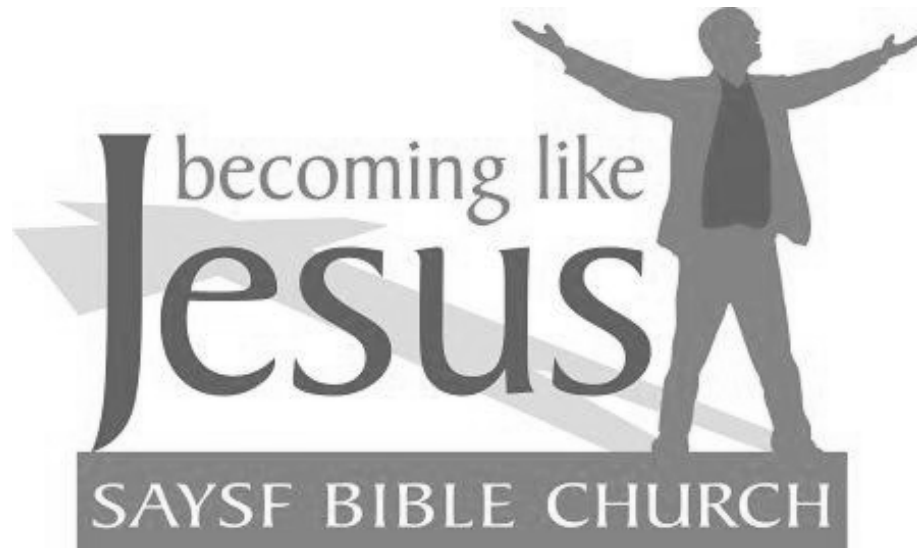


# **SAYSF Roots:**

## **Who We Are, What We Believe, and What We Practice**



### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

At the end of each lesson and at the completion of this course each member will be able to...

- ❖ Communicate with confidence who we are, what we believe, and what we practice.
- ❖ Make or renew a commitment to the Lord to minister, fellowship, and identify with SAYSF Bible Church as your home church.

### **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

**Becoming like Jesus... Head, Heart, Hands, Knees and Feet!**

January 2016

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# LESSON 1: SAYSF Beginnings and Distinctives

## BEGINNINGS

The SAYSF ministry was begun as a camp for children in the late 1940s, and soon afterward became an assembly of believers who gathered weekly after the manner of the Plymouth Brethren. The Plymouth Brethren began in Great Britain in the 1800s as one of the original back-to-the-Bible movements. They emphasized the unity of all believers, which was an uncommon thing in a highly sectarian age when closed communion was practiced in most denominations. The early Brethren forsook denominational structures and names in order to meet simply as Christians, welcoming all who belong to Christ.

In concert with these roots, SAYSF Bible Church is an independent Bible church, maintaining much of the Plymouth Brethren flavor.

## DISTINCTIVES

SAYSF Bible Church, as a local body of believers in Jesus Christ has adopted the following Mission Statement and Core Values as we: worship our Heavenly Father; minister to one another's spiritual and physical needs, and reach out to our community, our nation, and our world with the good news of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

### **Mission: Becoming like Jesus... Head, Heart, Hands, Knees and Feet!**

#### **Core Values:**

- **Worship:** We value heart-felt, meaningful expressions of God's all-surpassing greatness. We seek every opportunity to individually and collectively glorify God (Nehemiah 8:6, Revelation 5:11-14, Psalms 29:2).
- **Authority of Scripture:** We value the accepted sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments and recognize them as the final authority in our personal and congregational lives. We actively seek to understand and observe biblical principles (2 Timothy 3:16).
- **Grace:** We value loving people even when not deserved. We think more of each other than ourselves; we forgive others quickly and actively seek reconciliation (Ephesians 4:2-3, Colossians 4:6).
- **Prayer:** We value listening to God and interceding for others before God. We pray individually and together, in faith believing that God hears and responds according to His will (Luke 11:1-13, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Philippians 4:6-7).
- **Lost People:** We value Jesus' Great Commission to go and make disciples of all peoples. We actively involve ourselves in local and worldwide evangelism (Matthew 28:18-20, 1 Corinthians 1:21).
- **Transformed Lives:** We value the Holy Spirit's power to change lives. We submit to the Spirit to convict us of sin and move us to increased personal holiness before God (2 Corinthians 3, Romans 6).
- **Godly Relationships:** We value healthy interpersonal relationships. We communicate openly and lovingly to one another in encouragement, accountability, burden sharing, and spiritual growth (Acts 2:46-47, Galatians 6:2).

- **Unity of the Body:** We value our oneness as a congregation over our individual desires. We exert every effort to honor one another above ourselves and obey Christ's command to love one another (John 13:35, 1 Corinthians 12).
- **Discipleship:** We value spiritually maturing each believer. We receive biblical mentoring and mentor others (Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Timothy 2:2).
- **Excellence In Ministry:** We value high quality in all aspects of body life. We diligently give our very best efforts in serving God and people (1 Corinthians 3:10-15).
- **Weekly Communion:** We value celebration of the Lord's Supper. Each week, we corporately remember Christ's sacrifice for our sins (Acts 2:42, Acts 20:7).
- **Leadership Development:** We value biblical leadership. We seek to identify and equip future leaders who will develop more leaders (Titus 1).
- **Small Groups:** We value being a church of small groups. We seek to regularly meet in small groups to study scripture, pray, and to encourage one another to authentically live out our faith (Acts 2:42-47, Hebrews 10:24-25).

For details on how the SAYSF ministry began and flourished under God's direction and guidance, see **Appendix A: SAYSF Early History**.

## **LESSON 2: Statement of Faith and Missions Approach**

**Summary Statement:** SAYSF's beliefs are worth sharing with the world. SAYSF Bible Church may well be described as a world mission-strategy center.

### **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

#### **WE BELIEVE IN:**

1. The verbal inspiration of the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).
2. The trinity of the Godhead (Matt. 3:16-17; 28:18-20; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2).
3. The creation of man by the direct act of God (Gen. 1:26-27).
4. The fall of man and his need for redemption (Gen. 3:1-7).
5. The deity, incarnation and virgin birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:18-20; Luke 1:31-34).
6. Christ's vicarious atonement for the sins of mankind by the shedding of his blood on the cross (Rom. 3:24-25; Eph. 1:7).
7. The resurrection of his body from the tomb (Matt. 28:5-6; John 20:4-7, 24-28).
8. Christ's ascension into heaven (Acts 1:9-10; Rom. 8:34).
9. Christ's personal, imminent return (John 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; Titus 2:11-14).
10. The deity of the Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:2; Matt. 3:16; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 3:16).
11. Justification of the believer by grace through faith (John 3:18, 36; Eph. 2:8-9).
12. A literal devil who is our adversary (Gen. 3:1-5; Job 1:6-7; Matt. 4:1-11).
13. A literal heaven for the redeemed and a literal hell for the lost (Matt. 25:41-46; Phil. 3:20-21).
14. The infallible rule of interpretation of scripture to be scripture itself (2 Peter 1:20-21; 3:16).
15. The requirement of implicit obedience to the expressed commands of Christ as the standard by which he will judge our love to him (John 14:15, 21, 23).
16. We believe the Bible is the only authority for defining marriage which was created and ordained by God directly. We hold that marriage is between one man and one woman, and that marriage is the only legitimate and accepted sexual relationship (Lev. 18:22; Rom. 1:26-28; 1Cor. 6:9-11; 1Tim. 1:10-11; 1Cor. 7:2; Mark 10:6-9; Heb. 13:1-25; Jude 1:7).

**Ministry Approval Policy:** We will not promote any event, curriculum, church or speaker that does not, as a minimum, align with the basic Statement of Faith outlined above.

**Expanded Doctrinal Statement:** All who desire to be a member of SAYSF Bible Church shall adhere to the basic Doctrinal Statement outlined above. An expanded doctrinal statement is

provided in **Appendix B** which shall be adhered to by all Elders, Deacons, Teachers, Ministry Leaders, and Missionaries supported and sent out by SAYSF Bible Church.

## **MISSIONS APPROACH**

SAYSF Bible Church may well be described as a world mission-strategy center

### **A. Defining the Mission of the Church**

1. We believe that the “Great Commission” of our Lord Jesus Christ to give the gospel to every creature throughout the world is incumbent on every believer (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).
2. We fulfill the Great Commission of Christ by reproducing ourselves in the planting of other New Testament churches (Acts 14:21-27).
3. We believe that the work of missions is to proclaim the gospel to all people of all races and all nations and discipling those that believe (Matthew 28:18-20).
4. We believe that preaching the gospel of Christ to lost souls near and far is necessary in order to bring them to God and save them from hell (Romans 10:17; 1 Corinthians 1:21).

### **B. Evangelism - Local Outreach**

Evangelism starts with the local church and is a vital part of missions. Mature and equipped Christians reproduce themselves through evangelism. We recognize the church’s responsibility to provide a nurturing environment for the development of witnessing Christians. We can actively demonstrate our commitment to Jesus Christ, and to reaching all peoples for Him by witnessing in our own “Jerusalem,” communicating the gospel with people in local communities surrounding the church. SAYSF members are encouraged to share Christ in their work and environment. Culture, race and color should not be barriers. Methods of sharing the gospel such as by means of distribution of gospel literature, house -to-house witnessing, street preaching, person-to-person witnessing, Evangelism Explosion, the use of radio, television, videos and cassettes, etc. are all part of evangelism and are to be encouraged in the local church.

In the late 1980’s, SAYSF’s congregation accepted a particular vision to plant other local churches in Southern Maryland as the Lord leads. Our daughter church, Faith Bible Church, in Mechanicsville, was opened in March of 1992 as a result of this vision and it became an autonomous assembly in February of 1998. We still seek the Lord’s leading as to how best to plant other local churches in the future as He adds to those who are saved among us.

### **C. Missions**

SAYSF believes that the supreme task of the local church is to evangelize the world through various means including fervent prayer, financial support and sending out qualified missionaries. SAYSF’s Missions Team seeks to promote within the congregation an awareness of world missions. They also (1) plan and promote an annual Missions Forum, (2) encourage and stimulate interest in preparation for and participation in missionary service both within our local community and abroad, (3) encourage regular prayer for missionaries, (4) maintain communication with the church concerning information about missions through our periodic “Missions’ Spotlight,” and (5) exhort the Christians of the church to support financially worthy missionaries both at home and abroad. (See **Appendix C: The Missions Policy of SAYSF Bible Church.**)



## LESSON 3: The Activities of the Church and Giving (Acts 2:42-47)

**Summary Statement:** The Activities and Ministries of SAYSF Bible Church are worth supporting with our presence and our finances.

On the birthday of the Church the apostle Peter preached a powerful message of repentance and 3,000 souls were baptized and added to the church. Then Luke records the early activity of this body of believers in Acts 2:42-47.

First, **they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine.** The church was grounded on solid doctrinal teaching. SAYSF Bible Church is committed to the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. They are complete, sufficient and absolute. They are the sole authority of the church's beliefs, teachings, and practices.

It is the goal of the spiritual leadership of SAYSF to equip the saints for the work of the ministry and to bring them to spiritual maturity through quality teaching and organized training on an on-going basis. Training, equipping, and teaching are foundational to the church's philosophy because of its biblical emphasis on every member becoming involved in ministry. A sound knowledge of the basic doctrines of the Bible is paramount to the stability and effective witness of the saints. Major doctrines include salvation, redemption, assurance, ordinances of the New Testament church, the Lordship of Christ, the priesthood of the believer, the work of the Holy Spirit, the church, heaven and hell, to mention only a few.

Opportunity is given to learn how to witness, to evangelize, to teach the Word, to counsel, to preach, to relate to one another, with the intent that the student will grow to become competent "to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2). It is expected that definite changes will be manifested in the life of the believer as the Word of God takes root in the heart especially as it relates to attitudes and conduct, both in and outside of the church (2 Timothy 3:17). A detailed discussion about our philosophy of teaching ministry is contained in **Lesson 11: "Christian Education and Service Opportunities"**.

Second, **they continued steadfastly in fellowship.** Regular fellowship in the Christian context, among believers in the church, promotes spiritual growth. Fellowship in Acts 2 brought about togetherness and singleness of heart.

Fellowship (KOINONIA, in Greek) is the fullest possible partnership with God and with others. It involves an intimacy of relationship. Fellowship is not an option for a believer. Fellowship is

### Acts 2:42-47

- 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.
- 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.
- 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;
- 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.
- 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.
- 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

not optional for a church. To be “in Christ” and to be a member of His body requires a fellowship with the living Christ and with His people.

The leadership of SAYSF Bible Church believes that meeting together regularly for the study of God’s Word, communion, prayers, and the preaching of the gospel, all constitute opportunities for fellowship. However, in order to love and understand each other more and in Christ share, enjoy, get acquainted, work and minister together, creating links among the church members, it is vitally important for each member of the body to be engaged in regular interaction together (Acts 2:46). This includes a wide variety of activity where individuals meet for both spiritual and social encouragement. Being in the company of God’s people is a source of strength one to the other. However, to best achieve the level of fellowship scripture calls us to, it is paramount to one’s spiritual growth that they be actively involved in a healthy Small Group.

Even though SAYSF is an **autonomous** church, we are not independent of other believers. SAYSF desires to work together with all other Bible-believing, gospel-preaching, New Testament practicing churches and to enjoy fellowship with them. This makes us **interdependent**. We need each other. We share in each other’s common life in Christ.

Third, **they continued steadfastly in breaking of bread.** (This topic will be dealt with extensively in **Lesson 4: “The Ordinances of the Church.”**)

Fourth, **they continued steadfastly in prayer.** Prayer is critical to the progress of the church. Prayer makes us realize our helplessness apart from God and helps us to draw on the full resources of God, our Provider (Philippians 4:6). We believe that prayer affords a great opportunity to praise, exalt, and thank the Lord for all His many mercies as well as for who He is, the “only Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, who only hath immortality” (1 Timothy 6:15, 16). See also 1 Timothy 1:17; Revelation 4:11.

It is our responsibility as a local church to encourage the saints of God to develop their daily, personal private and family prayer lives in order to live victorious Christian lives. The church also encourages members to pray together regularly, especially in the weekly prayer meeting, as a way of sharing burdens, loving each other, and striving for the unity of the spirit.

We believe that in accordance with His own will (1 John 5:14), God does hear and answer the prayer of faith. We also believe in the effective working of the prayer of faith for the sick and afflicted as taught in James 5:14, 15. We believe the elders are to be called upon to pray for the sick. We do not hold to the teaching that the divine healing of the body is inherent in Jesus’ atonement for sin. Rather, salvation and forgiveness are in the atonement (Isaiah 53:5). Our bodies will be ultimately healed when we meet Jesus.

We believe that the believer needs to confess his/her sins to God and appropriate that forgiveness that Christ gives according to 1 John 1:9: *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

Fifth, **they gave.** In the church of Jesus Christ, giving is a most important and necessary function. It is clear from the teachings of the Bible that giving is an obligation that God lays on every Christian.

*“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye use will it be measured to you again.” (Luke 6:38)*

*“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”  
(1 Corinthians 16:2)*

But we each need to be taught and regularly reminded that there are right (biblical) ways and wrong (unbiblical) ways to give. In other words, God is deeply interested in our motives.

When one learns to give in accordance with the scriptural teaching, many are the blessings or rewards that God promises (Proverbs 3:9, 10; Luke 6:38). We at SAYSF Bible Church are careful, therefore, to teach giving as not only the method of meeting needs, but more importantly, of glorifying and worshipping God.

Our purpose here is to summarize the biblical principles of giving as taught and practiced at SAYSF Bible Church. Note first two scriptural warnings that would test our motivation:

- a) God warns us never to give simply to get the praise of men (Matthew 6:1, 2). As a matter of fact, this scripture advocates giving in private rather than “to be seen of men”!
- b) The Bible also warns against the natural tendency to give with a selfish motive. Instead of asking first, “what’s in it for me?” the Bible insists that God’s people should give without expecting anything in return (See Luke 6:34, 35).

## **EIGHT BIBLICAL ASPECTS OF GIVING**

### **1. Giving as an expression of a spiritual gift (Romans 12:8).**

Giving finds itself in the list of spiritual gifts recorded in Romans 12:6-8. Christians with this gift are enabled by the Lord to serve God in the specific ministry of giving. Wealth is not a requirement, but an attitude of loving generosity is. (See **Lesson 5: “The Priesthood of Believers and the Gifts of the Spirit”** for more specifics on the gift of giving.)

### **2. Giving as an expression of obedience.**

All Christians should give simply because God commands them to do so (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7).

### **3. Giving as an expression of gratitude.**

The principle of giving to show gratitude is clearly seen in both the Old and New Testaments. A vivid example of this is the reward Naaman offered to Elisha for the prophet’s part in cleansing him of his leprosy (2 Kings 5:15-17). Naaman is to be commended for this expression of gratitude even though Elisha refused it because he was unwilling to accept credit for the miracle. For a good New Testament illustration of giving out of gratitude, see the story of Zaccheus in Luke 19:2-10.

#### **4. Giving as an expression of love.**

2 Corinthians 5:14 states, “for the love of Christ constraineth us.” All that we do for the Lord, including our giving, must be motivated by love in order to be accepted by Him. This love was beautifully demonstrated by our heavenly Father when He gave His only begotten Son to die for us (John 3:16), and also by Christ, who became poor that we might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). When genuine love is present, Christians will not have to be prodded to give. Rather they will do so cheerfully (2 Corinthians 9:7) and sacrificially.

#### **5. Giving as an expression of mercy (James 2:15, 16).**

Our Lord has exhorted us to be merciful, as our heavenly Father is (Luke 6:36), and has provided us with a beautiful expression of merciful giving in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).

#### **6. Giving as an expression of godly discipline.**

When he wrote to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 16:2, the apostle Paul laid down at least five principles of giving as a discipline:

- a) Our giving should be *regular* - “on the first day of the week.”
- b) Our giving should be *individual* - “let everyone of you.”
- c) Our giving should be *systematic* - “lay by him in store.”
- d) Our giving should be *proportionate* - “as God hath prospered him.”
- e) Our giving should be *orderly* - “that there be no gatherings when I come.”

It is only as one is willing to exercise these disciplines daily in his or her life that the whole matter of giving becomes acceptable in the sight of the Lord.

#### **7. Giving as an expression of worship.**

Christians are taught to worship with their gifts (Hebrews 13:15, 16), and we believe at SAYSF Bible Church that this is the highest form of giving. There are two outstanding illustrations of this form of giving in the Bible. After the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the wise men worshipped Him with their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Matthew 2:1-11). Then in John 12:3 Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, brought to the Lord Jesus a jar of costly perfume and anointed His feet with it, an act of humble worship for which our Lord commended her (Mark 14:9).

#### **8. Giving as a sacrifice.**

In a land blessed with plenty, we often do not experience the blessings of giving up something or “going without.” The example of David who would not “offer to God that which cost me nothing” (2 Samuel 24:24), should encourage us to look at our lives. We should examine what luxuries we don’t need in order to both advance His kingdom and to conform us more to the image of His Son.

## WHAT DOES SAYSF BELIEVE ABOUT TITHING?

In the Old Testament, God commanded His people to tithe regularly<sup>1</sup>. Tithing (giving 1/10 of our income to the Lord) was clearly God's way of teaching Israel both **how** to give as well as **how much** to give. Tithing established the same principles of regular, individual, systematic, proportionate, and orderly giving as we see taught in 1 Corinthians 16:2, with the additional concept of quality giving, giving to God first before anything else. "*Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase*" (Proverbs 3:9). The Old Testament saint tithed in order to learn "*to fear the LORD thy God always*" (Deuteronomy 14:23). In Malachi 3:8-10, the LORD challenged the people to "*bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*"

In the New Testament, Jesus rebuked the leadership of that day for making tithing a ritual and missing the more important areas of justice and mercy (Luke 11:42). In Luke 21:1-4, Jesus commends the sacrificial giving of a poor widow who gives her all, putting to shame those who gave great amounts but with impure motives. God exhorts us to give **privately** (Matthew 6:2-4), to give **liberally** (Romans 12:8 NKJV), to give **cheerfully** (2 Corinthians 9:7), and we may add all the other concepts already listed on pages 7 and 8 above.

So the question arises, "**What if I cannot afford to give 10% to God?**" God's answer is found in 2 Corinthians 9:7, "*Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*" Again, to encourage those who may feel like giving more, but just can't, God says, "*And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work*" (2 Corinthians 9:8). Whatever you are able to sow, will reap a harvest for God. Realize that God does not "need" our money, nor should we give in order to receive. God wants to bless our lives and one of the disciplines that He wants us to learn is related to the stewardship of our wealth. God knows our hearts and He knows when we have a willing heart to give (cf. 2 Corinthians 8:12).

Another question arises, "**Should I give to the local church only, or can I also give to other organizations?**" Jesus ordained His Church to be the primary vehicle through which the gospel would reach the world. As believers, we should be getting our primary feeding, discipleship, and fellowship through our local church. Therefore, it makes sense that the local church should be the primary recipient of our giving. However, God moves in a very personal way upon the heart of each believer. It is important to give to organizations that are living in the light of God's principles. God uses both the local church and para-church ministries to accomplish His work in this world. Pray and seek His wisdom. Then be faithful in your giving.

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<sup>1</sup> There were actually 3 "tithes" in the Old Testament: One for the Levites, one as a type of tax, and one every 3rd year for the poor. Technically, if we follow Old Testament practice we should give 23 1/3% !! Unfortunately, in our society the government has taken on many responsibilities that the church was unable or unwilling to do.

## LESSON 4: The Ordinances of the Church (Baptism and the Lord’s Supper)

**Summary Statement:** The two ordinances of the Church are to be obeyed.

SAYSF Bible Church teaches that there are **two ordinances** of the New Testament Church, namely, 1) Christian baptism and 2) the Lord’s Supper. We consider an ordinance to be valid if it meets three basic requirements:

1. The Lord Jesus must command it (Matthew 28:19; Luke 22:19-20).
2. The early church must have practiced it (Acts 2:41-42).
3. Its spiritual meaning must be expounded in the Epistles (Romans 6:3,4; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29).

### BAPTISM

(See **Appendix D: SAYSF Bible Church Looks at Water Baptism**)

We believe in only one baptism as is taught in the Bible, but in two aspects. Notice the following distinctions:

<b>Spirit Baptism</b> <b>Invisible to man</b> <b>Spiritual</b>	<b>Water Baptism</b> <b>Highly visible to man</b> <b>Temporal</b>
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We believe that there is one baptism by the Spirit which occurs at the moment of conversion (see Romans 8:9) and it is into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Spirit thus indwells and seals each believer unto the day of redemption (Ephesians 1:13,14). We believe Pentecost was an historical event and is not to be repeated; therefore, we do not accept the teaching that speaking in tongues is associated with either the initial receiving of the Holy Spirit by the individual Christian today or as the evidence of His fullness.

We believe that water baptism is to be observed by all believers in Christ (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:41). Although we do not believe water baptism is necessary to salvation, we do believe that in obedience to God’s Word, every born-again believer should be baptized by total immersion. SAYSF Bible Church does not accept the teachings of infant baptism, baptism by sprinkling, and baptism of unconverted people. We do, however, practice and encourage the dedication of infants (Mark 10:13-16). This is not to be confused with conversion nor with “christening” (infant baptism or sprinkling), which has no biblical foundation.

## **THE LORD'S SUPPER**

**(See Appendix E: SAYSF Bible Church Looks at the Lord's Supper)**

Worship recognizes the intrinsic worth of our Creator/Redeemer. Since we can worship God by various means, through our voices, singing, praying, in meditation, and our giving, we are able to worship God at any service we attend. However, a unique and wonderful opportunity for individuals to worship God is to be found at the Lord's Table, and we deem this our privileged obligation to do so regularly (every Lord's Day, Acts 2:42; 20:7). The church encourages the men to take the leadership role at the communion service, thereby also exercising gifts that God is developing among men.

