His bodily Resurrection, and His personal return in power and glory.

#### **Virgin Birth: *Matthew 1:18-25***

**Verse 18:** She was still a virgin, in fulfillment of ***Isaiah 7:14***, then she is found to be pregnant.

***Isaiah 7:14:*** *Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*

The Old Testament is being fulfilled in the womb of Joseph's teenage fiancé.

**Verse 21-25:** This was prophesied by the prophet Isaiah 700 years before.

#### **Sinless Life: *Hebrews 4:14-15***

The Passover in Exodus 12:1-14 was a type of Jesus dying in our place for our sins on the cross.

The lamb represents Jesus. The Bible calls Him the Lamb of God (***John 1:29, 36***). Just as the lamb had to be perfect so did the Son of God, otherwise He would have been disqualified. Just before His crucifixion, after being beaten and examined by the religious leaders and the Romans, Pontius Pilate said of Him, "*I can find no fault in Him*" (***John 18:38; John 19:4, 6***).

#### **Miracles: *Acts 2:22***

- Jesus changed water into wine (***John 2:6-10***).
- Jesus caused the disciples to catch a large load of fish (***Luke 5:4-6***).
- Jesus casts out demons (***Matthew 8:28-32; 15:22-28***).
- Jesus healed lepers (***Matthew 8:3; Luke 17:14***).
- Jesus healed diseases (***Matthew 4:23,24; Luke 6:17-19***).
- Jesus healed the paralytic (***Mark 2:3-12***).
- Jesus raised the dead (***Matthew 9:25; John 11:43-44***).
- Jesus restored sight to the blind (***Matthew 9:27-30; John 9:1-7***).
- Jesus restored cured deafness (***Mark 7:32-35***).
- Jesus fed the multitude (***Matthew 14:15-21; Matthew 15:32-38***).
- Jesus walked on water (***Matthew 14:25-33***).
- Jesus healed the sick (***Matthew 8:5-13; 9:22***).
- Jesus calmed a storm with a command (***Matthew 8:22-27; Mark 4:39***).

- Jesus rose from the dead (**Luke 24:39; John 20:27**).
- Jesus appeared to disciples after resurrection (**John 20:19**).
- Jesus ascended into heaven (**Acts 1:9**).

### **Atoning Death: 1 Timothy 2:5-6**

#### **Vicarious (Substitutionary) Atonement**

Victory's position is the one known as "vicarious atonement." The word "vicarious" means substitute. Therefore, Christ was a substitute for others in that He took their place and suffered their punishment.

**Genesis 22:13:** *Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son.*

Notice that the ram was offered in place of Isaac. This was a substitutionary sacrifice and that is exactly what "vicarious" means.

**Isaiah 53:4-5:** *Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.*

What was due to us because of our sinfulness, is what fell upon Christ. He was our substitution (**2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 4:25 ESV**).

Clearly, Jesus was a substitution in that He was made sin on our behalf. He took our place and bore our sins in His body on the cross (**1 Peter 2:24**) and made propitiation for our sins (**Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10**).

Propitiation: The removal of wrath by the offering of a gift.

### **Resurrection: 1 Corinthians 15:3-8**

#### **Acts 2:43-44; 1 Corinthians 15:17 Amplified**

#### **What is the resurrection?**

The resurrection is three things: (1) you're alive, (2) you die, for a period of time and (3) You come back to physical life.

#### **What is the biblical evidence for the resurrection of Jesus?**

1. It was prophesied by Isaiah 700 years in advance. **Isaiah 3:6-11 NIV**

2. Jesus Himself predicts repeatedly His own death, burial, and resurrection.

***Mark 8:31; Mark 9:30-31; Mark 10:33-34***

3. Jesus appeared physically, not just spiritually, alive three days after His death.

***Matthew 28:9; John 20:17; John 20:20-28; Luke 24:36-43***

Jesus appeared physically alive over the course of forty days to crowds as large as five hundred people at a time (***Acts 1:3 NIV, 1 Corinthians 15:6***).