Worship in communion must be from the heart and in sincerity. We therefore teach that those who take part at the Lord's Table should:

- a) be sure of their salvation;
- b) be in good fellowship in a local Bible-believing church (not under the discipline of the church);
- c) be seeking to obey the Word of God in their daily lives, walking worthy;
- d) participate only after self-examination, that is, dealing with any unconfessed sin (1 Corinthians 11:27-31).

The worship that pleases God must emanate from the heart. The worshipper approaches God fully prepared to give to Him the sacrifices of praise, continually, which is "the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name" (Hebrews 13:15). This simply means that in contrast to those services where we find ourselves asking favors of God, we now place God at the receiving end, while we bring to Him our adoration, praise, thanksgiving and love from the hearts that He has redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. It is true worship when the worshipper, from the heart, becomes the giver, and the Great Giver of all good gifts becomes the Receiver.

The Lord's Supper, instituted by Christ on the eve of His betrayal, was observed by the disciples and the early church on a daily basis (Acts 2:46). It clearly became the practice of the church as they matured, to remember the Lord in the breaking of bread "upon the first day of the week" (Acts 20:7). SAYSF Bible Church believes that it is biblical to observe the Lord's Supper every Lord's Day, and therefore upholds this practice.

Christians visiting from other groups and who may not understand the spiritual import of this special service, or who are under the discipline of their own local church, are urged to simply worship as observers and not as partakers of the elements [that are used in this service]. Christians of SAYSF Bible Church who are under the discipline of the church, or who after examining themselves (1 Corinthians 11:28) do not feel free for some personal reason to partake of the Lord's Table, should also worship as observers, although they are urged to attend.

Worshippers are therefore encouraged and taught that this is not the time to bring their troubles and trials to the Lord, or to make requests of God for temporal blessings or to meet needs. Rather they should focus their thoughts and prayers on the Lord's death and resurrection, on exalting, praising, thanking, and adoring the Lord, and simply expressing their love, admiration, and devotion to Him.

## LESSON 5: The Priesthood of Believers and the Gifts of the Spirit

**Summary Statement:** Every believer is a priest with direct access to God and is spiritually gifted by the Holy Spirit to serve in the Body of Christ.

### THE PRIESTHOOD OF BELIEVERS

A priest is a mediator between man and God. In the Old Testament times the tribe of Levi was designated by God to be priests for the nation of Israel. Only those of the family of Aaron were allowed to be high priests. Only the high priest was allowed to enter into the presence of God in the Holy of Holies, and then only once every year.

The death of Christ changed all that. When He died, the veil preventing entry into the Holy of Holies in the temple was torn from top to bottom indicating that all believers now have complete access into God's presence (Mark 15:37-38). Jesus Christ, who is now the great high priest, has made all believers priests by the shedding of His blood.

As priests of God, we have certain privileges and responsibilities:

- I. **We have direct access to God.** Because of Christ's sacrifice all believers can enter confidently into the presence of God (Hebrews 10:19-22).
- II. **We offer sacrifices to God.** Christ's sacrifice paid the debt of sin once and for all, but we can still offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise. These sacrifices take the form of
  - (a) giving our bodies as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1-2);
  - (b) giving monetary gifts (Philippians 4:16-18; Hebrews 13:16);
  - (c) our service (Philippians 2:17);
  - (d) our gospel witness (Romans 15:16); and
  - (e) our praise (Hebrews 13:15).
- III. **We can make intercession to God.** We should be praying for those with whom we come in contact, both believers and unbelievers.
- IV. **We must keep ourselves holy.** The Old Testament priests were required to keep themselves ceremonially clean. As New Testament priests we must keep ourselves spiritually clean. Unconfessed sin keeps us from fellowship with God, and without such fellowship we cannot perform our priestly duties.

**APPLICATION:** There is no distinction between clergy and laity. We are all on equal footing. We do not need a separate priest to intercede in our place. We can talk to God directly. Praise God for the priesthood of believers.



## THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

(See **Appendix F: Definition of Specific Spiritual Gifts**  
and **Appendix G: SAYSF Bible Church Looks at the Gift of Tongues**)

“To each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good” (1 Corinthians 12:7).

### I. **The Key Passages On Spiritual Gifts**

Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30; Ephesians 4:7, 11-12; 1 Peter 4:9-11

### II. **Key Questions Regarding Spiritual Gifts**

There are several questions that come up when discussing the topic of spiritual gifts.

- A. What is a spiritual gift? This is the issue of definition.
- B. What is the purpose of spiritual gifts?
- C. How can a person discern what gift or gifts he or she has been given?
- D. Is there a relationship between the possession of spiritual gifts and spirituality?
- E. Did God intend the gifts possessed by the early Church to remain in the Church throughout its history?

#### **A. What is a spiritual gift?**

When members of a church begin considering spiritual gifts, they sometimes run into difficulty by thinking that God gives them some *thing*: like an ingredient called administration. No, He doesn't give some *thing*; He gives Himself. **The gift is a Person.** The Holy Spirit equips you with *His* administrative ability. So His administration begins to become your administration. What you observe when you see a spiritual gift exercised is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit: you see *the Holy Spirit equipping and enabling an individual with His abilities and capabilities to accomplish God's work.* Therefore, a spiritual gift may be defined as follows:

**A spiritual gift is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit at work in and through a Christian's life for the common good of the body of Christ.**

#### **B. What is the purpose of spiritual gifts?**

Every manifestation of the Holy Spirit working through each individual believer is for the benefit of others, not themselves (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:7). Peter put it this way, “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Peter 4:10).

#### **C. How can a person discern what gift or gifts he or she has been given?**

To answer this question we need to look at four prerequisites and four criteria. The individual must be in a spiritual frame of mind to discover and effectively manifest the Spirit's enabling. Therefore they need four things:

1. **A commitment to Christ's Lordship.** Notice that Romans 12:1-2 (dedicating your body and renewing your mind) comes before the list of spiritual gifts in 12:6-8.
2. **A genuine desire to be used in the service of Christ.**
3. **Information.** Do the careful biblical research to inform your mind, stimulate your spirit and challenge your will.

4. **Involvement.** There is nothing like involvement to stimulate the Spirit's work in and through you. Accept responsibility and begin to serve.

If you meet these prerequisites you will be able to discern the manifestation of God's enablement in your life when the following **four criteria** line up.

1. **A Longing.** God's Spirit will give you a longing to do certain ministries.
2. **Enjoyment.** The Greek word for joy (chara) is from the same root as the word for gift (charisma). Your joy will be complete, and you will experience fulfillment when you are using your spiritual gifts in submission to the Lord.
3. **Recognition.** Discerning Christians will recognize that your gifts lie in a certain direction.
4. **Results.** If through the consistent exercise of one's gift a person has seen lives changed, families brought together, people's burdens eased, and the body of Christ edified, this certainly is most confirming and provides good evidence that one is on the right track.

**D. Is there a relationship between the possession of spiritual gifts and spirituality?**

The possession and exercise of spiritual gifts do not make a believer spiritual nor are they a sign of spirituality. The Christians at Corinth possessed and exercised all the spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit gave to the early Christians (1 Corinthians 1:7) but Paul declared that they were not spiritual (1 Corinthians 3:1-3). Let's look at the distinction between possessing and exercising one's spiritual gift and the issue of spirituality.

	The Possession and Exercise of Spiritual Gifts	Spirituality
The Results	The Holy Spirit works in individual believers to minister to others.	The Holy Spirit has control over the believer's life.
What each primarily Relates to	What the believer does in the realm of ministry.	What the believer is and does in the realm of character.
What each Produces	A ministry impact upon the lives of others.	A godly character characterized by the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), a godly lifestyle, purity, and obedience.

In light of the facts that the Corinthian Christians possessed and exercised numerous spiritual gifts and yet were not spiritual, and that there is a definite distinction between the possession and exercise of a spiritual gift and spirituality, *two major conclusions* can be drawn.

**First**, *a Christian does not have to be spiritual in order to possess a spiritual gift.* In other words, a godly character and pure, obedient lifestyle are not required in order to possess a spiritual gift. However, a spiritual gift must be exercised in the power of the Holy Spirit, not in the power of the flesh, in order to result in “the common good of the Body of Christ” (see definition of a spiritual gift, p.13, II.,A.). The fact that a Christian can exercise a spiritual gift in the power of the flesh has frightening implications, for it means that a believer can perform a ministry even when his character and conduct are not what they should be. This explains, then, why some pastors, Bible teachers and television evangelists have the ability to continue their ministries in spite of the fact that they are involved in illicit affairs and pursuing extravagant lifestyles.

**Second**, *the possession and exercise of spiritual gifts cannot be made a test of spirituality.* As noted earlier, spirituality is associated with the fruit of the Spirit, which include love (Galatians 5:22-23), but Paul indicated that it was possible for a believer to do such things as speak in tongues and prophesy without having love (1 Corinthians 13:1-3). In other words, a believer can possess and exercise spiritual gifts without being spiritual. Therefore, it is wrong to make the possession and exercise of any spiritual gift a test of spirituality. Christians, therefore, should never make such a thing as speaking in tongues a test of spirituality. The true test of spirituality is as follows: Is the believer’s life characterized by the fruit of the Spirit, purity and obedience to God?

**E. Did God intend the gifts possessed by the early Church to remain in the Church throughout its history?**

There is reason to believe that God intended some of the spiritual gifts that He gave to the early Church to be temporary. The Scriptures present several lines of evidence to that effect.

**1. The apostles of Christ were temporary, and some of the spiritual gifts were unique to them.**

- a. In order to be an apostle of Christ one was required to have been with Christ throughout His entire earthly ministry and have seen the resurrected Christ with his own eyes (1 Corinthians 9:1). Peter stated this requirement in Acts 1:21-22. Paul was one exception to this normal requirement. For that reason, he stated that he was “born out of due time” (1 Corinthians 15:8), and some challenged his claim to be an apostle of Christ (2 Corinthians 12:11). In light of this normal requirement, it is apparent that people of later generations did not qualify to be an apostle of Christ.
- b. It should be noted that neither the Scriptures nor church history records indicate that new apostles of Christ were appointed by God or the Church to replace the first generation apostles as they departed through death. Certainly God would have appointed replacements if He had intended the Church to have apostles of Christ throughout its history.
- c. In Ephesians 2:20 Paul drew an analogy between the construction of a building and the construction of the Church. He declared that the apostles and New Testament prophets are the foundation of the Church. Since the foundation of a

building is laid once and for all in the early stages of construction, Paul's analogy implies that the apostles were present once and for all in the early stages of the Church. Just as the foundation is not built up to the top of a building, so apostles of Christ are not present in the Church throughout its history.

In light of the fact that apostles of Christ were temporary, Paul's statement in 2 Corinthians 12:12 is most significant. Paul stated, "*Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.*" Paul's statement indicates that some of the miraculous sign gifts in the early Church were unique to the apostles. In other words, some of the sign gifts were possessed and exercised just by the apostles of Christ, not by any other believers.

## **2. The Apostle Paul specifically declared that some of the gifts were temporary.**

In 1 Corinthians 13:8, Paul stated: ". . . *whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*"

Here is Paul's argument: First, he asserted that love is superior to the spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31-13:7). Then he gave one of the reasons for love being superior to the gifts (v. 8). Love is superior to the spiritual gifts because love never fails; it is permanent; it abides (cf. v. 13). By contrast, some of the spiritual gifts are temporary. Prophecies will be made to fail (passive voice). Tongues shall cease of their own accord (middle voice). Knowledge shall be made to cease (passive voice).

The apostle names three specific spiritual gifts (prophecy, tongues, and knowledge) as examples of those that were temporary. The specific gifts, which Paul named, belonged to two different categories of gifts. Prophecy and knowledge belonged to the category of revelational gifts. According to Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 14:22, tongues belonged to the category of sign gifts. It would appear, then, that Paul was indicating that the revelational and sign gifts were temporary.

In verse 9 he states, "*For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.*" He is saying that the revelational gifts were temporary because they delivered only a partial revelation or knowledge of God. That was their intended purpose or function and were no longer necessary. Because they had fulfilled their intended purpose or function and were no longer necessary, God did away with them.

It is important to note that through this example of why some of the spiritual gifts were temporary, Paul indicated a significant principle concerning spiritual gifts. That principle is as follows: It is the purpose or function of a spiritual gift that determines its duration. A spiritual gift will continue to exist until it fulfills its God-intended purpose or function. But once it fulfills its intended purpose or function, it is no longer necessary, and God does away with it.

Paul then says in 1 Corinthians 13:10, “*But when that which is perfect is come then that which is in part shall be done away.*” The expression “*that which is in part*” is not the spiritual gifts, but the partial revelation or knowledge of God, which came through the revelational gifts. When the Scriptures were completed, the partial revelation, which came through the revelational gifts, was done away with. We have a whole, total or complete revelation that has come to man.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> NOTE: Large portions of this lesson came from ISRAEL MY GLORY. Dr. Renald E. Showers, professor at Philadelphia College of the Bible writes many of their articles on doctrine. For the full articles see the following issues:

SPIRITUAL GIFTS - THEIR DEFINITION, DISCERNMENT AND PURPOSE (March-May 1988)

SPIRITUAL GIFTS - THEIR DISTRIBUTION AND RELATIONSHIPS (June/July 1988)

SPIRITUAL GIFTS - THEIR DURATION (August/September 1988)

## LESSON 6: Our Church Government: Elders

**Summary Statement:** Elders are men appointed by God and recognized by the local church to minister as spiritual leaders of the local church.

### THE BIBLICAL BASIS

SAYSF Bible Church believes that the Bible records only two official leadership positions within the New Testament church. They are 1) elders, and 2) deacons. They both have their distinctive roles and are expected, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to work together for the good of the church and the glory of God. (Note 1 Timothy 3:1-13.) While deacons are concerned primarily with the physical and temporal aspects of the church (Acts 6:1-4), elders are primarily concerned with her spiritual welfare. The Scriptures make it abundantly clear that oversight of the affairs of the church is the awesome responsibility that rests on the shoulders of the elders. (See 1 Timothy 3:5; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Peter 5:2.)

### ELDER DEFINED

The Bible uses various names and words to depict elders and describe the nature of their work. In addition to elders, we find references to **bishops, overseers, shepherds, and pastors**. The word “**bishops**” (episkopoi) in the KJV of 1 Timothy 3:1, 2, is better translated “**Overseers**.” This describes precisely the type or nature of work in which the elder should be engaged. Overseers are those who, being raised up and qualified by the work of the Holy Spirit, are appointed to have the spiritual care of and to exercise oversight over, the churches.<sup>1</sup>

In Acts 20:17, Paul called for the elders (the *presbuteroi*, the men of spiritual maturity). Then in verse 28-29 he charges them to “*take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (episkopoi), to feed (shepherd) the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*” He uses terms of the shepherd to describe their work. Truly these terms are interchangeable. Note that those who are called pastors are equally commissioned to take the oversight of the flock of God in the same way that a shepherd would look after his sheep.<sup>2</sup>

Vine defines a pastor as follows:

*“a shepherd, one who tends herds or flocks (not merely one who feeds them)...Pastors guide as well as feed the flock; compare Acts 20:28 which, with verse 17, indicates that this was the service committed to elders (overseers or bishops); so also in I Peter 5:1, 2 “tend the flock...exercising the oversight” RV; this involves tender care and vigilant superintendence”.*<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984), p. 351, s.v. “elder.”

<sup>2</sup> It will be observed that both these words, pastor and shepherd, are derived from the same Greek word, *poimen*, and therefore refer to the same person.

<sup>3</sup> W. E. Vine, p. 839, s.v. “pastor.”

The apostle Peter exhorts the elders of the early church to...

*shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God;...nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:2-3, NASB).*

So we find that the work of the pastor or shepherd is included in the elder's job description: taking care of, tending, feeding and overseeing the flock of God. To properly pastor or shepherd a flock, its pastor (or pastors) must of necessity also be an elder (or elders) seeing that his work is virtually the same as that of the elder. They must therefore also have the same qualifications.

SAYSF Bible Church recognizes the need for such gifted men in the local church and regards Ephesians 4:11 as God's promise that He will supply them. Because they are needed for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the maturing of the body of Christ we believe that God will continue to either raise up from among us, or send in to us, men with the gifts of the evangelist, pastor and teacher (or perhaps more correctly, pastor-teacher). Men so gifted, when once recognized, will likely spend much more time in the work of the ministry than their fellow elders who are secularly employed. Thus they may be more in the public eye and may represent the church in various ways. However, it must be clearly understood that the pastor(s) must work closely with the other elders on all fronts. Unless specifically delegated by the elders to do so, the pastor(s) may not make any major independent decisions that will affect the rest of the church. (See **Appendix H: Further Explanation for the Role of Elders** for additional details.)

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

As a group, the elders are directly accountable to God for the work they do, the doctrines they teach, and the example they set (Hebrews 13:17). SAYSF Bible Church accepts the fact that the Bible teaches that the government of the church is in the hands of a plurality of elders, not one man. (See **Appendix I: How the Elders Inform**). With this important distinctive of biblical leadership in mind, each elder is therefore accountable also to all the other elders. The apostle Peter may well have had this in mind when, within the context of addressing elders, he exhorts the younger men to submit themselves to the elder, and then concludes "Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility..." (1 Peter 5:5).

## **CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALITIES**

I Peter 5, I Timothy 3, and Titus 1 and other passages speak to what kind of life an overseer should have, and what kind of ministry they should have. . A concise list is given here, taken from I Timothy 3. (See **Appendix J: Characteristics, Qualities, and Ministries of an Elder**, for a full enumeration.)

An elder must be:

1. Above reproach. (v. 2)
2. The husband of one wife. (v. 2)
3. Temperate. (v. 2)
4. Prudent. (v. 2)
5. Respectable. (v. 2)
6. Hospitable. (v. 2)
7. Able to teach. (v. 2)
8. Not addicted to wine. (v. 3)
9. Not pugnacious. (v. 3)
10. Gentle. (v. 3)
11. Uncontentious. (v. 3)
12. Free from the love of money. (v. 3)
13. Manages his household well. (v. 4, 5)
14. Not a new convert. (v. 6)
15. A good reputation. (v. 7)

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ELDERS**

Besides general ministry, at SAYSF the elders have the following specific responsibilities:

### **1. Finances.**

It is the privilege of the congregation as a whole to be involved in setting and approving the annual budget. But it is the responsibility of each line item manager to propose and manage their particular line item. The elders cast a vision for the direction the church is heading and make input into the process as a group. It is the elder's responsibility to handle their own finances well and to teach others how to be good stewards of all that God has given us. Apart from offering advice or counsel, the pastors/elders shall refrain from handling the actual offerings of the church, which is they should not take up offerings, count the money, nor make deposits.

### **2. The elders and deacons should work closely together.**

For each group to know the objectives of the other group and encourage one another requires regular meetings. These should be scheduled at least quarterly.

### **3. The pastors/elders are responsible for the day-to-day supervising of the office staff.**

### **4. It is the elder's responsibility to organize the order of service at every public meeting.**

This includes approval of those taking part whether speaking, singing, testifying, or simply reading the Scriptures. In selecting speakers, care must be taken to guard our platform against preachers with doctrines that are not in line with our **Statement of Faith** (See **Lesson 2**). These duties may be delegated to another who has the approval of the elders. Officiating at communion is not the exclusive duty of elders or deacons although it is their responsibility to see to it that this service is conducted in an orderly and Scriptural fashion.



## **5. Elders must be able to make decisions.**

As an elder-governed assembly, the elder team is responsible for the spiritual welfare of the body, and thus is accountable for all of the decisions that affect the body. Some decisions, such as setting the annual budget, are made by the body as a whole. Other decisions are delegated to ministry leaders, since they should know best how to manage the people and programs for which they have been given responsibility. Lastly, some decisions are made by the elders as a group. In these cases, the elders may choose to seek input from the whole body through informational exchange meetings. Or, they could seek counsel from individuals. Sometimes, because of confidentiality when dealing with sensitive personal or doctrinal matters, they may have to rely only on each other and the Lord.

No one makes major decisions at SAYSF unilaterally. Our first effort is always to determine the mind of the Lord through prayer, the earnest study of the Scriptures and in conference together, before reaching a final verdict, which often requires time. The leadership at SAYSF generally makes their decisions by consensus, but because elders are mere men, there will inevitably be times it is not always possible to come to a unanimous agreement.

The following guideline from Oakdale Community Church is a helpful process to follow in those (hopefully rare) times when agreement is difficult to achieve:

*When they don't have a consensus and if the matter is not directly addressed in the Bible, the minority will have a waiting period of up to three months - to be determined by the majority - to discuss their objections with the other elders. If, at the end of the waiting period, the minority view is still a minority, the majority view can be adopted. This procedure in no way negates the principle that mutual love and respect for one another lays the foundation for the elders to work together. Rather, it guarantees each elder, under the lordship of Jesus Christ, the freedom to express his views and convictions. At the same time, it eliminates the possibility of "rule by the minority." (See 1 Corinthians 14:32, 33; Philippians. 2:1-5; Psalm 133.)<sup>1</sup>*

During the decision-making process some matters may be considered "confidential." After a final decision has been reached, the minority must agree to accept the majority's decision, and also to refrain from creating division by influencing individual members of the body with a contrary determination. Preserving the unity of the Spirit is the goal of this process.

## **6. Difference in responsibilities between Staff Elders and Lay Elders.**

Please see the church office for the unique expectations and responsibilities of each of our Elders.

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<sup>1</sup> "Philosophy of Ministry" in Structure of Ministry, Oakdale Community Church, P. O. Box 88014, Carol Stream, IL 60188.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF SAINTS TOWARD THE ELDERS

In his book on Scriptural principles of the Christian assembly, Henry Hitchman points out a number of responsibilities that Christians have toward their elders which are worthy of mention. They are summarized here:

**1. They are to remember them in thanksgiving and prayer.**

*“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation”* (Hebrews 13:7).

**2. They are to obey them.**

*“Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you”* (Hebrews 13:17).

**3. They are to esteem them.**

*“Esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake”* (1 Thessalonians 5:13)

This means that they are to show appreciation and respect for their service.

**4. They are to trust them.**

Before accusing any believer it is always necessary to be able to *“prove all things”* (1 Thessalonians 5:21). But particularly an elder ought to be trusted until proven otherwise. The Scriptures state it in this manner: *“Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.”* (1 Timothy 5:19)<sup>1</sup>

We may then add to this list one other important point. It relates to the believers’ response to the elders’ duty to admonish the Christians. (1 Thessalonians 5:12) To admonish is to correct, rebuke, counsel, and reprove, all with a view to restoring. When this becomes necessary, it is the duty of the believers so admonished to receive this word in a spirit of love and be willing to act upon it. Proverbs 9:8, 9 says,

*“Reprove not a scoffer lest he hate thee; rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give instruction to a wise man and he will yet be wiser. Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.”*

## APPOINTMENT AND RECOGNITION

Unlike the appointment of deacons, the Scriptures speak clearly as to the appointment of elders or overseers. In Acts 20 Paul gathered together the elders of Ephesus to give them his parting counsel. He said to them (verse 28),

*“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Hitchman, Some Scriptural Principles of the Christian Assembly, (Kilmarnock, Scotland: John Ritchie Ltd.), pp. 148-150. We have drawn heavily on the writings of Henry Hitchman in the chapter “Overseers.”

This leaves no room for doubt as to who appoints elders. Gary Inrig observes,

*It is obvious when the biblical qualifications of elders is studied, that elders are made by God, not by men. It is the Holy Spirit that raises up such men, and in the New Testament period, they were appointed...by an apostle (Acts 14:23) or apostolic delegate (Titus 1:5). They clearly were not imposed on those churches, since a condition of eldership was that they must be beyond reproach. There is no suggestion that they were elected by the congregation....An elder is known by the work he does and his fulfillment of the biblical requirements, and not by election to a position. It is the assembly's responsibility to recognize those whom God has raised up, and not its prerogative to create "elders by election." [See 1 Thessalonians 5:12.]*

*While apostles and apostolic delegates are not available to appoint elders, Spirit-appointed elders will still be raised up in an assembly. To put it simply, they will emerge. They will be recognized by their work of shepherding, by their conformity to biblical requirements, and by the consensus of the believers that these men have indeed been raised up by the Lord of the Church. Existing elders will lead in this recognition, and on biblical precedent, will publicly lay hands on these men in recognition of their God-given ministry.<sup>1</sup>*

We use the following process for recognizing both elders and deacons:

- 1. Information.** The Congregation needs to be made aware of the Scriptural qualifications of elders/deacons. This will help them have eyes to see clearly.
- 2. Intercession.** The church needs to pray for God to raise up leaders.
- 3. Invitation.** The names of candidates are brought before the elders by individual elders, deacons, and as a result of congregational input.
- 4. Inspection.** Candidates will be reviewed by the elders and then interviewed by (ideally) two elders. Then they will be brought before the congregation to be introduced as elders-in-training/deacons-in-training. They will be invited to work with the elders/deacons for a period (typically 4-12 months) before being publicly recognized as elders/deacons. During this time period, their Scriptural qualifications will be affirmed by the current elders with input from the congregation.
- 5. Installation.** After a period of time, the candidates, having proved themselves worthy of the office, are brought before the congregation, prayed for by the elders with the laying on of hands, and presented to the congregation as duly appointed elders/deacons.

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<sup>1</sup> Gary Inrig, Life in His Body, (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1975), pp. 107, 108.

## **RESIGNATION (APPLICABLE TO BOTH ELDERS AND DEACONS)**

The Scriptures do not specifically address the matter of resignation. It is generally expected that an elder or deacon, once appointed and recognized, will continue in that office as long as his health permits. In some cases, the congregation may, over a period of time, recognize a deacon as serving more clearly in the role of an elder. Their gifts, calling, and leadership role may move them into the ministry of an elder. However, the services of an elder or deacon may be terminated for the following reasons:

1. Elders/Deacons may resign due to ill health.
2. Elders/Deacons may step away from their leadership role for a sabbatical of up to 1 year due to over-involvement. They may no longer have the time required to properly do their work, and their fellow elders/deacons may determine that they are so often unable to attend scheduled meetings that their effectiveness in the office is impaired. Beyond 1 year the congregation may need to reacquaint themselves with this leader. It is suggested that there be a 6-12 month period of adjustment before the elder/deacon takes on full responsibilities again. At that time the present congregation, after recognizing him for his work and care for them will receive him back as an elder/deacon by the laying on of the elders' hands and prayer. Note: Resigning for any of the reasons already mentioned does not imply misconduct, incompetence, or lack of integrity. Such resignations could be considered only temporary as circumstances may dictate.
3. Relocation out of the area will automatically terminate the services of an elder/deacon.
4. Immorality or a sinful lifestyle will automatically disqualify an elder/deacon from serving, seeing that he would no longer be "blameless."
5. Upon reaching age 65, an elder/deacon may continue in office. However, in order to do so, the support of the other elders and deacons, as well as his own willingness to continue serving, will be confirmed. This mutual confirmation will be sought at each subsequent 2-year interval.

## LESSON 7: Our Church Government: Deacons

**Summary Statement:** The deacons are spiritual men appointed by the elders and recognized by the local church to minister in the physical and practical areas of leadership in the church.

### INTRODUCTION

God has designed the office of the deacon because He delights in having all things “done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40) within the structure of the New Testament Church. The following are similarities between the office of the elder and that of the deacon.

1. They both form an important part of the leadership of the local church.
2. When the New Testament speaks of either one, it is always in the plural.
3. The standards for both of these important offices are high, but similar, except that deacons need not be “able to teach.” (Compare 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 8-13.)
4. They are both to be publicly recognized by the congregation. (See Acts 6:3-6; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Corinthians 16:15-16.)

All who aspire to the office of a deacon must be fully aware of the biblical qualifications as given in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

### QUALIFICATIONS (1 Timothy 3:8-13):

1. “Likewise must the deacons be grave.” Men of serious outlook, and worthy of respect.
2. Men “not double-tongued,” sincere, straightforward, not evasive. Their word can be trusted.
3. Men “not given to much wine.” Not given to excessive drinking.
4. Men “not greedy of filthy lucre.” Men not pursuing dishonest gain or questionable money-making; not greedy.
5. Men who are “holding the mystery of the faith in a pure [clear] conscience.”
6. Men “proved” (literally tested and approved) and found “blameless.”
7. Men whose wives are also “grave,” i.e., of serious outlook and worthy of respect.
8. Men whose wives are “not slanderers” or malicious gossips.
9. Men whose wives are “sober,” i.e., self-controlled.
10. Men whose wives are “faithful in all things,” i.e., trustworthy in every way.
11. Men who are the “husband of one wife.”
12. Men who are “ruling [managing] their children and their own houses well.”  
(See **Appendix J: Characteristics, Qualities, and Ministries of an Elder**).

Although the duties of the deacon are primarily in the temporal realm of church life, they are nonetheless, absolutely important. Without the efforts of faithful men to execute this ministry, no church can function effectively. It must always be remembered that their qualifications are almost identical with that of the elder. They too are to be spiritual men. This is extremely significant, as the importance of the deacon’s interest in the things of the Lord, growing in grace, and setting a good example to the rest of the flock, can have tremendous impact on the spiritual tone of the church. Spiritual men make spiritual leaders.

## **THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE DEACON AT SAYSF BIBLE CHURCH**

(Note: A detailed list of responsibilities can be obtained in the church office.)

### **1. The Role and Function of the Deacon Defined.**

The deacon ministry is both an office and a function within the local church. The elders direct the deacons and the deacons receive their specific duties of service from the elders. The two offices complement each other, the elders being responsible for pastoral oversight and the deacons for practical service to the whole congregation, allowing the elders to devote themselves more to prayer and to the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:3-4).

### **2. The Role of Trustees.**

As a matter of clarification, it is agreed that the Trustee Board should be a separate entity from the Deacon Board. Trustees are not required to meet the Scriptural qualification of 1 Timothy 3 as are the elders and deacons. Elders and deacons may serve as trustees. The following statement defines the roll of trustees of SAYSF Bible Church:

*To hold the assets and financial resources of SAYSF Bible Church in trust thus representing and functioning for the church with respect of the business world in accordance with the will and direction of the church, and to ensure that the church family be protected legally.*

## **COMMUNICATION**

It is desirable and necessary that both elders and deacons meet together periodically to coordinate plans for the advancement of the work of God and for His glory. A copy of the minutes of the deacons' meetings should be made available to the elders for their information and perusal.

## **APPOINTMENT AND RECOGNITION**

The Scriptures do not spell out an exact method by which deacons may be appointed. As a matter of fact, the only Scripture that describes the choosing of men to do the work of deacons is that of Acts 6. There the apostles instructed "all the disciples" to "choose seven men from among you," (vv. 2 and 3) describing the character of the men. The group chose seven men and "presented these men to the apostles" who then prayed, laying their hands on them (v. 6).

The leaders of SAYSF desire to be as true to the Word as possible, even when the process of selection is not very specific. As we look closely at Acts 6, it becomes clear that the elders, the existing deacons, and the church family should all have a voice. Therefore, our recognition and appointment of deacons will follow closely the process followed in our recognition and appointment of elders. (See pages 22-23)

**RESIGNATION** (See page 24)

## **LESSON 8: Restoration (Church Discipline)**

**Summary Statements:** To become a disciple, discipline is needed. Chastisement is used by the Lord to produce holiness and righteousness. Confrontation may be needed but *restoration* is always the goal.

*“Do you not judge them that are within?”* (1 Corinthians 5:12).

The honest answer to this question by most churches today would have to be “No, we do not!” As permissiveness has grown in our society, so also there has been a decline in clear action by local churches in disciplining the conduct of their members, even though God has clearly given this responsibility to His Church (Matthew 18:17-18). Our heavenly Father treats His people as His children (Hebrews 12:5-11). As important as it is that we maintain discipline within a closely knit family, so it is necessary that we maintain godly discipline within the church family.

### **WHAT IS CHURCH DISCIPLINE?**

The church is told to instruct, admonish, correct, rebuke, discipline and even shame those who conduct themselves in a manner that would bring reproach to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. The purpose of this action is not to punish, but to restore. All saints who have committed themselves to SAYSF Bible Church as their local fellowship are subject to its discipline and entitled to its benefits.

### **LEVELS OF DISCIPLINE**

Scripture indicates a number of different actions to be taken, depending on the type of offense.

#### **A. Private Personal Offenses**

We are all instructed to privately correct a fellow believer who has offended us and not to take the problem to all of our church friends. We should always be careful not to accuse another of sin before ensuring we have not either misinterpreted the offense, or have been overly sensitive to a personal hurt. It is always a blessing to overlook a small offense (Proverbs 19:11). We should concentrate on forbearing and forgiving first (Colossians 3:13; 2 Timothy 2:24) and only confront when the brother or sister truly needs to be corrected and restored.

#### **B. Private General Offenses**

When people are insubordinate, troublesome, or disorderly, they need to be warned that such behavior is wrong (2 Timothy 2:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:11, 12). This should first be a private confrontation by a mature believer (Galatians 6:1). This could also be performed as a second step to the attempt at personal restoration explained above. We should be careful to have at least 2 witnesses (2 Corinthians 13:1), lest the alleged offense become the word of one person against another.

### **C. Public Offenses**

If someone continues in sin without repentance, or if the offense occurs in the public domain of the church, they should be rebuked publicly. 1 Timothy 5:20 teaches that all the people need to know that a holy God will not permit open sin in the assembly. Paul had to deal this way with Peter when Peter refused to eat with the Gentiles for fear of what the Jews would say (Galatians 2:11-14).

The elders may also ask the person to refrain from partaking in the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:29), and to refrain from leadership or active involvement in any ministry. Such a person is still encouraged to attend all activities and services.

The teaching of heresy should also be dealt with publicly, so the sheep are protected. Once having been warned, one who continues to teach in opposition to God's Word should be considered divisive and dealt with accordingly. A heretic is to be "put away" if unrepentant after two admonishments (Titus 3:10).

### **D. Avoiding or Putting Away an Unrepentant Brother or Sister**

Paul chastised the church at Corinth for not dealing with open sins. His final words were that they should "*put away from yourselves that wicked person*" (1 Corinthians 5:1-13). The final act of church discipline is the shunning of one who refuses to repent. This is done, not to count the person as an enemy, but to shame him or her to repentance (2 Thessalonians 3:14, 15). Jesus taught (Matthew 18:17) that if a person refuses to heed the church's admonition, they should no longer be welcome in a fellowship which represents God's holy, spotless bride. When the person does repent, he or she should immediately and publicly be brought back into proper fellowship, just as the father acted in the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32).

## **WHO CAN PERFORM CHURCH DISCIPLINE?**

All mature believers are to be involved in restoring one who stumbles (Galatians 6:1) or personally offends them. Public discipline should only be conducted by the elders, who have been given watch over the souls of the flock (Hebrews 13:17).

## **CAN A CHURCH LEADER BE DISCIPLINED?**

The apostle Peter was rebuked by Paul. All of us are mere humans who must take heed lest we fall. However, it is a serious thing to bring a charge against a shepherd or overseer. Elders should be entreated and not rebuked, and any accusation against them should only be received with at least two witnesses (1 Timothy 5:1, 19).

## **NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLES OF PROBLEMS REQUIRING DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

- A. Open sexual immorality (1 Corinthians 5:1-13).
- B. Unresolved personal conflicts (Matthew 18:15-20).
- C. Divisiveness (Romans 16:17, 18; Titus 3:10).
- D. False teaching (Galatians 1:8, 9; 1 Timothy 1:20; 6:3-5; 2 John 9-11; Revelation 2:14-16).



## **SUMMARY**

It is difficult to lay down “the letter of the law” about such a grave subject. God’s grace and forgiveness must always be kept in mind. Nevertheless, we should not shirk our responsibility to actively restore a stumbling brother or sister, lest we give the impression that actively disobeying the Lord is not serious.

(See **Appendix K** for a flow chart on **Problems Requiring Discipline**.)

**REMEMBER:  
THE GOAL OF ALL DISCIPLINE IS RESTORATION.**

## LESSON 9: The Role of Men and Women in the Church

**Summary Statement:** Men and women are equal as far as their position before God is concerned but are different in their function and role responsibilities.

*The basic biblical teaching on the relationship between men and women is rooted in the biblical account of creation. The simple words of the Creator hold a depth of meaning: “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make a helper fit for him” (Genesis 2:18). Literally, the words are “a helper corresponding to him.” Thus, woman is man’s counterpart physically, intellectually and spiritually. She is a helper equal to him, adequate for him and a complement to all that he is....This sense of equality and yet distinction of function carries throughout the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup>*

*From a study of the Scriptures three basic truths are evident:*

- 1. Women and men are equal as far as their position before God and spiritual privilege are concerned.*
- 2. Equality of status does not involve identity of function and responsibility. Sexual differences remain.*
- 3. The ministry of women is of great importance for the well-being of the church.<sup>2</sup>*

### EQUAL

The apostle Paul, in spite of all the anti-feminist charges against him, exhibited the same attitude toward women as his Lord. He appreciated and joined the women’s prayer group at Philippi (Acts 16:13), accepted Lydia’s hospitality and planted the first church in Europe in her home. He mentioned Euodias and Syntyche as co-laborers with him (Philippians 4:3, 4) and warmly commended Priscilla and Phoebe and other women for their “much labor” and help in the work of the Lord (Romans 16). He stated very clearly the spiritual equality of men and women: “*Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus....There is neither Jew nor Greek...bond nor free...male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*” (Galatians 3:26-28) Male and female have the same standing before God. Justified by faith, we have peace with God, enjoy His gracious favor, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Romans 5:1, 2). But though equality is stated, the differences are not negated. The Jews remained Jews and the Greeks were still Greeks, maleness and femaleness were not altered.

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<sup>1</sup> Gary Inrig, Life in His Body, (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1975), pp. 153, 154.

<sup>2</sup> Fay Smart and Jean Young, The Woman Who Pleases God, (Dubuque, IA: Emmaus Bible School, 1977), pp. 65-69, 75-76

## **BUT DIFFERENT!**

The gender differences were put there by God at creation and put there for His good purpose. God had different functions and responsibilities in mind for the man and for the woman. Both are important for the carrying out of His purposes. God in His sovereignty assigned each of His creatures to its position in the universe. He assigned man to a place of special responsibility and gave to woman a role complementary to man (Genesis 2:18). Superiority and inferiority were not involved. Equality of status, but difference in function was simply God's order and plan.

We notice that the Lord Jesus accepted and appreciated women, yet there were no women chosen among the twelve disciples, no women present at the institution of the Lord's Supper, no women missionaries or writers of the New Testament, no women leaders of the churches. It seems obvious that the place of leadership, of public prominence, was meant for men, but that is not to say that the role of women is insignificant and of little value.

## **MEN'S MINISTRIES**

Men have the responsibility of being the spiritual leaders of their homes and in the church. (See **Lesson 4: The Ordinances of the Church, 'The Lord's Supper'; Lessons 6 and 7: Our Church Government; Lesson 11: Christian Education and Service Opportunities, 'Christian Education'**).

## **WOMEN'S MINISTRIES AND ROLES**

All believers, women as well as men, have received spiritual gifts for ministry in the body of Christ. All are important to the well-being of the local church. It is only as everyone ministers that the needs of the whole body are met (Ephesians 4:16). Women should manifest their spiritual gifts in soul-winning, in teaching other women and children, in the ministry of hospitality, in rearing godly families, in the ministry of music, in the ministry of prayer, and in many other ministries that are available to them in the church.

As you look into the New Testament one can see the varied ministries of women for which they were noted: praise and worship, hospitality, teaching, good works, laboring in the gospel. Women were in the upper room prayer meeting with the disciples after the Lord's ascension (Acts 1:14). They were probably present in Acts 2 at the descent of the Spirit. Many women were saved in the early days of the church (Acts 5:14). They were subjected to persecution just as the men were (Acts 8:3). They made valuable contributions to the expansion of Christianity in the first century. Gary Inrig says, **"There is no gift which God has given to a woman that the church does not need and that cannot be actively and creatively used in a biblical way to glorify the Lord Jesus."**<sup>1</sup>

What does he mean by "used in a biblical way?" We must determine from the whole tenor and teaching of the New Testament just *how* God wants each of us to serve Him. The soldier may be highly trained and fully equipped, but he doesn't act on his own initiative; he waits for the direction of his commander. Someone has said, "For best results, obey instructions of maker!"

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<sup>1</sup> Inrig, p. 161.

We want to know the instructions of the Head of the church, as He has revealed them to us in His Word. It is not God's purpose to *suppress* the gifts He has given to women, but to lay out the framework in which they are to be used.

## HEADSHIP AND SUBMISSION

**The principles of headship, submission and authority are evident throughout the Bible, beginning with the order of creation.** Adam was formed first, then Eve. The one formed first is to have the responsibility of authority; the one formed after is to follow and be in subjection. *“The man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man”* (1 Corinthians 11:8, 9). Women react defensively to the order of creation if men wrongly assume that priority means superiority and act in a domineering way. This was not God's intention.

The Apostle Paul states the principle of headship very clearly: *“...the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God”* (1 Corinthians 11:3). Thus, there are three great relationships involving subordination. Such headship is not intended to downgrade anyone. Was Christ inferior because He was subordinate? The headship of God in relation to Christ was no threat to Christ's Person or deity.

God has appointed to each creature a place in His ordered universe. Authority and submission are essential to that order. God has given to man the place of authority. To the woman God has given the place of submission. Both need to be accepted with gladness, knowing that submission to God's wise design means blessing and fulfillment. Each man and woman functions uniquely, according to God's design.

## THE PRINCIPLE OF SILENCE

Linked to the principle of headship and submission, is the principle of women's silence in the church gatherings. Paul writes: *“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection . . . I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.”* (1 Timothy 2:11, 12) This word “silence” (Gk. – ‘hēsuchia’) is often translated, “be in quietness” expressing an attitude of composure. A different Greek word (‘sigē’) is usually used to mean “complete silence.” Peter exhorts women to develop the inner adornment of *“a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price”* (1 Peter 3:4). To this, Paul would add that each of us should *“study to be quiet”* (1 Thessalonians 4:11).

The specific prohibition in 1 Timothy 2:12 is that women should not teach men nor have authority over them in church affairs. And the reasons are given: *“For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression”* (1 Timothy 2:13, 14). **The apostle Paul here appeals to creation order and to the Fall as the basis of the requirement for women's silence**—not to any cultural or local situation of the first century. This is basic ground and therefore the requirement is binding for us today.

Paul also wrote to the believers at Corinth: *“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak but they are commanded to be under obedience....It is a*

*shame for women to speak in the church*” (1 Corinthians 14:34, 35). Some contend that Paul is here forbidding the chatter or gossip of women during a service, but the word translated “speak” does not mean to chatter. The same word is used of God in verse 21.

Notice that this whole 14th chapter is dealing with order in church gatherings and the edifying of the church (verses 4, 5, 12, 19, 23, 33), regulating such matters as the use of tongues and the ministry of prophets, as well as giving instructions to women. It is in this connection, then, that the proper behavior of women is clearly stated, i.e. they are not permitted to speak or even ask questions during a public service. Was this going on at Corinth? Yes. In the Corinthian culture, women were not allowed to confront men in public. Apparently some of the women who had become Christians thought their Christian freedom gave them the right to question the men in public worship. This was causing division in the church. In addition, women of that day did not receive formal religious education as did the men. Women may have been raising questions in the worship service, which could have been answered at home without disrupting the church service. Paul was asking the women not to flaunt their Christian freedom during the worship service. The purpose of Paul’s words was to promote unity and order in the worship services.

The role of women is not one of public leadership in the church whereby she is exercising authority over men. At SAYSF, we do not completely silence our ladies in our large corporate services but rather, coming to a mutual understanding of this matter through teaching, give them freedom to take an active part in worship and ministry. This is done through avenues such as music, testimonies, missionary reports, and special children’s and women’s presentations. The role of men is to teach and preach the Word in the public forum of the church gathering and to answer the wife’s questions at home. This means that the man has to stay sharp in the Word and be able to answer her questions. This will allow unity and order to rule during worship services.

Is it proper for women to lead in prayer in a corporate meeting? In 1 Timothy 2:8, Paul exhorts that “*the men* (Greek word for males) *pray everywhere.*” The men are encouraged to lead. In our large corporate prayer times at SAYSF, we believe the initiative and the example of leading openly in prayer should be given by our men. In our small-group mixed gatherings the women should feel free to pray as the male leadership present grants them the freedom to do so.

We cannot leave this subject of women’s silence without reference to what is said in 1 Corinthians 11:5—“*But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoreth her head.*” Were women praying and prophesying in public? Is Paul permitting public ministry for women in 1 Corinthians 11 and forbidding it in 1 Corinthians 14? No.

Much has been written from every possible viewpoint about the meaning and significance of this verse. May we just point out that the subject under consideration in chapter 11 is headship and subjection, not church order. Paul is not dealing here with the question of whether or not women should speak in public. What then does he mean by this reference to women praying and prophesying in 1 Corinthians 11? We are driven to the conclusion that if women were praying and prophesying in public in Corinth, it was extraordinary; this was not the custom in other churches (1 Corinthians 11:16) but was unique to Corinth, a church that had numerous irregularities. The principle of silence clearly taught in 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2 is based on the teaching of headship and subjection in 1 Corinthians 11, and is not altered by the incidental reference to the irregular activities of women in Corinth.

## **SUMMARY**

SAYSF believes that men and women are equal in their standing before God, but that God has given them separate functions. The New Testament clearly teaches that the man is to take the position of leadership and that the woman is to learn in silence and not usurp authority over the man particularly in regard to teaching and preaching the Word (1 Timothy 2:11, 12; 1 Corinthians 11:3; 14:34).

It cannot be overemphasized that the contribution of women in many areas of ministry both inside and outside the church walls and home are of great value and need. The leadership at SAYSF Bible Church wants all the women to know that we highly respect, cherish, and value who you are, as well as all your God given gifts, talents and abilities.

## LESSON 10: Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage

**Summary Statement:** God originated the institution of marriage for very specific purposes and He has the authority to make the rules that govern marriage.

Problems associated with marriage, divorce and remarriage abound. Every generation has had serious conflicts with some aspects of this subject. They arise from the real difficulty people have had historically in developing good relationships with one another. Marriage brings two people into the closest and most intimate relationship possible and conflicts will arise.

### MARRIAGE

SAYSF Bible Church is committed to teaching and practicing the principles of marriage as they are taught in the Word of God. The Bible makes clear the following:

1. **God is the Originator of marriage.** He designed and made us the way we are, male and female, and also performed the first wedding (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7, 18-24). As the divine Architect and Creator, He has the authority to make the rules that govern marriage. His plan is **ONE MAN FOR ONE WOMAN FOR ONE LIFETIME**.
2. **God had specific purposes in instituting marriage.** Here are five from the Bible:
  - a. Companionship (Genesis 2:18).
  - b. Procreation (Genesis 1:28).
  - c. Enjoyment (Proverbs 5:18-21; Ecclesiastes 9:9).
  - d. Alternative to a sinful life-style (1 Corinthians 7:2).
  - e. A picture of Christ's relationship to His bride, the Church (Ephesians 5:22-33).  
A good understanding of God's purposes adds meaning to marriage.
3. **God outlined three essentials in marriage** (Genesis 2:24).
  - a. **Marriage is exclusive:** "*a man shall leave his father and mother.*" At marriage the man's priorities change. Before marrying, his obligations were to his parents. Now they are to his wife.
  - b. **Marriage is permanent:** "*shall cleave to his wife.*" "Cleave" can be translated "cling, keep close, or stick." The husband and wife are "stuck" or "glued together" suggesting both passion and permanence. This verb is often used in the OT to designate Israel's covenant relationship to the Lord (Deuteronomy 4:4; 10:20; 11:22; 30:20).
  - c. **Marriage is a God-sealed covenant:** "*And they shall become one flesh.*" Jesus clearly states that it is God Himself who joins the couple together ("What therefore God has joined together," Mark 10:8-9). The concept of a man and a woman becoming "one flesh" is repeated throughout the Holy Scriptures at least seven times (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5, 6; Mark 10:8 (twice); 1 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:31).
4. **God instituted marriage for the whole human race**, not just for His own people (Hebrews 13:4). Since marriage was given long before the church came into existence, God's laws applying to marriage are just as binding on those outside the church as those within it. Far from nullifying marriage commitments made before conversion, SAYSF Bible Church teaches that salvation gives fresh reasons for being faithful to them.