4. Jesus' resurrected body was the same as His pre-resurrected body.

His disciples recognized Him as the same person who had been crucified (***Luke 24:31***), and Mary Magdalene recognized Him by the sound of His voice (***John 20:16***). While Jesus' resurrected body was the same, it was transformed. This explains why Jesus was not immediately recognized after His resurrection (***John 20:14-15***), and seemed to appear and reappear mysteriously (***John 20:19, Luke 24:31***).

**Return:** We will discuss this in the Doctrine of our Blessed Hope

## Connect Class – Week 4

### Doctrines – What We Believe

**IV. The Doctrine of the Salvation of Man:** We believe that for salvation for lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential. We believe a person is saved when he repents of his sin and turns in faith by accepting Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. The believer is kept by the power of God and is eternally secure in Christ. Salvation includes the forgiveness of sins past, present, and future, which gives us a perfect standing before God in Jesus Christ.

Receiving Christ as your Savior begins an eternal relationship with God. It is much more than just going to heaven when you die.

Everyone in the family of God was a sinner who has been saved by God's grace. *"For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."* (**Ephesians 2:8-9**)

#### Being "Born-Again"

A person who receives Christ as their Savior and receives eternal life begins as a newborn baby in the Lord.

**John 3:1-19 NLT:** *There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. <sup>2</sup> After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. "Rabbi," he said, "we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you." <sup>3</sup> Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God." <sup>4</sup> "What do you mean?" exclaimed Nicodemus. "How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again?" <sup>5</sup> Jesus replied, "I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. <sup>7</sup> So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again.' <sup>8</sup> The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit." <sup>9</sup> "How are these things possible?" Nicodemus asked. <sup>10</sup> Jesus replied, "You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don't understand these things? <sup>11</sup> I assure you, we tell you what we know and have seen, and yet you won't believe our testimony. <sup>12</sup> But if you don't believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup> No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man has come down from heaven. <sup>14</sup> And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life. <sup>16</sup> "For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but*

to save the world through him. <sup>18</sup> "There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God's one and only Son. <sup>19</sup> And the judgment is based on this fact: God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil.

Jesus explained to Nicodemus that "born again" means that there are two births. The first birth is our physical birth that occurs when a mother gives birth to her child. The second birth is our spiritual birth whereby God the Holy Spirit causes us to be born again from spiritual death to spiritual life.

## **The Old Nature**

Before a person is saved they do not have the nature of God. They only have what the Bible refers to as the "old" or "carnal" nature. That is why we sin.

**Genesis 1:26-28** – God Gives Man Dominion

**Genesis 2:15-18** – God Gives Man A Command

**Genesis 3:1-7** – Man Disobeys God and Sins

## **Progress to Transgression:**

1. Verse 1 – Doubt
2. Verse 3 – Adding to the Word
3. Verse 4 – Contradiction of the Word
4. Verse 6 – The Transgression

Because a person who has not received Christ only has the old carnal (sin) nature, he cannot please God (**Romans 8:7-8; Romans 5:12**).

Sin is rebelling against God by not living as we should.

The only way to remove this sin nature is to become a child of God by receiving Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Here's the process:

1. A person must realize he is a sinner.

**Romans 3:23** says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

2. A person must realize without salvation he will go to hell.

**Romans 6:23:** For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

**John 3:15-16:** That whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

3. A person must believe that Jesus died for them and rose again.



**Romans 5:8:** *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

**Acts 3:14-15:** *But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, <sup>15</sup> and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.*

4. A person must confess Christ as Lord & Savior and receive Him into their hearts.

**Romans 10:9 & 13:** *That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.*

## Connect Class – Week 5

### Doctrines – What We Believe

**V. Doctrine of Baptism:** We believe it is important, upon confession of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, to be water baptized.

Jesus gave the disciples some instructions just before He ascended back to heaven: **Matthew 28:19-20**, *"Go therefore and make disciples (teach people how to image Christ) of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen."*

**Matthew 4:19:** *Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.*

The first instruction Jesus gave His disciples in Matthew 28 was to go and make disciples. A disciple is one who is following Jesus, being changed by Jesus, and is committed to the mission of Jesus. After a person is saved, the second thing Jesus instructed them to do was to baptize.