## DIVORCE

Let's see what the Bible has to say about divorce and try to answer several commonly asked questions.

### What does God think of divorce?

God clearly states in Malachi 2:16 that He *"hates divorce."* God will always hate divorce because it shatters His divine ideal and always causes great suffering and pain. Malachi saw the men divorcing the wives of their youth in order to marry other women and called it *treachery* (2:14-16). The very reason God wants couples to be faithful to one another is to produce a *"godly seed"* (2:15). Divorce short-circuits God's original plan of passing on a godly line to the next generation. Even if there is "justification" for divorce, it should be avoided, if at all possible.

### Is divorce ever valid?

**Since the Bible teaches that marriage is a permanent institution, SAYSF believes it should not be interrupted by divorce.** Having said this, we also recognize that in our culture, divorces are granted for many reasons: adultery, abuse, lack of love, separation, conviction of a felony, defamation of the other spouse, desertion, drunkenness, sickness, incompatibility, non-support, neglect, and a host of others. **There are times when divorce is the chosen course of action in a hardhearted world.** It is God's desire that husbands and wives stay together for life, yet divorce will continue to be a reality for some of God's people because of sin. Sometimes divorce happens despite all of our best efforts to stop it. The Scriptures make it plain that God knew and understood this reality for the nation of Israel, and he also understands it for the church. The bottom line is really an issue of the heart.

### What did Moses say about divorce?

Apparently divorce was widespread in the ancient Near East. What Moses recorded in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 was given to regulate an already existing practice. The "uncleanness" or "something indecent," referred to in 24:1 is literally, "the nakedness of a thing." This cannot refer to adultery for which the penalty was death (Deuteronomy 22:22). Nor can this indecency refer to the wife's premarital intercourse with another man for which the penalty was also death (22:20-21).

Perhaps it was something related to her lack of ability to bear children or some other sexual issue that caused her husband to be displeased with her and to dismiss her. Before sending her away, he would write her a *"bill of divorcement."* What was this bill?

#### Deuteronomy 24:1-4

- 1 When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.
- 2 And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.
- 3 And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife;
- 4 Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.



This “bill of divorcement” was actually a **certificate of innocence** for being unjustifiably dismissed.<sup>1</sup> Without it, the husband causes her dismissal to be looked upon as adultery on her part. An innocently dismissed wife cannot possibly be conceived of as having committed adultery herself. It is her licentious husband who has dismissed her for a reason other than sexual infidelity who commits adultery against her and, therefore, causes her to be thought of as an adulteress. In addition, the person who would marry such a dismissed woman also assumes her undeserved “adultery.” With this certificate of innocence, she could freely remarry.

### **What did Jesus say about divorce?**<sup>2</sup>

In Matthew 19:1-12, Jesus addressed the very heart of the issue, which was the heart. He was asked a question about the law on divorce that was prompted by Deuteronomy 24. They wanted to know if divorce was permissible for any cause. This is the question people are still asking today. The Lord pointed them back to Genesis and God’s original plan. But this did not satisfy the Pharisees. So they asked, “*Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?*” (Matthew 19:7)

The Lord’s answer in Matthew 19:8, pointed out that it was because of the hardness of men’s hearts that Moses permitted divorce. Moses was trying to regulate it so that the wife would not be abused.

Then, Jesus gives one of the harshest statements on the topic of divorce. He said, “*And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, commits adultery: and whoever marries her which is put away commits adultery*” (Matthew 19:9).

**This statement was meant to be provocative.** It was designed to stun the Pharisees. This pronouncement was so difficult that with one between-your-eyes moment, Jesus splashes conviction all over the Pharisees. It is interesting that even the disciples reacted by saying if the relationship with a man and his wife is like this, it would be better never to get married (Matthew 19:10).

Now why did the disciples react this way? It is easy to inflict our Christian point of view on the disciples and miss the fact that they, too, were hardhearted; they could not conceive of remaining in a marriage that didn’t please them. Jesus meant to stimulate the thinking of these men so that they could see their hard hearts more clearly. He provoked their emotions to bring their sinful attitudes to the surface.

Jesus knew that old platitudes and formula solutions were not enough to reach the Pharisees and the disciples, so Jesus threw out a statement intended to provoke. Because the Pharisees were masters at warping the law to justify their behavior, the Lord forced them to peer into God’s mind. He pulled back the curtain so they could see their self-serving behavior contrasted with God’s holiness. Jesus clearly blamed their failure on being hard-hearted.

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<sup>1</sup> “To Commit Adultery” (moichao), The Complete Words Study Dictionary, New Testament, by Spiros Zodhiates, Th.D., AMG Publishers, Chattanooga, TN, © 1994, pp. 993-994.

<sup>2</sup> The next three sections rely heavily on The Gospel Solution by Tom Weaver, True Light Press, Bremerton, Washington, © 1999, pp. 245-268.

*“Let me show you how God views your behavior,” Jesus is saying. “If you leave your wife and marry another woman without just cause, God sees you as an adulterer.”*

In each of the passages where the Lord talks about divorce, Jesus delivers his message with this same startling impact. (In Mark 10:12, Jesus adds that if a wife divorces her husband, she also commits adultery. Luke 16:18 declares that when a man divorces and remarries he causes his former spouse to commit adultery if she remarries. The cumulative effect of all three passages is quite strong.) The Pharisees were so convinced of their religious superiority that the Lord needed to rip out the mat from beneath their sandals. **Jesus’ purpose is not to write a new doctrine; his purpose is to give insight into God’s view of things in order to provoke a reaction that would lead them toward repentance.**

### **Is Matthew 19 the new rule for the Church?**

What has become of Jesus’ statement that was designed to convict these Jews of their sin? Unfortunately, it has been accepted as the new law on divorce for the church. Christians have taken these words of Jesus and interpreted them to be part of the new covenant, believing they supersede the old covenant given by Moses. But the Lord does not introduce the new covenant in his earthly teaching ministry. The gospel of grace comes only after the Lord’s death. While there are some veiled references (which are clear to us today in retrospect), the disciples did not understand much of the Lord’s teaching until after the resurrection. Therefore, if we interpret the words of Jesus on divorce as a direct message for the church, we will completely misunderstand his purpose, and we will succeed only in creating another form of legalism.

If a man is involved in ongoing adultery because he has been divorced and remarried, how can he ever repent of that sin? Even if he were to divorce his new wife and remarry his first wife, he would only be compounding the problem. And if a man was to divorce his second wife and remarry the first, he would be violating the clear teaching of Moses (cf. Deuteronomy 24:4). Nothing he does can alter his status, short of divorcing again and remaining single for life. Such a harsh law would leave him no remedy for full repentance, and this is certainly in conflict with grace.

Christians believe that grace covers sin committed before conversion, but what about those transgressions which take place after salvation? If grace does not cover them, you can be assured that no believer will make it into heaven. So, if a man is divorced and remarried after he has become a Christian, and this act is determined to be something for which he cannot repent and therefore becomes ongoing adultery, how can he ever enter heaven (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:9)? This teaching makes divorce and remarriage into an unpardonable sin. If the Lord’s statements are seen as church law, we effectively neutralize the power of grace!

We must be careful not to take the tough statements of Jesus, which were designed to bring conviction, and make them into church law, thereby producing incredible bondage. Ultimately, every believer will find himself under condemnation. The Lord’s teaching, as it is recorded in the first three Gospels, was designed to reveal the full ramifications of the Old Testament law. It was never designed to replace it with an even more difficult burden. **Therefore, we conclude that grace needs to be applied to every difficulty of marriage. Compassion needs to be shown, not condemnation. Administering love instead of investigating loopholes for leaving the relationship should be the standard in our counseling.**

### **Is Divorce and Remarriage Ongoing Adultery?**

So often remarried Christians read the words of the Lord and cringe, wondering if they are in the state of ongoing adultery. The Lord never intended to pronounce that divorce and remarriage are unforgivable acts that cannot be undone. His purpose was not to condemn but to convict. Jesus could not have been teaching that a new legitimate marriage produces the ongoing sin of adultery but is rather a single act of adultery against the former spouse. This act can be repented of and be forgiven.

If the Lord was actually telling us that remarriage invokes a permanent state of adultery, then Jesus must not recognize divorce, for if remarriage constitutes adultery against the first spouse, then we can only conclude that the first marriage has not been truly severed. On the other hand, if God does recognize divorce, then remarriage must also be valid, even if it makes God unhappy. It cannot be considered ongoing adultery but is only a sin against the former spouse, on the same level as all others.

Jesus gives another interesting clue to understanding this issue by His attitude toward the Samaritan woman in John 4. When the Lord asked her to call her husband, she answered that she had no husband. Paraphrased, He replied, *“You know, you’ve answered correctly. You’ve actually had five husbands and the man you’re living with now is not your husband”* (John 4:17b-18). By making this statement, Jesus recognized all five of her marriages as being legitimate. He also acknowledged all five of her divorces. If they weren’t valid, He most certainly would have told her that she was still tied to her first husband. The Lord even acknowledges a distinction between being married and living together.

Now if ever someone needed to hear from the Lord about divorce, it would have been this woman. Yet Jesus presents a completely different message to her. Why does He use such kid gloves with this multi-divorced woman? Why doesn’t He lay on her the same message that He dropped on the Pharisees and the disciples? The difference seems to be the condition of her heart. This woman would quickly come under conviction, while the self-righteous Pharisees were so hardened they needed an artillery barrage for softening. So the message Jesus gives to the Pharisees is not meant to eliminate divorce and remarriage, because like Moses, the Lord recognized both divorce and remarriage.

Marriage is a God-given union much older than the church. It is based on a covenant (vow) between a man and a woman and is also regulated in our society by the God-ordained institution of the state. This means that a marriage outside of the church and one before Christian salvation is just as real as a marriage in the church after salvation. It also holds true that a divorce before a man’s conversion is as valid as one afterward. **If Jesus recognized divorce and remarriage, then we must be careful not to condemn any union as one of ongoing adultery.**

**What was the Apostle Paul’s Commentary on Jesus’ Teaching (Mark 10:2-12) on Divorce? What additional instructions did Paul give (1 Corinthians 7:10-16)?**

Within 1 Corinthians 7:10-16, Paul highlights the special place the believer plays in the life of the spouse and their children. Although separation may be necessary for a time, ultimately reconciliation is the goal. The Christian spouse has a wonderful opportunity to represent the Lord in that marriage before the unbelieving spouse and the children. This should not be taken lightly. But if the unbelieving spouse chooses to leave, the Christian is free to remain unmarried or to remarry, but only to another believer.

Admittedly, separation (“*if she depart, let her remain unmarried*” – v.11) sometimes leads to divorce (which usually has remarriage in view), but the apostle is not advocating divorce. The divorced spouse is encouraged to remain unmarried, allowing reconciliation to be pursued.

For those that find themselves in an unequally yoked marriage (usually because one spouse receives Christ after they are married), Paul provides insight and a significant dimension of hope. He wants that believing spouse to know that they are a sanctifying influence upon both their spouse and their children. They should not leave, but remain the salt and light that may lead to the regeneration of the whole family.

**What are some alternatives to divorce?**

Rather than divorce, the Bible suggests another way. The Lord Jesus taught *forgiveness*, not divorce, as a solution to the painful things that happen in relationships. John 8:1-11 speaks of a woman caught in the very act of adultery. She was brought to Jesus by the scribes and Pharisees to trick Him into saying something that the leaders could use against Him. Instead, Jesus presents the standard, “*He who is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone.*” Under conviction her accusers left. Jesus then tells this woman to go and sin no more. That was grace! Jesus does not condone her sin but He could not technically punish her because He would need two or three witnesses (Numbers 35:30; Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15).

Through the prophet Hosea, we see the extent of God’s covenant love for His people. We see the power of **reconciliation** as we watch to what extent Hosea goes to woo his wife back to himself. Israel’s forsaking of the LORD was brought home to Hosea in the adulterous acts of his own wife, so that his personal experiences became an allegory of God’s experience with Israel. God wanted His people to know that He will never cease to love His own and, consequently, He seeks to win back those who have forsaken Him.

**1 Corinthians 7:10-16**

- 10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:
- 11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.
- 12 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.
- 13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.
- 14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.
- 15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.
- 16 For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

## **REMARRIAGE**

### **When may a person who has already experienced marriage be free to remarry?**

It is a serious mistake for the church to prohibit remarriage. The vast majority of people are sexually driven, and to prohibit remarriage will inevitably push many believers into immorality and then often right out of the church. The proper expression of our sexuality is within the bonds of marriage, and when someone is not allowed to remarry it will merely drive their sexual expression underground.

Divorce reflects the sinfulness of mankind. But, as Christians, we believe that when we repent of sin, it is covered; it goes under the blood of Jesus, just like all other sin. We must let it remain there so we do not become like Satan who lives to accuse the brethren and haunt them with their past deeds.

### **Here are three scenarios where we believe God permits remarriage:**

1. The death of the other spouse (Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:39).
2. The remarriage of the other spouse, for there would no longer be any possibility of reconciliation (see Deuteronomy 24:1-4).
3. The unbelieving spouse leaves and divorces the believing spouse (1 Corinthians 7:10-16). The believing spouse should try to be reconciled but is not bound to stay in that marriage. The believing spouse should try to faithfully represent Christ to the former spouse in the process.

In all three scenarios the believer should only remarry a believer (1 Corinthians 7:39).

### **Here are several suggestions for those who have experienced divorce:**

1. Repent of past sin that led to divorce. Ask for God's forgiveness and cleansing. With the Lord's help, forgive those who have defrauded you in past relationships, including any past partners.
2. If and when you become involved in the courtship process, you should consider only believers. Christians are called to marry believers, so they should avoid developing romantic relationships with non-Christians that may inevitably lead to marriage (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 1 Corinthians 7:39).
3. Keep yourself sexually pure for your future spouse. Playing around sexually outside the covenant of marriage is a sin, and will only create guilt and negative emotions that may surface later in your marriage. If you are now involved sexually, abstain so that you can have a time of purity together before you wed.
4. Make a commitment to the new marriage as if it were your first. Second marriages are just as real as first marriages. God recognizes both your past divorce and your new marriage. So enter into this relationship as a lifetime commitment—until the two of you are parted by death.
5. Fulfill all the obligations of any past marriages. Pay your child support. Observe visitation with your kids and as much as possible continue to be active as their parent. Perform any other commitments that you might have. Make sure your new spouse understands your need to fulfill past obligations.

### **How should the church treat those who are divorced?**

When there is divorce, we need to remember there is also forgiveness. Divorce carries with it a lot of pain and emotional turmoil. It carries a stigma that causes a lot of guilt. As we deal with those who have gone through a divorce, we need to comfort them and help them know that God forgives them and can help them move forward for Him. For those who are now remarried after a divorce, the church needs to recognize that this marriage is identified and recorded by God. *“Marriage is honorable in all”* (Hebrews 13:4). He recognizes them and He holds those who enter into them accountable for the vows they’ve made before witnesses and in His presence (see Ecclesiastes 5:4-6).

As far as church ministry, we at SAYSF hold that a man who has become a believer after a divorce is not necessarily disqualified for service as an elder or deacon. But we also realize that the difficulties and traumas of that broken marriage may follow him into his ministry for Christ. Even though he is a new creature in Christ and begins his spiritual life and service for our Lord at the moment of his conversion, the consequences and ramifications of his situation will need to be evaluated by the leadership team at SAYSF.

### **MARRIAGE AND THE WILL OF GOD**

There are many good reasons for not getting married. Paul lists several in 1 Corinthians 7:32-40. One of them is to allow more time to work for God’s Kingdom. So don’t assume that God wants everyone to marry. Instead, be sure you prayerfully seek God’s will before you enter into the life-long commitment of marriage.

Many marriages take place outside the will of God. The pain and anguish endured by all too many couples testify daily to this fact. We make no claim at attempting to define the many aspects of what it means to marry outside the will of God. The following things however, become abundantly clear as we allow the Spirit of God to guide us in the study of His Word.

1. The Word of God explicitly states that no Christian should yoke himself or herself to a non-Christian (2 Corinthians 6:14). Such a marriage is not God’s will.
2. God hates divorce (Malachi 2:16). Those who become divorced should not seek to enter into another marriage until reconciliation with the former spouse is no longer possible. As long as your “ex” is alive and unmarried, reconciliation should be the goal.
3. Homosexual “marriages” are never God’s will (Romans 1:24-32).
4. People who are merely “committed partners” are not recognized by God as married, and should be treated as sinners who need to change their lifestyle. This activity is fornication and is not God’s will.

### **PRE-MARITAL COUNSEL<sup>1</sup>**

In order to help couples prepare for marriage, SAYSF Bible Church offers pre-marital counseling, a preventative rather than corrective form of counseling. This consists of a series of sessions outlining the hidden dangers and potential trouble spots in marriage, offering help in

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<sup>1</sup> See **Appendix L** for **The Basic Approach to Counseling of the Pastoral/Elder Staff of SAYSF Bible Church**. This applies to our overall counseling approach, and not just pre-marital counseling.

evaluating the readiness of a couple for marriage and helping to lay a biblical foundation for a lasting marriage. The course is given by one of the pastors or a mature Christian counselor who is qualified and designated for this purpose. Counsel of this sort enables a couple to approach marriage with the seriousness it deserves as well as with a better understanding of the practical ways in which the Bible addresses this very important subject.

To briefly outline what would be expected of couples contemplating marriage at SAYSF Bible Church, it should be recorded that:

1. The leadership of this assembly will not entertain marriages that constitute an “unequal yoke,” that is, a believer to an unbeliever (2 Corinthians 6:14).
2. The engagement period should be regarded as a most important prelude to marriage. This time is valuable in allowing the couple to get to know and understand each other more intimately. It is a time for them to get the answers to numerous questions that need to be asked before marriage. This intimate friendship, however, must not be sexual.
3. A minimum of 4 months notice should be given to the leadership of SAYSF Bible Church for any intended marriage to be performed by the pastoral staff of SAYSF.
4. Every couple intending to be married by one of the pastors of SAYSF Bible Church must be willing to submit themselves to a series of pre-marital counseling sessions.

## LESSON 11: Christian Education and Service Opportunities

**Summary Statements:** As part of the body at SAYSF, we will give ourselves to be equipped and trained in the Word of God so we can better serve others.

The Church is like an army that must be recruited, equipped, trained, and led into battle. The Church is like a body where each part must work together, under the leadership of the head, for the good of the whole.

### THE BIBLE: A BOOK WORTH TEACHING

The primary method by which we can know God is through His Book, the Bible. Therefore, our goal at SAYSF is to equip all of the saints in the truths of God's Word so they may apply them to their lives. In other words, we want the saints to **"Become like Jesus . . . Head, Heart Hands, Knees and Feet!"** SAYSF certainly is a Bible Church. The word "Bible" comes from the Greek word **biblios** which means "a book." SAYSF is a Church of The Book! This means that:

1. We accept the original writings of the Bible as divinely and verbally **inspired**. The human agents that God used to write the Holy Scriptures did not write their own ideas or philosophies, but were moved along by the Holy Spirit, so that their words expressed precisely what He directed, using their own personalities and styles. (See 2 Peter 1:21; 2 Timothy 3:16.)
2. We also accept these original writings to be **inerrant**, that is, without error in word or concept.
3. We accept these sacred writings to be **complete and sufficient**. God permitted no more and no less to be written than He intended. See Revelation 22:18-19. All that man needs to know, as far as his relationship to God is concerned, is recorded in this book which we call the Bible. Or, as Peter states it in 2 Peter 1:3, "according as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness."
4. We believe that the Bible, since it comes from the mind of an omniscient and sovereign God, is **infallible** and cannot be proven wrong.
5. We believe that the Bible, as the Word of God, is **immutable**, that is, it cannot be changed. Our Lord was quoted as saying that "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35). It is safe to conclude therefore, that the Bible as God's holy written Word is absolute and final. This certainly cannot be said of any other book. With all other Bible-teaching churches, SAYSF believes the Bible is the world's most priceless possession. Every person should become acquainted with its message and thus with its divine Author.
6. We believe that **it is the Bible that changes lives**, not man's word.

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

How do we go about teaching this Book? SAYSF believes that the primary responsibility for learning about our Lord lies with the family unit (see Deuteronomy 6:6-9), and we all are to be in the habit of personal study of God's Word. However, we seek to provide as many different opportunities as we can to encourage collective and age-appropriate learning of what God has to



say to each one. These educational ministries include: 1) preaching and teaching on Sunday mornings 2) Sunday School for all ages, 3) SAYSF Small Groups, 4) Awana, 5) Youth Group, 6) Vacation Bible School, 7) Bible studies and discipleship classes. Let's look at each of these areas in more detail.

### **1. Sunday Preaching/Teaching Services**

Our Sunday morning preaching hours: 8:15 and 10:00 are planned so that the music and message create a unified theme. The preaching load is shared among many men, although pastor/teachers who are gifted by God for our church carry much of the ministry. Preaching topics are chosen as the elders sense the Holy Spirit's leading to meet the needs of the saints.

### **2. Sunday School**

The leadership of SAYSF believes that Sunday School is a valuable time of teaching the Bible to every saint. During the 10:00 am service each week multiple parallel Sunday school classes are offered for all ages. Classes are organized as follows, beginning at 10am, Adult (High school age and up) Sunday School classes are offered. Beginning at 10:30 am, 5 years – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade, Grades 3-5, and grades 6-8 classes are offered. Children begin the 10:00 service with their parents, and are released to their Sunday School classes before the sermon begins. Experience tells us that our most faithful members come through these classes, where the lessons are applied to real life through active participation. The leaders of these classes are accountable to the elders, one of whom is designated as the supervisor to the Christian Education Team.

#### **How our Sunday School works:**

##### **A. Team Teaching**

Two teachers are normally enlisted for each class. This helps with hands-on training, sharing responsibilities, crowd control, and provides a built-in back-up system for emergencies. It also protects the teacher from accusations of child abuse.

##### **B. Materials**

Classes from toddlers through junior high school are taught using materials consistent with the SAYSF Bible church expanded doctrinal statement. Topics are laid out in rotating schedules so students acquire a broad base of learning as they progress through each grade. The teacher is encouraged to adjust their material to include topics not covered in the rotation.

##### **C. Recruitment**

Teacher recruitment is done by department heads and individual teachers. All regular teachers must be approved by the elders before being committed to a ministry. The elders maintain a list of approved teachers. All teachers are encouraged to read the **Ministry Guidelines for Members of SAYSF Bible Church** (See **Appendix M**). Before teaching at SAYSF, the teacher must be a member of SAYSF and if they are going to teach children (birth through High School) they must complete the **Ministry Screening Form** at the end of **lesson 12**.

#### **D. Adult Electives**

A selection of topics is offered each quarter with the purpose of rotating between Bible doctrines, book/character studies, and topical studies. Some classes are designed to focus on specific groups (young adults, ladies only, married couples). A new believer's class is offered periodically to help ground saints in the basics of the Christian life.

#### **E. Christian Education Team (See Appendix N).**

The purpose of the SAYSF Christian Education Team (CE Team) is to assist the Elders by assisting/supporting SAYSF's ministry of Christian Education and formation for adults, youth and children. The CE Team provides oversight of both curriculum (what we teach) and teacher development (how we teach). This group is composed of members of SAYSF Bible Church, who are volunteers or recruited candidates that have an interest in Christian Educating. CE Team Members are encouraged to commit to service for a minimum period of one (1) year.

#### **F. Teacher Training**

Programs and materials are useless without trained people. SAYSF is committed to providing leadership and resources to support all our ministries, especially teaching ministries. We aim to offer courses regularly that will equip the saints to become better communicators of the Word of God. Additionally, we expect that all teachers will be in some kind of personal or group Bible study, and not to be so busy in ministry that they fail to grow themselves.

### **3. SAYSF Small Groups**

Small Groups are not intended to be just another program in the church, but rather our model for being the church.

SAYSF Small Groups establish a framework by which each member of our church family can draw closer to God and develop intimacy with other believers. As such, the purpose for SAYSF Small Groups is as follows:

#### **A. Scripture:**

To provide a time and place by which to learn God's Word. Believers are encouraged to share how God, through His Word, has worked in their lives.

#### **B. Fellowship:**

To provide for a time of fellowship among believers. Small groups are encouraged to provide settings that foster fellowship within the group.

#### **C. Accountability:**

To allow for the building of relationships among believers to produce accountability among group members into every area of each believer's life.

**D. Prayer:** To provide a time to pray for one another. Prayer needs may be made known within the Small Group so that each member of a group can pray for that need.

**E. Support:**

To provide a framework by which each Small Group may become one of the support networks to the members of that group. If there are needs (financial, spiritual, etc.) that can be met at the Small Group level, then the group is encouraged to meet the needs of that brother or sister.

**F. Outreach:**

To allow for outreach to visitors and into the community – group members are encouraged to invite neighbors, friends, and co-workers to their Small Groups.

**G. Assimilation:**

Group members are encouraged to invite visitors to become a part of their Small Group (or direct them to the group in their area). This is a powerful means to get visitors plugged in and to allow them to make new friends at SAYSF.

**4. Awana**

Awana stands for **Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed**, taken from 2 Timothy 2:15. Awana Clubs is an international Christian program for kids pre-school through High School. The groups are called “Cubbies” (age 3 & 4), “Sparks” (K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade), “Truth In Training” (3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Grade), “Trek” (7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade), and “Journey” (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade). Awana’s two-fold purpose is stated in their pledge, “...whose goal is to reach boys and girls for Christ and to train them to serve Him.” Our Club meets Sunday evenings for 1 ½ hours during the school year. This evangelistic and discipleship program is broken down into three main sections:

**A. Handbook Time** where the kids learn Scripture and work through an age-appropriate workbook which contains Bible drills, activities, crafts, missions and service assignments.

**B. Council Time** where the kids listen to a Bible message, sing, and share their testimony.

**C. Game Time** where the kids divide up into four color teams and compete around the “Awana Circle.” This 30’ circle inside a 40’ square is unique to Awana. These games teach team work, good sportsmanship and the importance of following directions. The whole evening is filled with high-energy and fast-paced excitement.

This is one of our best outreach programs. As part of their handbook work each kid is required to bring a minimum of two visitors to club each year. This allows us to reach into many neighborhoods and families who do not know Christ. This gives the church a pool of contacts for evangelistic visits. Many family members have come to Christ through the ministry of Awana and Awana follow-up.

**5. Outbound Youth Group**

The purpose of the Outbound Youth Group is to “*assist parents in training their teens to claim ownership of their faith in Jesus Christ through evangelism, discipleship, worship, ministry, and fellowship.*” Outbound ministers to teens in grades 7-12 and meets on

Sunday evenings from 6 pm until 7:45 pm. The teens learn biblical truths and the practical application of them each night.

Dynamic fellowship activities are provided to allow for enjoyment in a positive atmosphere. Outreach events are scheduled throughout the year and short-term missions projects allow the teens to focus on the needs of others around the world.

#### **6. Vacation Bible School**

Our VBS is usually one high-energy week for the kids during the summer. The curriculum is often action-packed with crafts, songs, games, videos, Bible lessons and food. An opening and closing session often aids in getting the adults and teens involved. Our aim for VBS is to be an evangelistic outreach into our community, particularly targeting unchurched children.

#### **7. Bible Studies and Discipleship Classes**

Various Bible studies are always offered to appeal to the different needs and schedules of our adults. These study groups are similar to our adult Sunday School classes, but meet on various days of the week.

In most cases, the Bible Studies and discipleship classes that are offered are seasonal, or they are offered for limited time – They include the Tuesday Ladies Bible Study and at times other studies or discipleship classes. Individuals are encouraged to check the weekly church bulletin for upcoming classes being offered.

### **SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES**

There are many, many ways for each of the saints to have a part in serving the body. SAYSF continually updates a brochure entitled, **Opportunities for Service and Ministry** which lists these, and gives the contact person and phone number for each ministry. This list can also be found in the church directory. The purpose of all of our ministries is to equip the saints for service and to build them up so that we all become more Christ-like. These opportunities to serve will stir up your spiritual gift while ministering to the rest of the body. By our service and love for one another the world will know that we are Christ's disciples and that God really did send Jesus into the world.

The Lord equips each saint with spiritual gifts that are designed to serve the body. New ministries may be started as the Lord lays a burden on your heart. Come see the elders and office staff about getting something started and they will pray with you and give you some practical insights into getting started. Use your gifts to help the body grow.

### **MINISTRY POLICY AND PROBATION**

Any person who is an active member of SAYSF Bible Church, and not under church discipline or on a probationary status (for reason of something like divorce proceedings) is eligible to serve in an ongoing teacher or leadership ministry. These include such ministries as Sunday School or Youth Group; a leadership ministry such as Awana Commander or Choir Director; and in a Worship/Praise ministry. Anyone working with children must first comply with our **SAYSF Child Policies** (See **Appendix O**), and complete a **Ministry Screening Form** (at the end of

**Lesson 12).** Exceptions to serving in ministry capacities such as the above will be considered by the elders for inactive members and non-members. Non-members will be free and encouraged to serve in areas other than Bible Teaching ministries, Leadership ministries, and Worship/Praise ministries at the discretion of the ministry leader in consultation with the elders.

The question often arises, “Why would someone be put on ‘probationary status’ or be declared ineligible for ministry when the situation they find themselves in may not be their fault? Shouldn’t this be decided on a case-by-case basis?” The answer to this is that when a saint is dealing with a traumatic issue such as divorce, the church has the responsibility to protect them from the conversation that unfortunately may more likely occur if they continue in ministry roles while their struggles are of public knowledge. Additionally, the emotional toll that is placed on them is often not conducive to ministry roles, particularly dealing with children, and it is a time where they particularly need to be ministered to, as opposed to ministering. Lastly, we aim to be consistent. If all of these situations were evaluated individually, inevitably someone will want to know “Why did you do this to me and not to them?” Therefore, the elders believe it is wisest to provide a season for those in such situations to be learning and worshipping, but not involved in public ministry. This time will be of undetermined length, but at a minimum will remain while the situation is still ongoing.

## LESSON 12: Membership

**Summary Statement:** As members of the Body of Christ we should also commit ourselves to a local fellowship and be recognized as members with all the privileges and responsibilities of that local church.

A member of SAYSF Bible Church is a professing Christian who has successfully completed the **SAYSF Roots** Class and has been given the “right hand of fellowship” by the congregation. A member in good standing from another group of Christians of like precious faith may bring a letter of transfer as an alternative to attending the **SAYSF Roots** Class. The letter of transfer should be signed by the elders of that assembly. Although this letter entitles the holder to immediate fellowship, all believers are encouraged none-the-less to attend the **SAYSF Roots** Class, which better acquaints them with the beliefs and practices of SAYSF Bible Church.

Baptism by immersion, though not taught as a requirement for salvation or church membership, is taught as an act of obedience to our Lord’s command (Matthew 28:20); therefore, all Christians are urged to be baptized.

Each new member is asked to subscribe to SAYSF’s **Statement of Faith** (see **lesson 2**). A copy of the membership application form along with a personal commitment may be found at the end of this lesson. You may also obtain a copy from the staff members of SAYSF.

Should at any time a member of SAYSF Bible Church decide to move from the area they may request a letter of transfer which will help to ensure fellowship with any other church of like precious faith in any part of the world.

Each member is encouraged to choose to be involved in at least one of the many ministries of our church. (See brochure: **Opportunities for Service and Ministry**).

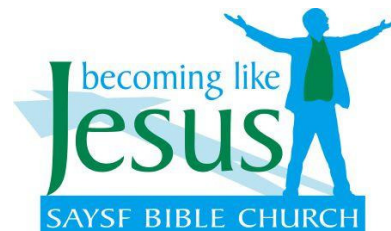
### Ministry Screening Form

If you would like to get involved with any children’s ministry from Nursery to Teens, please complete the **MINISTRY SCREENING FORM** at the end of this lesson and turn it in to any staff member. This screening form is being used as part of the process of providing a safe and secure environment for every child that participates in our programs and uses our facilities. Your information will remain confidential and will be checked as quickly as possible so that you may get involved in ministry quickly.

In **Appendix O** you will find our **SAYSF Child Policies**. Please read these as part of the application to ministry process. See **Appendix P** for information on **Child Abuse**.

# SAYSF BIBLE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Revised December 2013



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

HOME: Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

\* WORK Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Mo Day Year

Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been baptized? Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_ Explain \_\_\_\_\_

Have you successfully completed the SAYSF Roots Class? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

## PERSONAL COMMITMENT

1. I have read and am in agreement with the Statement of Faith of SAYSF Bible Church.
2. I will maintain a good testimony before the world as a witness for Jesus Christ wherever I may be, allowing myself to be a part of God's mission to reach the world with the gospel.
3. I will actively support the activities and ministries of SAYSF Bible Church with my presence and my finances.
4. I will endeavor to attend the public worship of God at SAYSF and honor the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's supper.
5. I realize my responsibility to use my God-given gifts and talents to build up fellow saints and serve the Body of Christ. Therefore, I will continue to sharpen my skills and become better equipped and trained to minister to others.
6. I agree that the Bible establishes church leaders such as pastors, elders, and deacons for the purposes of teaching, counseling, and discipling saints based on the principles of Scripture. I therefore commit myself to the leadership of SAYSF Bible Church and will abide by their biblical disciplines.
7. In the event that I should become grieved or offended for any reason, I agree to approach the matter according to the steps and principles set forth in the Word of God realizing that restoration is always the goal.
8. I understand that men and women are equal before God as far as their spiritual position is concerned but are different in their functions and role responsibilities. Therefore, I will serve God in the body within the role that God has laid out in His Word.
9. I will commit myself to being faithful to God and obedient to His Word in my marital status.

\* optional

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

### WE BELIEVE IN:

1. The verbal inspiration of the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)
2. The trinity of the Godhead (Matt. 3:16-17; 28:18-20; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2)
3. The creation of man by the direct act of God (Gen. 1:26-27)
4. The fall of man and his need for redemption (Gen. 3:1-7)
5. The deity, incarnation and virgin birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:18-20; Luke 1:31-34)
6. Christ's vicarious atonement for the sins of mankind by the shedding of His blood on the cross (Rom. 3:24-25; Eph. 1:7)
7. The resurrection of His body from the tomb (Matt. 28:5-6; John 20:4-7, 24-28)
8. Christ's ascension into heaven (Acts 1:9-11; Rom. 8:34)
9. Christ's personal, imminent return (John 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-52)
10. The deity of the Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:2; Matt. 3:16; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 3:16)
11. Justification of the believer by grace through faith (John 3:18, 36; Eph. 2:8-9)
12. A literal devil who is our adversary (Gen. 3:1-5; Job 1:6-7; Matt. 4:1-11)
13. A literal heaven for the redeemed and a literal hell for the lost (Matt. 25:41-46; Phil. 3:20-21)
14. The infallible rule of interpretation of scripture to be scripture itself (2 Peter 1:20-21; 3:16)
15. The requirement of implicit obedience to the expressed commands of Christ as the standard by which He will judge our love to Him. (John 14:15, 21, 23)

We believe the Bible is the only authority for defining marriage which was created and ordained by God directly. We hold that marriage is between one man and one woman, and that marriage is the only legitimate and accepted sexual relationship. (Lev. 18:22; Rom. 1:26-28; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:10-11; 1 Cor. 7:2; Mark 10:6-9; Heb. 13:1-25; Jude 1:7)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For Office Use:

Roots Class Instructors: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Interviewing Elder/Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Membership Certificate presented: date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



## **SAYSF MEMBERSHIP PROCESS FOR MINORS AND YOUNG ADULTS**

Scripture indicates all believers are to gather themselves together with fellow believers, and SAYSF believes this includes binding themselves together with local believers through formal church membership. SAYSF Bible Church welcomes all who have acknowledged their reconciliation with God the Father through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and have been led by the Spirit to become part of the membership of SAYSF Bible church. Those who are minors (age 17 and under) and young adults (age 18 – 21) are particularly welcomed as church members. They represent the future of the church here on earth in general, SAYSF Bible Church in particular. The following paragraphs set forth SAYSF's process regarding the membership of minors and young adults:

Regardless of a minor's previous attendance, commitment, and participation in the worship and service activities of SAYSF, each individual is required to fulfill the membership requirements outlined in the church's Constitution and By-Laws (Section II – Membership). This includes, but is not limited to, completion of the SAYSF Roots class, and a brief Elder interview to confirm their testimony (Section 2.2 of the Constitution and By-Laws).

Upon reaching their 18th birthday, young adults need to make a prayerful decision regarding their commitment to SAYSF, and their desire and leading to join the membership. Minors and young adults who are involved in a church ministry (approved child care worker, teacher, assistant teacher or Children's Church worker, special music, ushering, etc.) can continue in that ministry without becoming a member of SAYSF Bible Church until their 19th birthday. If they have not completed the membership process by their 19th birthday, they shall be encouraged to continue to participate in the worship, instruction and fellowship activities of the church. However they shall forego participation in any church ministry in which they have been involved, until such time as the membership process is complete.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) shall be informed and involved with the church, as deemed appropriate, in all church disciplinary issues involving their children under the age of 21 who are still living at home.

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# MINISTRY SCREENING FORM

SAYSF Bible Church - May 2007

**Confidential**

All applicants shall complete this application for any position (volunteer or compensated) involving the supervision or custody of minors. This form is being used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs and use our facilities. This is not an employment application form. Persons seeking position in the church as a paid employee shall be required to complete an employment application in addition to this screening form.

**CURRENT INFORMATION: (Please Print)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Present address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you lived at the present address? \_\_\_\_\_

Please give information regarding your previous address if you have been at your current address less than 2 years.

Previous address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_ (Note: This information will remain in a locked file cabinet.)

Identity must be confirmed with a driver's license. Lic#: \_\_\_\_\_

State Issued: \_\_\_\_\_

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime? No \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ (If Yes, please explain.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**CHURCH REFERENCE: (Last church if possible. If no church, list a personal reference.)**

Church Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you known this reference? \_\_\_\_\_

**CHURCH HISTORY AND PRIOR WORK WITH CHILDREN OR YOUTH:**

List other churches you have attended regularly in the last 5 years: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
List all previous church work involving children or youth: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
List all previous non-church work involving children or youth: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
List any gifts, training, education, or other factors that have prepared you for children or youth work: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references, or churches listed in this application to provide SAYSF with any information (including opinions) regarding my character and fitness for work with children age Nursery through Teens. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by SAYSF Bible Church, I hereby release any individual, church, youth organization, charity, employer, reference or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization. I waive any right to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me in this application.**

**Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the policies of SAYSF Bible Church and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church.**

**I further state that I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF AND I SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN FREE ACT. This is a legally binding agreement, which I have read and understand.**

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Office Use Only:**

References Checked

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Caller: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendices List**

- A. SAYSF Early History
- B. Expanded Doctrinal Statement
- C. The Missions Policy of SAYSF Bible Church
- D. SAYSF Bible Church Looks at Water Baptism
- E. SAYSF Bible Church Looks at the Lord's Supper
- F. Definition of Specific Spiritual Gifts
- G. SAYSF Bible Church Looks at the Gift of Tongues
- H. Further Explanation of the Role of Elders
- I. How the Elders Inform
- J. Characteristics, Qualities, and Ministries of an Elder
- K. Problems Requiring Discipline
- L. The Basic Approach to Counseling of the Pastoral/Elder Staff of SAYSF Bible Church
- M. Ministry Guidelines for Members of SAYSF Bible Church
- N. Christian Education (C. E.) Team
- O. SAYSF Child Policies
- P. Child Abuse

## **Appendix A: SAYSF Early History**

Theron Wesley Davidson, lovingly known as “T”, came to Pax River in 1946 as a young navy officer. T had received the Lord at the age of nine in a small country church in New York and at age thirteen was already enjoying using his gift of evangelism to serve the Lord.

T’s arrival to St. Mary’s opened many opportunities to work with young people. It didn’t take him long to see the need for a Youth Bible camp. Facing obstacles did not hinder him from making his vision of a summer camp a reality. Land was offered for use on the St. Mary’s River which he cleared himself. In August of 1947, he and friends from NY, Barbara Jean (Dolly) Brown, Gould & Dorothy Brown (Dolly’s Parents), and Winnie Bower, set up tents and worked together to open the first KAMP SAYSF. Seventeen young people came to Christ that summer.

T’s attempt to purchase this property failed, but his vision did not. In 1948 he purchased thirteen acres in Lexington Park (where the present SAYSF Bible Church is located). He began to cut down trees and with help from young men from the Navy base, cleared the land, built roads, and erected buildings. Camp was held on this new site that summer and for about twenty years to follow.

T married Dolly Brown in 1951 and they began holding Sunday services and Bible studies in their home. Later that year this fellowship of believers (called The Lexington Park Christian Assembly) moved to the camp buildings. The dining hall served as the sanctuary for many years and was known in the community as SAYSF Chapel. In 1979 a new church building was added to the chapel and the name was changed to SAYSF Bible Church. In March of 1992, Faith Bible Church was planted in Mechanicsville as an outreach of the SAYSF ministry.

Many lives have been touched by the ministries of SAYSF. T’s Chalk Art talent and his gift of evangelism have been instrumental in winning hundreds to Christ. Dolly’s musical abilities have beautifully complimented the services and touched many hearts. Hundreds have been helped and blessed by the SON-KISS ministry as many have traveled to help others rebuild their homes and lives.

Praise God for His vision, His strength, His encouragement, and His power that make all things possible. Praise God for His people, like T, Dolly and many others who were faithful and willing to be used by Him. Praise God for SAYSF Bible Church and its ever-growing family of believers.

## **Appendix B: Expanded Doctrinal Statement**

(Taken from Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **THE SCRIPTURE**

We believe that all “Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” by which we understand the whole Bible is inspired in the sense that holy men of God “were moved by the Holy Spirit” to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings—historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic—as appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe that the whole Bible in the originals is therefore without error. We believe that all the Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming, and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read, or understood, until it leads to Him. We also believe that all Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction. (Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22-23; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 2:13; 10:11; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21.)

### **THE GODHEAD (THE TRINITY)**

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and that these three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence, and obedience. (Matt. 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:14; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:4-6.)

### **ANGELS, FALLEN AND UNFALLEN**

We believe that God created an innumerable company of sinless, spiritual beings, known as angels; that one, “Lucifer, son of the morning”—the highest in rank—sinned through pride, thereby becoming Satan; that a great company of the angels followed him in his moral fall, some of whom became demons and are active as his agents and associates in the prosecution of his unholy purposes, while others who fell are “reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” (Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:11-19; 1 Tim. 3:6; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6.)

We believe that Satan is the originator of sin, and that, under the permission of God, he through subtlety, led our first parents into transgression, thereby accomplishing their moral fall and subjecting them and their posterity to his own power; that he is the enemy of God and the people of God, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; and that he who in the beginning said, “I will be like the most-High,” in his warfare appears as an angel of light, even counterfeiting the works of God by fostering religious movements and systems of doctrine, which systems in every case are characterized by a denial of the efficacy (effectiveness) of the blood of Christ and of salvation by grace alone. (Gen. 3:1-19; Rom. 5:12-14; 2 Cor. 4:3-4; 11:13-15; Eph. 6:10-12; 2 Thes. 2:4; 1 Tim. 4:1-3.)

We believe that Satan was judged at the Cross, though not then executed, and that he, a usurper, now rules as the “god of this world; that, at the second coming of Christ, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years, and after the thousand years he will be loosed for a little season and then “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone,” where he “shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” (Col. 2:15; Rev. 20:1-3, 10.)

We believe that a great company of angels kept their holy estate and are before the throne of God, from whence they are sent forth as ministering spirits to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. (Luke 15:10; Eph. 1:21; Heb. 1:14; Rev. 7:12.)

We believe that man was made lower than the angels; and that, in His incarnation, Christ took for a little time this lower place that he might lift the believer to His own sphere above the angels. (Heb. 2:6-10.)

## **MAN CREATED AND FALLEN (TOTAL DEPRAVITY)**

We believe that man was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, and that he fell through sin, and, as a consequence of his sin, lost his spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and that he became subject to the power of the devil. We also believe that this spiritual death, or total depravity of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad apart from divine grace. (Gen. 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Ps. 14:1-3; 51:5; Jer. 17:9; John 3:6; 5:40; 6:35; Rom. 3:10-19, 23; 5:12; 6:13; 8:6-7; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:22-24; Col. 3:1-10; 1 Tim. 5:6; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 John 3:8.)

## **THE DISPENSATIONS**

We believe that the dispensations are stewardships by which God administers His purpose on the earth through man under varying responsibilities. We believe that the changes in the dispensational dealings of God with man depend on changed conditions or situations in which man is successively found with relation to God, and that these changes are the result of the failures of man and the judgments of God. We believe that different administrative responsibilities of this character are manifest in the biblical record, that they span the entire history of mankind, and that each ends in the failure of man under the respective test and in an ensuing judgment from God. We believe that three of these dispensations or rules of life are the subject of extended revelation in the Scriptures, viz., the dispensation of the Mosaic Law, the present dispensation of grace, and the future dispensation of the millennial kingdom. We believe that these are distinct and are not to be intermingled or confused, as they are chronologically successive.

We believe that the dispensations are neither ways of salvation nor different methods of administering the so-called Covenant of Grace. They are not in themselves dependent on covenant relationships but are ways of life and responsibility to God, which test the submission of man to His revealed will during a particular time. We believe that if man does trust in his own efforts to gain the favor of God or salvation under any dispensational test, because of inherent sin his failure to satisfy fully the just requirements of God is inevitable and his condemnation sure.

We believe that according to the “eternal purpose” of God (Eph. 3:11) salvation in the divine reckoning is always “by grace through faith,” and rests upon the basis of the shed blood of Christ. We believe that God has always been gracious, regardless of the ruling dispensation, but that man has not at all times been under an administration or stewardship of grace as is true in the present dispensation. (1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 3:1-10; Col. 1:25; 1 Tim. 1:4.)

We believe that it has always been true that “without faith it is impossible to please” God (Heb. 11:6), and that the principle of faith was prevalent in the lives of all the Old Testament saints. However, we believe that it was historically impossible that they should have had as the conscious object of their faith the incarnate, crucified Son, the Lamb of God (John 1:29), and that it is evident that they did not comprehend as we do that the sacrifices depicted the person and work of Christ. We believe also that they did not understand the redemptive significance of the prophecies or types concerning the sufferings of Christ (1 Pet. 1:10-12); therefore, we believe that their faith toward God was manifested in other ways as is shown by the long record in Hebrews 11:1-40. We believe further that their faith thus manifested was counted unto them for righteousness. (cf. Rom. 4:3 with Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:5-8; Heb. 11:7.)

## **JESUS CHRIST (THE FIRST ADVENT)**

We believe that, as provided and purposed by God and as preannounced in the prophecies of the Scriptures, the eternal Son of God came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill



prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end He was born of the virgin, and received a human body and a sinless human nature. (Luke 1:30-35; John 1:18; 3:16; Heb. 4:14-15.)

We believe that, on the human side, He became and remained a perfect man, but sinless throughout His life; yet He retained His absolute deity, being at the same time very God and very man, and His earth-life sometimes functioned within the sphere of that which was human and sometimes within the sphere of that which was divine. (Luke 2:40; John 1:1-2; Phil. 2:5-8.)

We believe that in fulfillment of prophecy He came to Israel as her Messiah-King, and that, being rejected of that nation, He, according to the eternal counsels of God, gave His life a ransom for all. (John 1:11; Acts 2:22-24; 1 Tim. 2:6.)

We believe that, in infinite love for the lost, He voluntarily accepted His Father's will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb and took away the sin of the world, bearing the holy judgments against sin which the righteousness of God must impose. His death was therefore substitutionary in the most absolute sense—the just for the unjust—and by His death He became the Savior of the lost. (John 1:29; Rom. 3:25-26; 2 Cor. 5:14; Heb. 10:5-14; 1 Pet. 3:18.)