Baptism describes our union with Christ as seen in **Romans 6:3-5 NIV:** *Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. <sup>5</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.*

### Water Baptism

Baptize means to immerse, or to place completely and totally under.

Water baptism is an outward evidence of what happens spiritually at the new birth.

Water baptism doesn't save us, yet we are commanded by Jesus to be baptized.

**Matthew 28:18-19** – The command to baptize

**2 Corinthians 5:17:** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

**Romans 10:9-10:** *That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

**Isaiah 1:19:** *If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land*

**Romans 6:1-4:** *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

**How do we baptize?**

**Acts 8:26-40** – A Scriptural Pattern

**Do we baptize in Jesus' name only?**

The answer is no. We baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Our authority to baptize is the name of Jesus.

**Matthew 28:19:** *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

**Colossians 3:17:** *And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*

**VI. Doctrine of Communion:** We believe that the Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the church and has been given as a means for the church to celebrate our covenant with the Lord. This celebration puts us in remembrance of what the Lord has redeemed us from, and what He has redeemed us to.

**I Corinthians 11:23-26:** *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; <sup>24</sup> and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." <sup>25</sup> In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." <sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*

**Two Elements:**

The bread represents Christ's body and the grape juice represents His blood that was shed for us. This is a reminder of what Christ has done for us until He comes back. This is a serious time and should never be taken lightly.

**Isaiah 53:4-5 – Healing – The Body of Christ**

<sup>4</sup> Surely He has borne our griefs (sickness, weakness, distress) and carried our sorrows (pains); yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

### **Revelation 1:5 – The Blood of Christ**

*And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood*

Communion is a memorial, a new covenant, and a proclamation. It is a sacred event for those who have a vital biblical relationship with Jesus.

**1 Corinthians 11:26-30** – Must receive communion with a right heart.

**VII. Doctrine of the Holy Spirit:** We believe that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is Biblically evidenced by manifestation of spiritual gifts and power in public testimony and service.

### **1. Being Indwelt by the Holy Spirit**

What does it mean that you are "indwelt" by the Holy Spirit of God?

**Luke 24:49 NLT:** *I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.*

Jesus in **Acts 1:5**, told his disciples that within a short time they would receive the "baptism of the Holy Spirit". He said, *"For John truly baptized with water; but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."* (**Acts 1:5**) Jesus told them this just before he returned to Heaven. In **Acts 1:4**; He said that they were to wait until they had received the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 2:1-4:** *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. <sup>4</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

### **2. The Holy Spirit Enables Us to Discern Spiritual Things**

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit begins when a person believes in the Lord Jesus and is saved.

**Titus 3:4-6:** *But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, <sup>5</sup> not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to*

*His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,*

**Regeneration** – The spiritual change brought about in a person's life by an act of God. In regeneration a person's sinful nature is changed, and he is enabled to respond to God by faith.

### **Discern Spiritual Things:**

**1 Corinthians 2:12-14:** *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

It is important to know that you can't truly understand the Bible without the help of the Holy Spirit.

**John 14:26:** *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*

### **3. The Holy Spirit at Work in Our Lives**

Because the believer is indwelt by the Spirit of God, we have the nature or desire to do, as God wants. We now have the ability to live as we should and as God intended.

**1 Corinthians 10:13:** *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

### **4. The Holy Spirit Equips us to Witness and Serve**

**Acts 1:8:** *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*

**1 Corinthians 12:1-11** – Supernatural Equipping

**Connect Class – Week 6**  
**Doctrines – What We Believe**

**VIII. Doctrine of the Church:** We believe that church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of the great commission. Each believer is an integral part of the general assembly.

**1. Where did the Church come from?**

**Matthew 16:13-20:** *When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”*

*<sup>14</sup> So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” <sup>15</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”*

*<sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” <sup>17</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. <sup>18</sup> And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup> And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

*<sup>20</sup> Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.*

Here is where Jesus introduces this idea that we call church. The church is built on the revelation that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus never intended the church to be built upon Peter.

Church - ekklesia - it is a compound word in the Greek that means the called out ones.