We believe that, according to the Scriptures, He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He had lived and died, and that His resurrection body is the pattern of that body which ultimately will be given to all believers. (John 20:20; Rom. 4:24; 1 Cor. 15:21-22; Phil. 3:20-21.)

We believe that, on departing from the earth, He was accepted of His Father and that His acceptance is a final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished. (Heb. 1:3).

We believe that He became Head over all things to the church, which is His body, and in this ministry He ceases not to intercede and advocate for the saved. (Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1.)

### **SALVATION ONLY THROUGH CHRIST**

We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again, and that no degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven, but a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation, and only those thus saved are sons of God. We believe, also, that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying in our room and stead; and that no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, nor all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles can add in the very least degree to the value of the blood, or to the merit of the finished work wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper deity with perfect and sinless humanity. (Lev. 17:11; Isa. 64:6; Matt. 26:28; John 3:7-18; Rom. 5:6-9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; 6:15; Eph. 1:7; Phil. 3:4-9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:18-19, 23.)

We believe that the new birth of the believer comes only through faith in Christ and the repentance is a vital part of believing, and is in no way, in itself, a separate and independent condition of salvation; nor are any other acts, such as confession, baptism, prayer, or faithful service, to be added to believing as a condition of salvation. (John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29; Acts 13:38-39; 16:31; Rom. 1:16-17; 3:21-26; 4:5; 10:4; Gal. 3:22; Col. 1:13-14; Heb. 9:22.)

## **THE EXTENT OF SALVATION**

We believe that when an unregenerate person exercises that faith in Christ which is illustrated and described as such in the New Testament, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life, and from the old creation into the new; being justified from all things accepted before the Father according as Christ His Son is accepted, loved as Christ is loved, having his place and portion as linked to Him and one with Him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ, and is therefore in no way required by God to seek a so-called "second blessing," or a "second work of grace." (John 3:3; 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:1, 9; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; Eph. 1:3; Col. 2:10; 1 John 4:17; 5:11-12.)

## **SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD**

We believe that all redeemed ones are called into a life of separation from all worldly and sinful practices. (Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 6:14; Jam. 4:4; 1 John 2:16.)

## **SANCTIFICATION**

We believe that sanctification, which is a setting-apart unto God, is threefold: It is already complete for every saved person because his position toward God is the same as Christ's position. Since the believer is in Christ, he is set apart unto God in the measure in which Christ is set apart unto God. We believe, however, that he retains his "sin nature," which cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing of the Christian in Christ is perfect, his present state is no more perfect than his experience in daily life. There is, therefore, a progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is to "grow in grace," and to "be changed" by the unhindered power of the Spirit. We believe, also, that the child of God will yet be fully sanctified in his state as he is now sanctified in his standing in Christ when he shall see his Lord and shall be "like Him." (John 17:17; 2 Cor. 3:18; 7:1; Eph. 4:24; 5:25-27; 1 Thes. 5:23; Heb. 10:10, 14; 12:10.)

## **ETERNAL SECURITY**

We believe that, because of the external purpose of God toward the objects of His love, because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless on the ground of the propitiatory (appeasing) blood of Christ, because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of God, because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, we and all true believers everywhere, once saved shall be kept saved forever. We believe, however, that God is a holy and righteous Father and that, since He cannot overlook the sin of His children, He will when they persistently sin chasten them and correct them in infinite love; but having undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He, who cannot fail, will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son. (John 5:24; 10:28-29; 13:1; 14:16-17; 17:11; Rom. 8:28; 1 Cor. 6:19; Eph. 1:13-14; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2; 5:13; Jude 24.)

## **ASSURANCE**

We believe it is the privilege, not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children filial (befitting a son or daughter) love, gratitude, and obedience. (Luke 10:22; 22:32; 2 Cor. 5:1, 6-8; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 10:22; 1 John 5:13.)

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the blessed Trinity, though omnipresent from all eternity, took up His abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost according to the divine promise, dwells in every believer, and by His baptism unites all to Christ in one body, and that He, as the Indwelling One, is the source of all power and all acceptable worship and service. We believe that He never takes His departure from the church, nor from the feeblest of the saints, but is ever present to testify of Christ; seeking to occupy believers with Him and not with themselves nor with their experiences. We believe that His abode in the world in this special sense will cease when Christ comes to receive His own at the completion of the church. (John 14:16-17; 16:7-15; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 2:9-14; 3:16; 6:19; Eph. 2:22; 2 Thes. 2:7.)

We believe that, in this age, certain well-defined ministries are committed to the Holy Spirit, and that it is the duty of every Christian to understand them and to be adjusted to them in his own life and experience. These ministries are the restraining of evil in the world to the measure of the divine will; the convicting of the world respecting sin, righteousness, and judgment; the regenerating of all believers; the indwelling and anointing of all who are saved, thereby sealing them unto the day of redemption; the baptizing into the one body of Christ of all who are saved; and the continued filling for power, teaching, and service of those among the saved who are yielded to Him and who are subject to His will. (John 3:6; 16:7-15; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:30; 5:18; 2 Thes. 2:7; 1 John 2:20-27.)

## **GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT**

We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healings were temporary. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism nor of the filling of the Spirit, and that the deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection. (Acts 4:8, 31; Rom. 8:23 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 13:8; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3-4.)

## **THE CHURCH, A UNITY OF BELIEVERS**

We believe that all who are united to the risen and ascended Son of God are members of the church which is the body and bride of Christ, which began at Pentecost and is completely distinct from Israel. Its members are constituted as such regardless of membership or nonmembership in the organized churches of earth. We believe that by the same Spirit all believers in this age are baptized into, and thus become, one body that is Christ's, whether Jew or Gentile, and having become members one of another, are under solemn duty to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian differences, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently. (Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:12-27; Eph. 1:20-23; 4:3-16; Col. 3:14-15; Heb. 10:24-25.)

We believe that designated leaders, or elders, who are responsible before God, are to lead and guide the local church as overseers. The elders give various responsibilities to other spiritual and capable men and women who serve together for development and growth of the congregation. (Acts 14:23; 20:17, 28; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:2-3.)

We believe that the teaching and pastoral ministry in the local congregation is the responsibility of the elders who work in conjunction with gifted people such as evangelists, pastors and teachers. Women share with men in various spiritual ministries, except for the authoritative teaching of the Scriptures to the whole congregation. (Rom. 16:1-5; Eph. 4:11-13; 1 Cor. 14:34-35; 1 Tim. 2:11-14.)

## **THE ORDINANCES**

We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only ordinances of the church and that they are a Scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age. (Matt. 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 8:12, 38; 10:47-48; 16:32-33; 18:7-8; 1 Cor. 11:23-28.)<sup>1</sup>

## **THE CHRISTIAN'S WALK**

We believe that we are called with a holy calling, to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. But the flesh with its fallen, Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, being with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord. (Rom. 6:11-13; 8:2, 4, 12-13; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 2:1-10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 John 1:4-7; 3:5-9.)

## **THE CHRISTIAN'S SERVICE**

We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit, and each is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit may will. In the apostolic church there were certain gifted men--apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers--who were appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints unto their work of the ministry. We believe also that today some men are especially called of God to be evangelists, pastors, and teachers, and that it is to the fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory that these shall be sustained and encouraged in their service for God, (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4-11 Eph. 4:11.)

We believe that, wholly apart from salvation benefits which are bestowed equally upon all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his service for his Lord, and that these rewards will be bestowed at the judgment seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself. (1 Cor. 3:9-15; 9:18-27; 2 Cor. 5:10.)

## **THE GREAT COMMISSION**

We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth of His Father into the world. We believe that, after they are saved, they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses, and that their primary purpose in life should be to make Christ known to the whole world. (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; John 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:11.)

## **THE RAPTURE (THE BLESSED HOPE)**

We believe that, according to the Word of God, the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive to Himself into heaven both His own who are alive and remain unto His coming, and also all who have fallen asleep in Jesus, and that this event is the blessed hope set before us in the Scripture, and for this we should be constantly looking. (John 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thes. 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14.)

## **THE TRIBULATION**

We believe that the translation of the church will be followed by the fulfillment of Israel's seventieth week (Dan. 9:27; Rev. 6:1-19:21) during which the church, the body of Christ, will be in heaven. The whole period of Israel's seventieth week will be a time of judgment on the whole earth, at the end of

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<sup>1</sup> We have deleted the term "sacrament" which appeared in the original DTS document.

which the times of the Gentiles will be brought to a close. The latter half of this period will be the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30:7), which our Lord called the great tribulation (Matt. 24:15-21). We believe that universal righteousness will not be realized previous to the second coming of Christ, but that the world is day by day ripening for judgment and that the age will end with a fearful apostasy.

### **THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST**

We believe that the period of great tribulation in the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went, in person on the clouds of heaven, and with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age, to bind Satan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, to restore Israel to her own land and to give her the realization of God's covenant promises, and to bring the whole world to the knowledge of God. (Deut. 30:1-10; Isa. 11:9; Ezek. 37:21-28; Matt. 24:15-25:46; Acts 1:11; 15:16-17; Rom. 8:19-23; 11: 25-27; 1 Thes. 1:9-10; 4:16-17; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Rev. 19:11-21.)

### **THE ETERNAL STATE**

We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own, whereupon soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory; but the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. (Luke 16:19-26; 23:42; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:4-15.)

## Appendix C: SAYSF Bible Church Missions Policy

### THE PURPOSE

This statement of policy applies to the function of the Missions Team, the Elders, the pastoral staff and the congregation in matters relating to the following:

1. Missions goals of SAYSF Bible Church
2. Work and responsibility of the Missions Team
3. Financial support of missionaries and mission agencies
4. Screening of new missionary candidates and the evaluating of missionaries currently supported by SAYSF Bible Church
5. Short-Term Missions

### THE SCRIPTURAL PURPOSES FOR INVOLVEMENT IN MISSIONS

Jesus commanded us in the Great Commission to go and make disciples of all nations:

*“Go therefore and **make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.**”*

*(Matthew 28:19-20 ESV, emphasis added)*

*“And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world, and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation’”*

*(Mark 16:15 ESV)*

*“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and **you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.**”*

*(Acts 1:8 ESV, emphasis added)*

### MISSIONS TERMS AND CONCEPTS

The grammatical emphasis of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) is on making disciples throughout the earth. This, plus the examples in the New Testament Gospels, Book of Acts, and the Epistles provide the basis for SAYSF’s involvement in Missions throughout the earth. The terms and concepts contained provided below are intended to guide individual saints and the body of believers known as SAYSF Bible Church in discerning the missions endeavors the Lord would have them support and personally become involved in, and guide SAYSF leaders in the stewardship of the time, talents and treasure of the local body with respect to missions.

#### 1. Key Missions Terms<sup>1</sup>

A. **Essential missionary task:** to establish a viable indigenous church planting movement

1. **Viable** – can grow on its own
2. **Indigenous** – not seen as foreign
3. **Church planting movement** – churches that reproduce intergenerational fellowships that can evangelize the rest of the people group

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<sup>1</sup> Terms and concepts are from “Finishing the Task” by Ralph D. Winter and Bruce A. Koch, Perspectives Reader pg. 538. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition © 2009

- B. **Unreached/Unengaged People Group:** An ethnic group in which there is no viable indigenous church planting movement
  - C. **Missiological Breakthrough:** When the essential missionary task has been achieved in a given people
  - D. **Frontier mission:** cross-cultural evangelism where no missiological breakthrough has been made
  - E. **Regular mission:** cross-cultural worker evangelizing across cultures, if possible in association with same-culture workers, where a missiological breakthrough has already occurred.
  - F. **Same culture mission:** a same-culture worker evangelizing where a missiological breakthrough has already occurred
2. **Missions Concepts**
- A. **Frontier missions** – direct personal involvement with a work leading to a “missiological breakthrough” (establishing a church-planting movement) among an unreached people. This may include:
    1. Communication of the Gospel in the hearer’s heart language
    2. Discipleship of new believers in the hearer’s heart language
    3. Discipleship or biblical equipping of national pastors, evangelists, disciple makers
    4. Supporting functions (e.g. maintenance, administration, etc.)
    5. Meeting the physical needs of the unreached people
  - B. **Regular Missions** – direct personal involvement with an established church-planting movement. This may include:
    1. Support of missionaries working as part of a church planting movement
    2. Evangelism or discipleship among a reached people in their national or trade language
    3. Support of national pastors, evangelists, disciple among reached people
    4. Meeting the physical needs of the reached people
    5. Supporting functions (e.g. maintenance, administration, etc.)
  - C. **Same-culture Missions**
    1. Same-culture mission among reached people
    2. Supporting national missionaries in their own culture

The Saints and leadership of SAYSF Bible Church shall follow the following concepts when personally and collectively seeking the Lord’s will in determining missions endeavors to prayerfully and financially support, and to become directly involved with.

1. While affirming the value of frontier missions, regular missions and evangelism, we believe that it is important to prioritize transmitting the Gospel among unreached people groups, i.e. frontier missions.
2. While the missionary efforts can take many forms, we believe that we should prioritize efforts to make disciples for Jesus Christ. Note that these efforts may include creative ways to access the culture (e.g. medical, business-as-missions, clean water projects, disaster relief, etc. which may not involve traditional church-planting activities.

## **POLICY OBJECTIVES**

1. To define clear lines of responsibility for all missions program participants, including mission agencies, missionaries, mission team members, and church members.
2. To empower the Missions Team in carrying out Elder Policy in a clear and consistent manner.
3. To facilitate accountability and communication to the church's leadership, congregation, missionaries, and missions agencies.
4. To provide guidelines in making important missions decisions on a factual, logical, spiritual, and consistent basis.
5. To build confidence and cohesiveness within the total church ministry.

## **POLICY 1**

1. THE POLICY STATED:

**SAYSF Bible Church purposes to equip its members to go into all the world to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) and to support this through finances, prayer and other tangible help.**

2. IMPLEMENTATION

- A. A Missions Team will be established by the Elders and shall function under the oversight of the Elders. The Missions Team shall be responsible for carrying out the church program to fulfill its goals for world missions.
- B. The Missions Team will be led by a Team Leader appointed by the Elders. There shall be a minimum of three members on this team with others added as function demands. It may be composed of people from different age groups in the church, both men and women. Each member should have an interest in missions, maturity in spiritual matters and judgment, and willing to commit the time required for the team work. These members shall be recruited by the Missions Team, recommended by the Team Lead, and approved by the Elders as needed.
- C. Overall Missions Team Objectives:
  1. Advance local and world evangelization by developing and carrying out an outreach plan for sending and supporting missionaries around the world.
  2. Educate every believer in the church concerning the Scriptural basis, strategy, and global progress of missions.
  3. Pray regularly for every missionary, mission field, and project with which we are involved.
  4. Maintain a personal relationship with our missionaries and provide opportunities for mutual ministry with our local body.
  5. Involve our church body in local and world evangelism by giving, praying, and personal involvement with missionaries, personal witnessing, and developing their gifts for service.
  6. Develop guidelines and policies for missionary support within the framework of a total missions strategy.
  7. Encourage the local church body to consider vocational Christian service.
  8. Evaluate our missionary program regularly for its effectiveness.
  9. Promote missions to the entire body, including all age groups.



#### D. Responsibilities of the Missions Team

1. Recommend to the Elders various missionaries, projects, and mission boards to be supported by the church. In carrying out these functions, the team shall:
  - a. Screen and evaluate prospective missionaries regarding need for support, and agreement with SAYSF Bible Church doctrine, priorities, and Mission objectives.
    - 1) Applicants must submit a written Application for Support to the Missions Team. The Application will include a recommendation from the sending organization and a signed affirmation of agreement with the SAYSF Bible Church expanded doctrinal statement.
    - 2) Applicants must have a personal interview with the Missions Team and Elders.
    - 3) Upon approval by the Missions Team and Elders, the candidate will be presented to the congregation.
    - 4) Supported missionaries are required to submit an Annual Missionary Report to the Missions Team.
  - b. Evaluate current missionaries, mission boards, and projects and recommend continued support or termination to the Elders. Good stewardship requires that we invest only in those persons who are sound in faith, diligent, and effective in the ministry. In addition, since those whom we support are a very vital part of our body, it is essential that they be willing to communicate with us freely and regularly concerning both their support needs and the status of their ministry. To ensure that our support is directed only to such persons, the guidelines discussed in “Causes for Missionary Termination” will be used in recommending termination of support.
  - c. Research and document approved mission agencies and projects for future long-term and short-term mission’s consideration.
  - d. Plan and implement programs which will increase missions awareness and interest of the entire church body.
  - e. Stimulate interest in our people going to the field and provide opportunities that would nurture and develop the gifts needed for missionary service, through such programs as the Short-Term Missions Program.
  - f. Administer interaction with a continuing relationship between the missionaries and the church, to include:
    - 1) Prepare and maintain an official Missionary Prayer List composed of all missionaries and organizations supported by the church and other missionaries toward whom the church has a responsibility as determined by the Missions Team and Elders. Prayer partners will be sought for each missionary on the list.
    - 2) Coordination of missionary activities with the body.
  - g. Provide written reports of mission’s activities to the Elders and staff. Provide highlight reports via Ministry Spotlights to the congregation periodically.
  - h. Evaluate one-time needs from individual SAYSF supported missionaries that will be communicated to the congregation, encouraging them to respond, as they are led by the Spirit.
  - i. Manage church missions budget, including recommendations for new annual budgets.
  - j. Develop and recommend revisions to the SAYSF missions policy and procedures for approval by the Elders.

- k. Recruit and recommend Mission Team members for approval by the Elders.
- l. Administer missionary correspondence (excluding financial transactions).
- m. Develop and maintain a data file of currently supported missionaries and mission agencies.
- n. Develop and coordinate SAYSF's Short-Term Missions Program.
- o. Develop a means to assure that every missionary is prayed for by the church and that all SAYSF Saints have an opportunity to be involved in a prayer ministry for missionaries.
- p. Publicize missionary and missions agency prayer requests to the church body and inform them of answers.
- q. Coordinate remembering the missionaries on special occasions such as Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries, etc.

## **POLICY 2**

### **1. THE POLICY STATED:**

**The Expanded Doctrinal Statement of SAYSF Bible Church is the foundational document used for missionary and agency approvals.**

### **2. IMPLEMENTATION**

- A. Agency doctrinal statements must not disagree with Expanded SAYSF Bible Church doctrine.
- B. All SAYSF Bible Church budget-supported missionaries are required to provide a completed Annual Missionary Report (Appendix C Attachment 1) to the Missions Team. This annual report shall include their signature indicating, without reservation, they agree with the SAYSF Bible Church Expanded Doctrinal Statement. Missionaries being considered for support by SAYSF Bible Church for the first time, or reinstatement are also required to sign a copy of the Expanded Doctrinal Statement attested to their agreement, without reservation, prior to consideration for support.

## **POLICY 3**

### **1. THE POLICY STATED:**

**The financial structure for the missions program shall be derived from the general church budget.**

### **2. IMPLEMENTATION**

- A. The Missions Team is responsible for submitting an annual budget recommendation with an explanation of changes to the Elders prior to the Budget Committee during the last quarter of the year, for the year to follow. Upon church adoption of its yearly budget, the team will notify the supported missionaries, in written form, of the support for the year.
- B. All financial commitments of support to missionaries, boards, and projects will be made for a four-year term of service, or a specified period of time, and will be considered for continued support after evaluation.
- C. General Missions Fund Usage. This Missions Team will use these funds for advancing missions commitment among SAYSF members, including but not limited to: world-missions-oriented literature expenses, conference and administrative fees. A simple majority of the

team must approve the proposed usage. These funds are not typically used for support of individual missionary needs except for urgent, emergency needs as decided by a simple majority of the Missions Team.

#### **POLICY 4**

1. THE POLICY STATED:

**Exceptions to SAYSF Missions policy require concurrence of the Elders.**

2. IMPLEMENTATION

Requests for SAYSF Missions policy exceptions will be made by the Missions Team to the Elders.

#### **POLICY 5: CAUSES FOR MISSIONARY TERMINATION**

1. Missionary support will be terminated for the following reasons and with these conditions:

A. Doctrinal disagreement or practice in dispute with the Expanded Doctrinal Statement of SAYSF Bible Church.

B. Those who evidence moral deviation.

C. Those leaving missionary service to be terminated within 3 months.

D. Those who have left the field for a period of greater than 12 months, with the following exceptions shall be terminated within 3 months.

1. Returned for illness.

2. Undergoing training or teaching directly related to their missionary service and who intend to return for full time service upon completion of their educational training.

3. Granted an extended furlough and are serving their mission board during that time. For example: Persons who have returned to care for aging parents and remain with their mission board.

2. Missionaries will be re-evaluated for continued support for the following reasons:

A. Those who are terminated by their mission board or who are placed under home church discipline.

B. Those who change the focus of their mission.

C. Those who change mission boards.

D. Those who have completed their one-term of service or specified period of time for which financial commitment was made.

E. Those who fail to complete and submit an Annual Missionary Report (Appendix C, Attachment 1) to the Missions Team.

#### **SHORT-TERM MISSIONS PROGRAM**

SAYSF Bible Church actively encourages its people to consider whether God is leading them to participate in short-term missionary activity under the direction of an approved mission or missionary agency for the following reasons:

1. To increase the church's total missionary impact, insight and awareness.

2. To gain a greater personal burden to participate in the missionary ministry by praying, giving, and going.

3. To render valuable assistance to a worthy missionary project.

The Missions Team will organize and facilitate annual short-term missions opportunities for the church body. These trips should be aimed toward SAYSF's budget-supported missions/missionaries when practical. All budgeted short-term missions funds shall normally be used toward the trips planned by the Missions Team.

In addition, the Missions Team will provide guidance and assistance in choosing a missions project, communicating with the mission/missionary involved, planning, and praying for other short-term projects God may direct in the lives of SAYSF members. Those seeking worthy missionary trips should seek the counsel and support of the Missions Team BEFORE committing to any short-term missions endeavor. In rare cases, the Missions Team may use unobligated short-term funds in support of these outside trips.

Those wishing to be part of a trip shall fill out and submit a Short-Term Missions Application (Appendix C, Attachment 2), within whatever deadlines are required by the Missions Team. All applications for trips will be evaluated using the SAYSF Short-Term Missions Applicant Evaluation Policy (Appendix C, Attachment 3). Evaluation is intended for the purpose of mutual encouragement, ensuring that those we support going (possibly out-to-country) on potentially life-changing trips are mature and prepared; evaluation is not intended to be a "hammer" to discourage applicants.

## **VOCATIONAL MISSIONS GUIDELINES**

SAYSF Bible Church actively encourages its people to consider whether God is leading them to invest their lives in vocational missionary activity. All vocational missionary appointees of SAYSF Bible Church must meet the following requirements:

1. Appointee(s) must be able to indicate full agreement with the Expanded Doctrinal Statement by signing an annual statement of agreement. If the appointee(s) consider SAYSF Bible Church as "their sending church" they must be members in good standing.
2. Appointee(s) should have at least one year of formal Bible training in an undergrad setting, or equivalent, approved by the Elders. The Elders may grant exceptions, on a case-by-case basis.
3. Appointee(s) are expected to show evidence of seriously praying about, thinking through and preparing for full-time vocational missionary work. Some of the key aspects of preparation include:
  - A. Researching the country and people God is calling the appointee(s) to serve.
  - B. Recognition of personality and spiritual gifts.
  - C. Development of a preliminary ministry plan explaining what the appointee(s) will do in the field and how they will do it.
  - D. Demonstrate a willingness and commitment to language learning, if necessary.
  - E. Demonstrate a good knowledge of Scripture.
  - F. Demonstrate physical, mental, and emotional health required to accomplish the work within the ministry plan.
4. Appointee(s) must be members of a missions/missionary agency approved by the Missions Team. The Missions Team will provide assistance in finding a missions agency equipped to assist the appointee(s) serve as God as has called them.

The Missions Team will carefully review and investigate the worthiness of each vocational missionary request for support. The Word of God and the Missions Policies of SAYSF Bible Church will be used as the guide in investigating each vocational missionary support request. If the request is

determined, by the Missions Team, to support the overall direction and goals of SAYSF Bible Church, the request will be forwarded to the Elders for consideration as a potential missionary appointee. If the vocational missionary receives Elder approval, they will be introduced to the SAYSF congregation as a potential vocational missionary seeking support. The introduction may include participation in the World Christian Forum and other public venues allowing the missionary to make a formal presentation for support.

Following a formal public introduction, the Missions Team may decide to recommend the vocational missionary for official support by including them in the annual budget recommendation with an explanation of the support addition to the Elders prior to the Budget Committee during the last quarter of the year, for the year to follow. Upon church adoption of its yearly budget, the team will notify the vocational missionary, in written form, of the support for the year. All financial commitments of support to the missionary will be made for a four-year term of service, or a specified period of time, and will be considered for continued support after re-evaluation.

Good stewardship principles require that SAYSF Bible Church invest only in those persons who are sound in faith, diligent, and effective in the ministry. In addition, since those whom we support are a very vital part of our body, it is essential that they be willing to communicate with us freely and regularly concerning both their support needs and the status of their ministry. The guidelines discussed in “Causes for Missionary Termination” above will be used to ensure budgeted support is directed to such persons.

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# SAYSF Bible Church Annual Missionary Report

(Appendix C, Attachment 1)

This *Annual Missionary Report* is required of each Missionary supported by SAYSF as part of the annual budget. The value of each Missionary in the body of Christ is greatly appreciated by SAYSF. Your work on the mission field encourages us, and this report helps the SAYSF Saints, members of the Missions Team and Elders understand and pray for your particular ministry. This form is provided to assist each supported missionary in preparing their *Annual Missionary Report* to SAYSF, and ensures the report covers the areas of particular interest to the Elders, Missions Team and Saints are covered.

SAYSF Missions Team

**Report date:**

### **Missionary and Mission Field Identification**

**Name(s):**

**Mission field:**

**Mission agency:**

**If children(s) location(s) are different, please identify:**

### **Praises, Prayers and Petitions**

**Describe what you are praising God for today:**

**Describe your most significant answer(s) to prayer this past year:**

**Describe any frustrations or areas of discouragement you would like to share:**

**Vision, Goal and Achievements**

**Describe the major goals of your ministry during the past year, and to what extent you were able to achieve them:**

**Describe the highlight(s) of your ministry during the past year:**

**Describe your ministry goals for the coming year: (Identify any changes expected in your ministry.)**

**Describe your long range vision (3-5 years) for your ministry: (Identify any changes expected in your ministry.)**

**Identify any other aspects of your ministry you would like to inform us of:**



**Health**

Describe the status of you and your family's health:

--

**Finances and Other Support**

Identify your missions present recommended monthly support: \$ _____ per month	Identify your current level of monthly support: \$ _____ per month
Does your missions agency have a retirement plan? <b>YES / NO</b> (circle one)	Do you participate in the program? <b>YES / NO</b> (circle one)
Has your missions agency changed their retirement plan recently? <b>YES / NO</b> (circle one) If YES, please identify changes:	
Identify any special needs, financial or otherwise, at this time:	

**Short-Term Missionary Team Visit**

Any interest in having a visit by a SAYSF Short-Term Missionary Team? <b>YES / NO</b> (circle one) If YES, please identify the skills and size of team you recommend.
---

**Overseas Missionary Furlough Plans**

Identify your next scheduled furlough dates: <b>From:</b> _____ <b>To:</b> _____
<b>Planned location of furlough base of operation:</b>
What can SAYSF do to assist in your furlough plans?
Do you have any interest in ministry at SAYSF during your furlough?

**Stateside Missionary SAYSF Visit**

Are you interested in ministry at SAYSF for a weekend or during our annual Missions Conference? <b>YES / NO</b> (circle one) If YES, describe your availability:
Do you plan on being in the vicinity of SAYSF during the next year? <b>YES / NO</b> (circle one) If YES, identify the dates:

**SAYSF Expanded Doctrinal Statement**

My signature below indicates that, in all good conscience, I agree with SAYSF's Expanded Doctrinal Statement: <b>YES / NO</b> (circle one) If No, please explain:
---

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## SAYSF Bible Church Short-Term Missions Application (Appendix C, Attachment 2)

### Application Deadlines

Short-Term Missions applications are to be submitted to the SAYSF Missions Team in accordance with the following schedule:

<u>Date of Mission Trip</u>	<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Date of Mission Trip</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Between April 1 <sup>st</sup> – August 30 <sup>th</sup>	January 10 <sup>th</sup>	Between September 1 <sup>st</sup> – March 30 <sup>th</sup>	July 10 <sup>th</sup>

<b>Date:</b>		<b>Deadline:</b>
<b>Applicant's Name:</b>		
<b>Address:</b>		<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Email address:</b>		
<b>Passport Number:</b>		<b>Passport Expiration Date:</b>
<b>Marital Status:</b>		
<b>Health Status:</b> <small>(Circle One)</small> Excellent Good Fair Poor		<b>If "Poor" explain:</b>
<b>Blood Type:</b>		<b>Any handicap or other medical conditions?</b>
<b>Any allergies, illnesses or other related health issues?</b>		
<b>Primary Physician:</b>		
<b>Address:</b>		<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Health Insurance Company:</b>		
<b>Policy Number:</b>		<b>Group Number:</b>
<b>Address:</b>		<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Does your medical insurance cover you outside the U.S?</b>		<b>YES / NO</b> <small>(Circle ONE)</small>
<b>Emergency Contact:</b>		<b>Relationship:</b>
<b>Address:</b>		<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Email Address:</b>		
<b>Parent/Guardian Name: (if applicable)</b>		
<b>Address:</b>		<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Email address:</b>		

<b>Dates of Travel:</b> From: To:		<b>Mission location &amp; Name</b>	
<b>Briefly describe trip's purpose/objective:</b> (Use additional sheets of paper if required.)			
<b>Total financial need:</b> \$	<b>Amount raised:</b> \$	<b>Requested financial support:</b> \$	
<b>How do you plan to raise the difference?</b>		<b>Date funds needed:</b>	
<b>Other needs:</b>			

### **Training, Experience & Skills**

<b>Summarize your educational and/or vocational training:</b>
<b>Have you been on a mission trip before? If so, where and when?</b>
<b>Describe your previous ministry experience, including cross-cultural experience, if any:</b>
<b>What strengths and/or skills do you have that will help you serve effectively on this particular mission team?</b>

### **Church Affiliation and Testimony** (Use additional sheets of paper if required.)

<b>What is your association with SAYSF?</b> (Include personal areas of responsibility and ministry.)
<b>Briefly describe your relationship with Jesus Christ:</b>
<b>How has God used you in other peoples' lives?</b>
<b>Have you led anyone to trust Jesus Christ as their personal Savior?</b>
<b>Describe your personal devotional life:</b>

**References: (Please provide three references.)**

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Email address:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Email address:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Email address:</b>	

**Supervising Church/Mission Agency/Group**

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Email address:</b>	<b>Web Site:</b>
<b>Name of Point of Contact:</b>	
<b>Email address:</b>	<b>Phone Number:</b>

**Trip Leader**

<b>Trip Leader's Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Email address:</b>	

**Covenant**

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby covenant with the SAYSF Missions Team that I will fully support this trip, faithfully fulfilling my role and placing the serving team needs above my own. I will immediately notify the SAYSF Missions Team of any changes to the planned trip.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date      \_\_\_\_\_ Date  
 Applicants Signature      Parent/Guardian Signature (If required)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date  
 Youth Leader Signature

<b>FOR MISSIONS TEAM USE ONLY</b>				
<b>Date Received:</b>	<b>Date Reviewed:</b>	<b>Disposition:</b>	<b>Funds Allotted:</b>	<b>Date Funds Sent:</b>
<b>Remarks:</b>				

## **SAYSF Short-Term Mission Trip Application Evaluation Policy** (Appendix C, Attachment 3)

(For use by the Missions Team and Elders in evaluating Short-Term Mission applications)

1. Applicant must present documentation to the Missions Team regarding their approval or invitation to serve by the hosting church, mission agency, or missionary, as applicable, with their application.
2. Applicant must be a member in good standing of SAYSF Bible Church who has demonstrated their accountability to the body for at least one year, or moving towards SAYSF membership and active in a ministry at SAYSF for at least a year. Applicants who are new to SAYSF, those with memberships of less than a year, are required to provide a letter of recommendation from their previous church.
3. Applicant must be approved by both the SAYSF Missions Team and the Elders.
4. Youth must have parental and preferably youth leader approval and support.
5. Applicant should show evidence of interest in, and an understanding of world missions. Applicants showing an interest in missions as a possible career will normally be given priority consideration.
6. Applicant should show evidence of: faithfulness in ministry, a cooperative spirit, submission to and respect for authority, the ability to laugh at oneself, and the fruits of the Spirit in their life. The candidate should also display cultural sensitivity.
7. Applicant for missionary service in a specific support role should show evidence of the basic capabilities/skills needed to fulfill the designated role or evidence they have received training sufficient to allow them to perform in the designated role. Full consideration is to be given to applicants where the purpose of short-term ministry includes training to develop the applicant's capabilities.
8. Applicant must agree that, if accepted, participation in any pre-trip orientation program is required.
9. Applicants who are married should demonstrate a strong and healthy marital relationship. For those in an unequally yoked marriage, both spouses must be supportive of the trip, especially when only one spouse is participating in the trip.
10. Applicants who are divorced must show an awareness of the hosting mission agency's policy concerning divorce, and that they are complying with policy.

The amount of funding assistance offered to any applicant from the "short-term missions" account will depend on the availability of funds and the number of applicants being considered. Funding assistance for any one applicant will normally not exceed 75% of the projected cost.

## Appendix D: SAYSF Bible Church Looks at Baptism

Water baptism is a well known practice of the Christian faith, yet it is poorly understood. Water baptism is commonly referred to as **believer's baptism**, **Christian baptism**, or just **baptism**. However, it is not to be confused **with baptism of/by the Spirit**.

The following is the SAYSF Bible Church position concerning the biblical teaching on water baptism.

### THE MEANING OF WATER BAPTISM

1. It is an outward, physical expression of an inward, spiritual reality.
2. It is a public declaration of a Christian's desire to be a disciple of Jesus Christ through this step of obedience.
3. It is an identification with Christ in His **death, burial, and resurrection**. This identification is symbolized in the believer being placed under water and then coming out as if alive from the dead. Baptism represents the death of the old sin-filled person and the birth of the new person in Christ (Romans 6:3-11; Colossians 2:12).

### IS WATER BAPTISM NECESSARY FOR SALVATION?

**Absolutely not!**

1. Water baptism is a public confession that saving faith has already taken place.
2. There are no righteous works a man can do to be saved (Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5).
3. Faith or belief in Jesus Christ is the only requirement for salvation (John 3:16; Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9). The thief on the cross illustrates this most graphically.
4. The **Book of Romans**, the manual of doctrine in the Bible, never designates baptism as necessary for justification. It is by faith and faith alone (Romans 5:1).
5. Paul summarizes the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 with no mention of baptism.
6. Paul said, "Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel" (1 Corinthians 1:17). Baptism was not a primary importance in Paul's mission.
7. The Gentiles in Acts 10:47-48 already possessed the Holy Spirit (were already saved – Romans 8:9) prior to their baptism.
8. Baptism is not a **requirement** for salvation, but should be a **result**.

### SHOULD INFANTS RECEIVE WATER BAPTISM?

1. There are **no explicit references** to infant baptism in the New Testament. There is no clear statement of any baby ever being baptized.
2. No person should be baptized who is not able to **understand** and **respond** personally to the gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. A genuine belief in Jesus Christ must precede baptism.
4. Salvation springs from the **new birth**, not **natural birth** (John 1:12-23; 3:5-7).
5. Water baptism does not **bring** salvation, rather it pictures a spiritual relationship which **begins with** salvation.
6. Infant baptism **makes water the Savior**, instead of the lord Jesus and implies that **Christ died in vain**.

## WHY SHOULD A CHRISTIAN RECEIVE WATER BAPTISM?

1. **Jesus Christ commanded it.** Christians should be baptized as an act of **obedience** to express the reality of their love for Christ (Matthew 28:18-20; John 14:15).
2. Jesus Christ is honored by the firm testimony of believers and their submission to Him. Baptism is not necessary for **salvation**, but it is for **submission**.

## THE FORMULA FOR BAPTISM

In the great commission, baptism is said to be in the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). In Acts 8:16, however, it is stated that the Samaritans were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Some have argued from this that, since the passage in Acts is later than that in Matthew, baptism should now be in the Name of the Lord Jesus alone and not in the Name of the Trinity. The argument is not well-founded, however, since no conflict is involved. The formula in Matthew includes the one in Acts. Therefore, if the former is used, there can be no possible question as to its validity.

## WHAT IS THE PROPER METHOD OR MODE OF WATER BAPTISM?

- 1 The **primary meaning** of the original Greek word “to baptize” is “**to dip**” or “**to immerse.**” The Greek language has special words for “sprinkle” and “pour,” and these are never used in connection with baptism.
- 2 When baptisms are described, the words “**in, into, out to,** and from” are used (Matthew 3:16; Acts 8:38, 39). These expressions are appropriate for immersion but not for sprinkling or pouring.
- 3 There was always the need for a **body of water** to be present in the New Testament baptisms (Mark 1:9-10; Acts 8:36-39). For example, John 3:23 says, “John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there.” No one in the New Testament was ever baptized beside a well or basin of water.
- 4 Immersion more accurately represents the truth portrayed, that is, **burial with Christ unto death and separation from the old life.**
- 5 The **Jews** baptized proselytes to Judaism by immersion.
- 6 Biblical historians admit that **the early church practiced immersion.**
- 7 The argument of **Romans 6** assumes baptism by immersion.

### Romans 6:1-14

1. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?
2. God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?
3. Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?
4. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
5. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:
6. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.
7. For he that is dead is freed from sin.
8. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we ; shall also live with him:
9. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.
10. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.
11. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.
12. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.
13. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.
14. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not unto the law, but under grace.



## Appendix E: SAYSF Bible Church Looks at the Lord's Supper

Water baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances of the Church. While water baptism sets forth the believer's union with Christ and is received but once in the life of the believer, the Lord's Supper is celebrated repeatedly, because it emphasizes the communion of Christ and His people. The following is the SAYSF Bible Church position concerning the biblical teaching on the Lord's Supper.

### COMMON NAMES FOR THIS ORDINANCE

1. **Communion** (1 Corinthians 10:16) expresses that common sharing faith and privilege of all God's people with the One of whom the elements speak. During communion, social distinctions are to be forgotten. All are thankful to be there, since all are partakers of the rich benefits purchased by the Savior's body and blood.
2. **The Sacrament** is a formal religious act that is sacred as a sign or symbol of a spiritual reality. Though not found in Scripture, it did come into early use. The "sacramentum" was the Roman soldier's oath of allegiance upon joining the army. By so doing, he passed from civilian to military life. For a long period of time, the ordinances of water baptism and the Lord's Supper clearly marked the separation between the Christian and the world which had rejected Christ.
3. **The Eucharist** is derived from the Greek word meaning "giving thanks." It is found in such passages as Matthew 26:27 and 1 Corinthians 14:16. In fact it is the usual word for thanks-giving in the New Testament (cf. Hebrews 13:15).
4. **The Lord's Supper** or **Lord's Table** (1 Corinthians 10:21) stands in vivid contrast to the table of demons. We are invited to fellowship with the Lord Himself and eat at His table.
5. **Breaking of Bread** emphasizes the simplicity of communion. Our Lord took two things right at hand and used them as the memorials of Himself.
6. **Remembrance Feast** commemorates the Lord's instruction, "this do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). This remembrance feast is only temporary; for in it, we do show or announce the Lord's death until He comes again. So this feast looks back to Calvary and forward to His second coming.

### THE LORD'S SUPPER AND THE PASSOVER

#### Similarities:

1. At the center of each is a memorial.
2. Both commemorate a birth (of a nation and of the Church).
3. Both involve death (of a lamb, of the Lamb of God).
4. Both commemorate a deliverance (Israel from Egypt, mankind from sin).

#### Differences:

##### The PASSOVER

1. To be remembered forever (Exodus 12:14)
2. Remembered yearly.
3. Remembers an event. (The Exodus)
4. Looked forward to a coming Redeemer.
5. Reminded of sins needing to be covered.

##### The LORD'S SUPPER

1. Remembered only until He comes.
2. Celebrated often (weekly-Acts 20:7).
3. Remembers a Person (Jesus Christ)
4. Looks backward to the finished work of our Redeemer.
5. Reminds of forgiveness accomplished.

## **PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR COMMUNION**

A holy life is the best preparation for a time of worship. The state of our heart is of prime importance when we come to Communion. We should be clean vessels ready to be filled. The precious ointment of worship must come from a broken vessel poured out upon the Lord in adoration.

One of the best ways to prepare for the Lord's Supper is to meditate upon His Word throughout the week. Those who are invited guests will soon discover that the measure of their preparation is the measure of their worship. When we come to the table with hearts prepared through meditation and reverence we can experience what those two disciples at Emmaus reported to the disciples back in Jerusalem, "he was known of them in breaking of bread" (Luke 24:35).

Focus on the Savior and you will not be disappointed in your time of worship. He is the center of the feast. His work is the reason for our praise. It is the Father's heart to seek out worshippers. So let God's character, promises, deeds, and presence fill your heart to overflowing.

## **FOUR "LOOKS" AT THE LORD'S SUPPER (From 1 Corinthians 11:23-34)**

- The **LOOK UP**. Our authority for observing Communion is directly from heaven (v. 23). Paul received directly from the ascended Lord his information about the Lord's Supper. Jesus expected this observance to be carried out. It was not commended to those who would follow Him; it was commanded.
- The **LOOK BACK**. "Ye do show the Lord's death." We look back to the Cross in holy wonder and appreciation, and seek afresh to grasp the love and grace displayed there. We seek to grasp a portion of the mystery of the divine atonement that was an absolute necessity to bring us to God. We meditate on His sufferings as our sacrifice and we commune with and worship the living Savior.
- The **LOOK FORWARD**. "Till He come." We eat of the Lord's Supper in anticipation of the return of the Lord. The Lord Himself will descend with a shout, and we shall rise to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). We anticipate that time when these symbols will no longer be required. In their place will be the substance.
- The **LOOK IN**. "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." We should examine our 1) companions of the week (Psalms 1:1), 2) habits (1 John 2:15), 3) thoughts (Proverbs 23:7), and 4) motives (Do we wish to see Jesus? or to be seen by men?). This self-examination will lead us to appear at the table with a clean heart and conscience ready to fellowship with the Lord as we partake of the elements that represent His body and blood.

## **THE PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE OF SAYSF BIBLE CHURCH**

As we enter into the Communion service one of the men will step forward and offer a word of reflection focusing on our Lord's great sacrifice made on our behalf. The reflection is offered in many different ways including the reading of Scripture, the sharing of a personal testimony, the singing of a selected hymn, and other methods. Following that he will give thanks for the loaf, which will then be broken and passed for each to partake. Each person may eat when they are ready. The same procedure will be followed for the cup (grape juice used).

Participation is open to all who have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and are living in fellowship with Him.

We observe the Lord's Supper at 9:20 am in the main sanctuary.

## **FAVORITE PASSAGES USED IN WORSHIP SERVICES**

1. Paul's instructions (1 Corinthians 11:23-34)
2. Prophecies regarding the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ (Psalm 22; Isaiah 53)
3. Types of Christ in the Old Testament:
  - a. The seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15)
  - b. Abraham offering Isaac (Genesis 22)
  - c. The Passover Lamb (Exodus 12)
4. The humility and exaltation of Jesus (Philippians 2)
5. The Person and Work of Christ (Colossians 1)
6. The Superiority of Christ (Hebrews)
7. The Worship of Christ (Revelation 4-5)
8. The Return of Christ (John 14:1-6)
9. The Reign of Christ (Revelation 19-22)

## Appendix F: Definition of Specific Spiritual Gifts

Key Scriptures: (1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30; Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:7, 11-12, 1 Peter 4:9-11)

### Gifts for Oral Ministry

Gift	References	Active Today?	Comments
Apostles	1 Corinthians 12:28 Ephesians 4:11 Acts 1:21-26 1 Corinthians 9:1-2	No	Special Messenger. “Foundation Gift” Needed before the canon of scripture was complete. Specific qualifications for the title of Apostle are found in Acts 1:21-26, and 1 Corinthians 9:1-2.
Prophecy	Romans 12:6 1 Corinthians 12:10 1 Corinthians 12:28 1 Corinthians 13:8 Ephesians 4:11	No	Inspired Speech (Revelation). “Foundation Gift” Needed before the canon of scripture was complete. Included both the prediction of future events, and the revelation of new messages from God.
Teaching	Romans 12:7 1 Corinthians 12:28 Ephesians 4:11	Yes	Ability to understand, explain, and apply the truth of God so that people can understand, respond, and grow.
Pastor	Ephesians 4:11	Yes	Someone who cares for God’s people by loving, guiding, feeding, and guarding them. A Shepherd.
Evangelist	Ephesians 4:11	Yes	One who has the ability to communicate the Gospel message in relevant terms to unbelievers so that people respond in conversion and discipleship. The evangelist is given to the Church to encourage and train others in the ministry of soul winning.
Exhortation	Romans 12:8	Yes	A Special ability to help another by motivating him to action through challenge, encouragement, and rebuke.
Word of Knowledge	1 Corinthians 12:8 1 Corinthians 13:8	No	The ability to understand truth that is not known by natural means. An example of this would be Ananias receiving the information about Saul and his situation directly from God, without being told by another human. (Acts 9:10-19)
Word of Wisdom	1 Corinthians 12:8	Yes	A special ability to make God’s will known to men. Application of scripture to vexing situations and contemporary problems.

### Gifts for Practical Service

Gift	References	Active Today?	Comments
Ruling/ Administration	Romans 12:8 1 Corinthians 12:28	Yes	An ability to lead a group in spiritual matters according to scriptural principles, promoting efficiency, the unity of the Spirit, and the common good, so that both individuals and the church are edified.
Ministry/Service	Romans 12:7 1 Peter 4:11	Yes	The ability to care for the physical needs of congregations and people. One ministering in a mercy mission of service to relieve a need.
Giving	Romans 12:8	Yes	A special ability to manage and give material goods and financial resources generously for the progress of God's work and the needs of others with such care and joy that the recipients are fortified by the realization that God is sharing through them. An example would be the believers of Macedonia (2 Corinthians 8:1-5).
Showing Mercy	Romans 11:28	Yes	The ability to give of yourself to alleviate the wretchedness and suffering of others.
Faith	1 Corinthians 12:9 Romans 12:3	Yes	The ability to see something that God wants done and sustain unwavering confidence that God will do it regardless of seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Faith discerns with extraordinary confidence the will and purposes of God for his work.
Helps	1 Corinthians 12:28	Yes	The ability to serve the church in any supporting role, joyfully and diligently, wherever and whenever it will release other workers for their spiritual ministries.
Hospitality	1 Peter 4:9 Romans 12:13	Yes	The ability and desire to provide an open house and a warm welcome to those in need of food and lodging. The Greek word <i>Philoxenia</i> , translated hospitality, literally means "love of strangers".
Discerning of Spirits	1 Corinthians 12:10	Yes	The ability to know with assurance whether certain behavior purported to be of God is in reality divine, human, or Satanic. Someone who has the gift can detect the "ring of truth" when they hear the word of God preached.

## Sign Gifts

These gifts were given as a means of authenticating the word of God at a time before the canon of scripture was complete. Now that we have the complete and self-authenticating word of God (the scripture), these miraculous gifts are no longer needed. This truth can be seen by the fact that we are directly commanded to exercise all the other gifts, but no command is given to us to exercise the sign gifts.