**2. What Is The Church?**

4 Definitive Scriptures that describe for us what the church is:

1). The church is established by Christ - **Matthew 13:16-20**

Any group of people who are not standing on the truth that Jesus is the Son of God, that He fulfilled the messianic prophecies, and that He is the Messiah and rose from the dead, is not a church by Biblical definition.

2). God wants the church to be united and not divided – **Ephesians 4:1-4, 11-12**

3). The structure of the church – **1 Peter 5:1-4**

Elders oversee the church by leading them, guiding them, training them, and

setting vision for them. They shepherd God's people under the direction and leadership of the Chief Shepherd.

- 4). The Body of Christ is raised up to employ their gifts for the service of one another – **1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31**

### **3. What's So Important About Attending Church?**

God Commands Us to Not Forsake Church Attendance – **Hebrews 10:24-25**

He solemnly commands us, *"do not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another."*

### **4. Why Must We Assemble?**

**1 Peter 4:10:** *As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

When God sets us in a particular church it is for a purpose.

- 1). When we are in the right church, then the gifts in that church will be the right gifts we need to grow spiritually. But we have to realize we have to be connected if we want to be in a position to take advantage of those gifts.
- 2). The other reason God puts us in a particular church is because we have gifts that this particular group of believers need. Without us they are incomplete and without them we are incomplete. We need one another because we are mutually dependent on each other.

**Romans 12:4-5 Amplified Bible:** *For as in one physical body we have many parts (organs, members) and all of these parts do not have the same function or use, so we, numerous as we are, are one body in Christ (the Messiah) and individually we are parts one of another [mutually dependent on one another].*

### **5. What Are The Responsibilities Of Being Assembled?**

When you become connected to something you become committed to what you are connected to. You can't separate what you are connected to. It is a part of you. Therefore you must be willing to be a good steward where you are connected.

**IX. Doctrine of Blessed Hope:** We believe in the imminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18:** *<sup>13</sup> But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no*

hope. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. <sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words.

1. Three things are mentioned in verse 16 as indications of the majesty of this event:

- 1) **The Shout** - “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout” - an authoritative command like military officers gives their subordinates.

- 2) **The Voice** - “...with the voice of an archangel...” All of heaven will be celebrating this great event—a shout of triumph.

- 3) **The Trumpet** - “...and with the trumpet of God.” The trumpet blast was used to gather God’s people at Mt. Sinai in Numbers 19. It signaled the victory at Jericho in Joshua 6. It was blown when Solomon was crowned king in 1 Kings 1. It signaled the beginning of the year of Jubilee (**Leviticus 25:9**).

2. **Verse 16:** ...And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Those who have died in Christ will have their bodies resurrected. On that great day of the Lord they will receive their glorified bodies.

3. **Verse 17:** Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. – Rapture

You and I have an appointment for the most awesome meeting ever—a meeting in the air first with the Lord and second with our loved ones.

**X. Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead:** We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the unsaved; those that are saved unto resurrection of life; and those that are unsaved unto the resurrection of damnation.

## The Judgment of the Cross

1. **John 5:24** - Passed from death to life.  
*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.*
2. **1 Peter 2:24** - Already bore our sin and sickness on the cross.



*Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.*

3. At this judgment Satan was judged and his power over the believer was broken. The sins of the world were judged and put away.

**John 16:8-12:** *And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.*

**Colossians 2:15:** *Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*

### **Judgment in the Daily Life of the Believer:**

1. **1 Corinthians 11:31-32** - Judge ourselves and we won't be judged.  
*For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.*
2. This must be an ongoing process in the life of the believer to prevent the chastening of the Lord.
3. There is to be a thorough confession of sin as the Holy Spirit reveals sin in the believer's life. (**1 John 1:5-9**)

### **Future Judgment:**

1. Judgment seat of Christ – where Christians are judged
2. Judgment of living nations - **Matthew 25:31-46**
3. Great White Throne Judgment  
(Judgment of the unbelievers)
4. Judgment of the Fallen Angels - **Jude 1:6, 2 Peter 2:4**

### **The Great White Throne Judgment:**

**Revelations 20:11-15:** *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.<sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.<sup>13</sup> The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. <sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. <sup>15</sup> And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*