Gift	References	Active Today?	Comments
Healing	1 Corinthians 12:9 1 Corinthians 12:28	No	The special ability to serve as a human intermediary through whom it pleases God to cure illness apart from the use of natural means. We still see God healing people today, but not through special people with the gift of healing.
Miracles	1 Corinthians 12:10 1 Corinthians 12:28	No	The special ability to serve as a human intermediary through whom it pleases God to perform acts that alter the ordinary course of nature. In Scripture, after the day of Pentecost, these miracles were always associated with an apostle.
Tongues	1 Corinthians 12:10 1 Corinthians 12:28	No	The God-given ability to speak the word of God in a language the speaker never learned. This was meant to clarify the word of God, not to confuse it.
Interpretation	1 Corinthians 12:10 1 Corinthians 12:30	No	The God-given ability to make sense of the message of one who speaks in tongues. The scripture warned against the public speaking in tongues without an interpreter.

## NEW TESTAMENT LISTS

	1 Corinthians 12:8-10 RV	1 Corinthians 12:28-30	Romans 12:6-8 RV	Ephesians 4:7, 11-12 RV	1 Peter 4:9-11
	“To each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal”	“God hath set some in the church”	“Having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us”	“According to the measure of the gift of Christ”	“As good stewards of the manifold grace of God”
<b>Gifts for Oral Ministry</b>	Prophecy (10)  Word of Knowledge	Apostles (28) Prophets (28) Teachers (28)	Prophecy (6) Teaching (7)  Exhortation (8)	Apostles (11) Prophets (11) Teaching (11) Pastor (11) Evangelist (11)	Speaking (11) 1 Corinthians 1:5 2 Corinthians 8:7
<b>Gifts for Practical Service</b>	Discerning of Spirits (10) Faith (9)	Governments (28) (Administration)  Helps (28)	Ruling (8) Ministry (7) (service) Giving (8) (2 Corinthians 8:7) Showing Mercy (8)  Faith (3)		Ministry (11)  Hospitality (9) (cf., Romans 12:13)
<b>Miraculous Manifestations (Signs)</b>  “Powers, wonders, signs”	Healing (9) Miracles (10)  Tongues (10) Interpretation (10)  (Acts 2:22 RV)	Healings (28) Working Miracles (28) Tongues (28) Interpretation (implied) (30)			

**Note:** The gifts of apostle and prophet were evidently foundation gifts, particularly related to the precanon era of church history (see Ephesians 2:20 and Hebrews 2:4).

There may be a secondary sense in which these particular gifts are exercised today, for example in the areas of leadership and proclamation. However, obviously there are no apostles today who meet the criteria laid down in the N.T. (Acts 1:21-26 and 1 Corinthians 9:1-2). Similarly there are no prophets today who offer authentic, direct revelations which can supplement or parallel the written and completed canon of Holy Scripture.

The New Testament list may not appear exhaustive at first sight and, indeed, there are some who suggest that other spiritual gifts have surfaced since N.T. days. However, after carefully considering some of these supposed newer gifts, for example, music, counseling, and writing, we may still conclude that they all fit under one of the categories already suggested in the New Testament lists.

Further support of the view that the miraculous manifestations were precanonical and not to be expected today is found in that, while we are given explicit commands to use all the other gifts listed in the first two categories, there is no command to use these “miraculous manifestations.” This is not at all surprising now that we have the sufficient and self-authenticating word of the Lord in Scripture. It is also significant that as we examine the various New Testament gift lists, we find these particular “sign gifts” only in Paul’s letter to the Corinthian Church, a church obsessed with carnal externalities.

## **Appendix G: SAYSF Bible Church Looks at the Gift of Tongues**

### **THE NATURE OF THE GIFT**

The Greek word *glossa*, “tongue,” appears 50 times in the New Testament. It is used in three ways: *physical muscle*, *metaphorically*, and *language of man*. Most Greek lexical authorities conclude that there is no evidence in the Septuagint that *glossa* is used of ecstatic speech. Everywhere the word *glossa* is exercised in the New Testament, it was done in a known language.

Believers in the Old Testament never practiced ecstatic speech. John the Baptist and Jesus were filled with the Holy Spirit, yet there is no evidence that they spoke in tongues. Rather, the gift of tongues was promised by Jesus in Mark 16:17-20 and fulfilled in Acts 2, after His ascension.

The basic passage that defines tongues in the New Testament is Acts 2:4-11, the account of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The “Law of First Mention” states that when a word or practice is first defined in Scripture, that definition becomes normative for all other usages unless the context clearly demands otherwise.

The “other tongues” mentioned in this passage were clearly known languages, and not ecstatic utterances. The hearers from other nations would hardly have been surprised had the Galileans been speaking unintelligible gibberish since this was common in paganism. However, the hearers claimed they heard “the wonderful works of God” being proclaimed in “our own tongue,” according to Acts 2:8. The association of the nations with the expression “tongues” clearly defines these as actual languages spoken within that country or region from which they came.

The miraculous ability to speak in other tongues, given at Pentecost, was not given to overcome a communication barrier. They could have communicated in Greek, Aramaic, or Hebrew. It was primarily as a convincing miracle, a sign, to attract the crowd. Once the crowd was gathered, Peter preached to them in Hebrew or Greek, particularly addressing the “House of Israel” (Acts 2:36).

### **THE SAMARITANS**

Jews from Jerusalem needed to witness the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on groups other than themselves. The first group to receive the Gospel outside of Jerusalem was the Samaritans, considered half-breeds by the Jews (Acts 8:5-17)

Philip the Greek (a Gentile) “preached Christ to them,” and multitudes believed. Then Peter and John (Jews), being sent from Jerusalem, laid hands on the Samaritan believers and they received the Holy Spirit. This subsequent receiving of the Holy Spirit after salvation was not a “second work of grace” but a necessary sign to a Gentile, “half-breeds,” and Jews that God was now uniting all into One Body. Salvation was not just for the Jew.

### **THE GENTILES – CORNELIUS**

The “mystery” of the Church being made up of both Jew and Gentile (Ephesians 3:3-6) had to continue to be proven to the Jews. Peter and his fellow Jews now witness Cornelius, a Gentile of Italian descent, having heard the Gospel and believing, immediately receiving the Holy Spirit and speaking with tongues (Acts 10:44-46). The sign from the Holy Spirit confirmed to the Gentiles that both the gospel message and the messenger were authentic. It confirmed to the skeptical apostles that what they were witnessing was the same thing that happened to them at Pentecost (Acts 11:15).



## **THE DISCIPLES OF JOHN THE BAPTIST**

In Acts 19:1-7 the word *glossais*, “tongues,” is the same word used in the previous passages. There is no reference indicating that these were anything other than known languages.

The disciples of John the Baptist had been baptized with the “baptism of repentance,” believing that Messiah was to follow. They needed to hear the rest of the gospel and be baptized in the name of Jesus. Paul laid hands on them and they spoke in tongues, a sign authenticating their experience.

## **THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH**

In 2 Corinthians 12-14, the word *glossa* is used exclusively when referring to speaking in “tongues.” If Paul had intended to describe a different experience, such as ecstatic speech, he would have used a different term.

By using rhetorical questions, Paul explains in 2 Corinthians 12:27-30 that no one Christian has all the spiritual gifts, therefore tongues cannot be a requirement for salvation or spirituality.

There are no passages in the Bible that refer to men speaking a heavenly language. In 2 Corinthians 13:1 Paul does not assert that anyone has ever spoken in the languages of angels. It’s merely a hypothetical case as in vv. 2 and 3) accentuating the greater need for love.

In chapter 14, Paul is particularly discussing the gifts of prophecy and tongues in the assembly of the church, not privately or otherwise. The basic concept is that the whole church should be edified through the exercise of spiritual gifts.

Prophecy is presented as the superior gift for edification because unlike tongues, it needs no interpreter. Without an interpreter, only God understands the communication. The word “mystery” in this context (2 Corinthians 14:20) does not mean unintelligible speech, but that which is not understood.

Self-edification by use of tongues is not encouraged in Scripture. The purpose of spiritual gifts is primarily for the building up of the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12), and not self. God can understand us praying or praising Him privately in our own language.

A wrong use of tongues implies immaturity, not spirituality (2 Corinthians 14:20). Any spiritual gift that is exercised in a way that divides and tears down rather than builds up the Body is not of God. Tongues, properly exercised, were intended to be a sign for unbelievers (2 Corinthians 14:22-25). If they didn’t understand those speaking, they would go away, thinking everyone was mad, rather than be drawn to the gospel message.

## **SIGN OF THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Some groups today say speaking in tongues is a sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, using Acts 1:5 (first baptism, they say) and 1 Corinthians 12:13 (second baptism, they say) as proof texts. The second baptism of the Holy Spirit is referred to as “the second blessing”, evidenced by speaking in tongues. The believer supposedly then receives the “fullness” of the Holy Spirit and true spirituality.

History alone, however, does not determine Bible doctrine. Just because certain groups or individuals received the sign of speaking in tongues as evidence of their conversion and/or spiritual filling in the early days of the Church doesn’t mean that this is necessarily a precedent for the rest of the Church Age. Acts is a book of history describing the birth and early days of the Church and this was a transitional period between the Old and New Testaments. Tongues were a sign to unbelievers who were witnessing these wondrous new events.

There is no evidence of the continuance of this gift after Apostolic times. Paul predicted in 1 Corinthians 13:8 that this gift would “cease of itself” (literal translation).

Spirit Baptism (1 Corinthians 12:13) is the work of God, placing the believer into the body of Christ, and is simultaneous with regeneration. It is a one-time experience never to be repeated again. The believer then has everything he needs for the spiritual life immediately upon salvation, and no need for a “second blessing.”

Believers are not encouraged to speak in tongues or to seek to speak in tongues. In fact, we are to “earnestly desire the best gifts” (1 Corinthians 12:31). All are baptized, but all do not speak in tongues.

If the Corinthian believers are any example, tongues are not an indication of spirituality. They were divided, immoral, carnal, and immature, partly due to their emphasis on the “sign” gifts, rather than the “best gifts.” It is a sign of spiritual maturity to build up the Body of Christ.

## CONCLUSION

Tongues are clearly stated to be a sign for the advancement of the gospel to unbelievers. Such miraculous signs were necessary in the very infancy of the Church when this “mystery” was being unveiled and the full written revelation of that mystery was still being penned. Since the purpose of the gift of tongues was for a sign, then is it not reasonable to conclude that when the necessity for the gift disappeared, the gift would also disappear?

*“Can God bestow the gift of tongues today? Of course He can. Rather, the issue is, ‘Has God purposed to do so since His purpose for tongues has already been fulfilled?’ It is most significant that, historically speaking tongues occurred only in connection with the ministry of the Apostles, that both this sign and healings and other miracles occurred less and less through the Book of Acts, and that there is no reliable record in Church history of the gift being exercised after 100 A.D.” (Spiritual Gifts, by Dr. Alden Gannett) Widespread tongues movements did not appear again until the 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.*

The cessation of the gift of tongues would seem to be very much in keeping with the foundation of the Church being laid, the canon of Scriptures having been completed, and the Lord Jesus Christ having been revealed in all His fullness. God need not speak in tongues, new prophecies, and knowledge (special revelation) today because God “... hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son” (Hebrews 1:1, 2).

## SOURCES

Scripture References from the KJV Bible

Books –

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## Appendix H: Further Explanation of the Role of Elders

**Note:** The Bracketed [ ] sections below are the explanations

### ELDER DEFINED

The Bible uses various names and words to depict elders and describe the nature of their work. In addition to elders, we find references to **bishops, overseers, shepherds, and pastors**. The word “**bishops**” (episkopoi) in the KJV of 1 Timothy 3:1, 2, is better translated “**Overseers.**” This describes precisely the type or nature of work in which the elder should be engaged. Overseers are those who, being raised up and qualified by the work of the Holy Spirit, are appointed to have the spiritual care of and to exercise oversight over, the churches.<sup>1</sup>

In Acts 20:17, Paul called for the elders (the *presbuteroi*, the men of spiritual maturity). Then in verse 28-29 he charges them to “*take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (episkopoi), to feed (shepherd) the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*” He uses terms of the shepherd to describe their work. Truly these terms are interchangeable. Note that those who are called pastors are equally commissioned to take the oversight of the flock of God in the same way that a shepherd would look after his sheep.<sup>2</sup>

Vine defines a pastor as follows:

*“a shepherd, one who tends herds or flocks (not merely one who feeds them)...Pastors guide as well as feed the flock; compare Acts 20:28 which, with verse 17, indicates that this was the service committed to elders (overseers or bishops); so also in I Peter 5:1, 2 “tend the flock...exercising the oversight” RV; this involves tender care and vigilant superintendence”.*<sup>3</sup>

The apostle Peter exhorts the elders of the early church to...

*shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God;...nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:2-3, NASB).*

So we find that the work of the pastor or shepherd is included in the elder’s job description: taking care of, tending, feeding and overseeing the flock of God. To properly pastor or shepherd a flock, its pastor (or pastors) must of necessity also be an elder (or elders) seeing that his work is virtually the same as that of the elder. They must therefore also have the same qualifications.

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<sup>1</sup> W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984), p. 351, s.v. “elder.”

<sup>2</sup> It will be observed that both these words, pastor and shepherd, are derived from the same Greek word, *poimen*, and therefore refer to the same person.

<sup>3</sup> W. E. Vine, p. 839, s.v. “pastor.”

[The Scriptures indicate that among the elders will be those particularly gifted as “pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11), which some noted Bible scholars refer to as “teaching shepherds.” All “teaching shepherds” will be elders but not all elders will function as teaching shepherds whose function will, to a large degree, involve teaching and preaching.]

SAYSF Bible Church recognizes the need for such gifted men in the local church and regards Ephesians 4:11 as God’s promise that He will supply them. Because they are needed for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the maturing of the body of Christ we believe that God will continue to either raise up from among us, or send in to us, men with the gifts of the evangelist, pastor and teacher (or perhaps more correctly, pastor-teacher). Men so gifted, when once recognized, will likely spend much more time in the work of the ministry than their fellow elders who are secularly employed.

[Note that the phrase above, ‘when once recognized,’ is in particular reference to pastors that God sends in to us (see above also) indicating that it is important that the current leadership and body of the recipient church have opportunity to recognize these men as Scripturally qualified (a period of time which we call ‘elder-in-training,’ typically 4-12 months; see page 23). This takes time, time for the leadership and congregation to learn to know and develop trust in the newly called pastor, and time for the newly called pastor to learn to know the sheep and the other shepherds. It gives, for example, opportunity for the church to see whether or not the new pastor is truly going to practice servant leadership, within a team of mutually submissive elders (values of SAYSF leadership), or will be ambitious for authority and a title. The practice of calling in outside pastors as many churches do today, especially non-denominational churches like SAYSF, make this elder-in-training period very important. In New Testament times most of the pastors would have been born in, and grown up in, the village/locale where they worshipped and served in a local assembly. They were known from childhood so that, if and when they evidenced the giftedness of a teaching pastor and elder, there was no need for an elder-in-training period as we have adopted. Exceptions to this pattern would have been when the apostles, or an apostolic delegate, appointed elders in the very early days of the church (Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5). They certainly would have consulted the people of each local church with regard to their qualifications before appointing them, plus we must recognize that the men doing the appointing had apostolic authority and giftedness, which we do not have in that New Testament sense today. If someone wants to apply the “letter of the law” to the teachings about elders with regard to the function and role of the pastor and teacher, certainly they may do so, but the “spirit of the law” would conclude there is nothing clearly unscriptural about allowing a period of time such as SAYSF’s elder-in-training allows for, making it applicable as well to a called-in pastor from the outside. Since SAYSF is an elder-led church, we concur with the quote that “Existing elders will lead in this recognition” (see page 23, paragraph 2)].

Thus they may be more in the public eye and may represent the church in various ways. However, it must be clearly understood that the pastor(s) must work closely with the other elders on all fronts. Unless specifically delegated by the elders to do so, the pastor(s) may not make any major independent decisions that will affect the rest of the church.

## **Appendix I: How the Elders Inform the Congregation on Important Matters**

SAYSF Bible Church is led by a plurality of Elders. Due to the confidential or sensitive nature of many of the situations that the Elders must deal with in their oversight responsibilities, they are usually not able to inform the congregation in regard to these things. Also, the Elders are responsible for guarding the doctrinal integrity and purity of the church and therefore must not allow any person or group of persons to use our doctrinal position in a public forum within the church to cause division. On the other hand, the Elders do recognize the importance of informing the congregation on important matters that affect the whole body. The importance of doing this is multifaceted: (1) To gain the body's support and ownership in prayer, vision, finances, and personal and corporate ministry involvement; (2) To get congregational feedback; (3) To prepare the congregation for either the Elder Team's decision in regard to an issue and/or a pending congregational vote.

The basic ways by which the Elders inform the congregation and encourage feedback are as follows:

- By including information in sermons and lessons
- By conducting "SAYSF Roots" classes and workshops, targeting especially those who are new and/or interested in membership
- Scheduling periodic (as needed) Congregational Information Meetings which are not for conducting official church business (reserved for the Congregational Business Meetings) but for information flow
- Congregational Business Meetings
- Sunday morning bulletin inserts and announcements during the worship services
- Posting minutes from the Elder's regular meetings
- Occasional articles in the church's newsletter, *The Companion*
- Occasional letters through the church mailboxes or the USPS
- Being available to individuals and small groups for informal Q and A

You are encouraged to take advantage of these avenues of information. A properly informed congregation will be a caring and interacting congregation with each member of the body "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3).

## Appendix J: Characteristics, Qualities, and Ministries of an Elder

### CHARACTERISTICS

Zadok Daniels and Ken Price point out seven things observed from 1 Peter 5:1-5 which should be noted by every elder and prospective elder<sup>1</sup>. In essence they are:

1. He should not be forced to serve as a shepherd.
2. He should work because he wants to.
3. He should not serve for the sake of money.
4. He should have a real desire to serve the Lord.
5. He should always rule and serve with love.
6. He should be a godly example.
7. He must exercise humility.

The diligent student of the Word can readily add to this list many other characteristics of a biblical elder, as they are recorded in other parts of the New Testament. Here are a dozen:

1. He must have a sound knowledge of the Word.
2. He should be willing to work hard studying, teaching, and preaching.
3. He must take his work seriously enough to make appropriate sacrifices.
4. He must exhibit a good measure of spiritual maturity.
5. He must love the people to whom he ministers.
6. He must be a man of prayer.
7. He must be morally clean.
8. He must be able to control his anger.
9. He must know his spiritual gift and willingly use it to the blessing and edification of the saints.
10. He must have a definite interest in reaching the world for Christ.
11. He must be a peacemaker.
12. He must possess a sound sense of responsibility.

No office that makes such demands on a Christian man should be entered into lightly or with doubtful mind, but rather, seriously, prayerfully, thoughtfully, and with the assurance of the exercise and leading of the Holy Spirit.

### QUALIFICATIONS

Very specific qualifications for the office of an elder are laid out in God's Word (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9). In his book Biblical Eldership, Alexander Strauch defines 15 qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3. (The terms are taken from the NASB.) Elders and prospective elders do well to measure themselves periodically against this list.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Zadok Daniels and Ken Price, Leaders in A Local Church, (Toronto, Canada M4C 3T4: Everyday Publications), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Strauch, Biblical Eldership, (Littleton, Colorado 80160-0369 USA: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1986), First edition, pp. 218-234. We have drawn heavily on the writings of Alexander Strauch as they relate to the definitions of an elder.

**1. Above reproach. (v. 2)**

His reputation must be morally and spiritually irreproachable, and so “free from any offensive or disgraceful blight of character or conduct....This is the overarching qualification. If an elder brings disgrace upon himself and the church because of sinful behavior, that man is disqualified from church oversight. He is no longer ‘above reproach.’”

**2. The husband of one wife. (v. 2)**

Admittedly, this is a most controversial phrase. That however, does not relieve us of the responsibility of earnestly seeking God’s face in revealing to us the interpretation that He intended and the one that will glorify Him. Leaders past and present have prayerfully arrived at the following conclusions.

- a. The phrase literally means “a one-woman man” or “a one wife’s husband” with the word “one” in the emphatic position. The phrase therefore implies that the elder must have no more than one wife at any one time in his life. There is also present an element of loyalty and faithfulness to one woman (his wife).
- b. In keeping with the Scripture’s general, clear teaching on the subject of marriage, we have concluded that a man who marries a second time after having lost his first wife by death, and chooses to remarry “in the Lord,” is not disqualified by this statement.
- c. We at SAYSF hold that a man who has become a believer after a divorce is not disqualified by this statement. He is a new creature in Christ and begins his spiritual life and service for our Lord at the moment of his conversion.
- d. Finally, Paul does not imply that only married men qualify for church oversight. He does not say “a husband of a wife,” but “the husband of one wife.” While it is wise to exercise caution in approving a single man for the office of elder, yet he should not be restricted if he qualifies in every other way.

**3. Temperate. (v. 2)**

A stable man. “Sober or temperate are good translations of the Greek and imply self-control, clear-mindedness, and freedom from all excesses.”

**4. Prudent. (v. 2)**

A balanced, sensible man. This means soundness of mind, balanced, discreet, and controlled by judgment, sensible thinking, and reasonableness.

**5. Respectable. (v. 2)**

An orderly, disciplined, and honorable man. Respectable is used to describe orderliness in outward demeanor and dress (1 Timothy 2:9), but here undoubtedly means orderliness in the whole person and life style, not thoughtless, careless or slipshod.

**6. Hospitable. (v. 2)**

Hospitality entails, as its root meaning indicates, the act of loving, receiving and providing for strangers. In the NT times, apostles, prophets and itinerant teachers and preachers depended upon Christians for lodging and food (Luke 10:7; Acts 10:6, 48; 16:14, 15, 34; Romans 16:23; Hebrews 13:1, 2; Philemon 22), as did our Lord Jesus (Luke 10:38).

**7. Able to teach. (v. 2)**

Overseers must be able to guide the Christian community by instruction from the Scriptures. Being able to teach entails three elements: “a knowledge of Scripture, the readiness to teach, and the capability to communicate.” Although all elders will not have the “gift” of teaching, as mentioned in Romans 12:7 and Ephesians 4:11, they must be able to open their Bible and instruct others, either on a private or public basis.

**8. Not addicted to wine. (v. 3)**

“An elder must be above reproach in the use of wine” (alcohol). Paul uses a strong word here that literally means not beside wine, or not addicted, preoccupied, or overindulgent with wine. Total abstinence (though safe to encourage) is not the injunction here. Plainly, this is a prohibition against the abuse of alcohol or any other substance that would be mind-altering and destructive to a man’s testimony.

**9. Not pugnacious. (v. 3)**

A pugnacious person is a fighter—a quick-tempered, quarrelsome individual who is prone to physical assault on others. The Greek word is derived from the verb “to strike,” and can be understood as a violent person, a “striker” [as in the KJV] or a brawler. Because a pugnacious man will strike the sheep rather than gently leading them, he cannot be one of Christ’s undershepherds. God only allows those He knows will be gentle to lead His sheep through the stresses of congregational life.

**10. Gentle. (v. 3)**

A forbearing, gracious and conciliatory man. The man who possesses the positive quality of gentleness stands in vivid contrast to the pugnacious man. The problem with the term “gentle,” is that no English word adequately conveys the fullness of its beauty and richness. Forbearance, gentleness, magnanimous, equitable, peaceable, and gracious all help capture the full range of meaning of gentleness....Gentleness is one of the elders’ most important and attractive qualities....The shepherd must be patient, gracious and understanding with the erring—and at times exasperating—sheep.

**11. Uncontentious. (v. 3)**

A peaceable man. Contention, strife and fighting will quickly weaken, paralyze and eventually kill any local church. Therefore a Christian elder is required to be “uncontentious,” which literally means, not fighting. That is, he is not quarrelsome. Positively stated, he is a peaceable man.

*“The servant of the Lord must not be quarrelsome-fighting and contending. Instead he must be kindly to everyone and mild-tempered-preserving the bond of peace; . . . patient and forbearing and willing to suffer wrong” (2 Timothy 2:24, Amplified Bible).*

**12. Free from the love of money. (v. 3)**

Scripture likewise warns all Christians against “the love of money” (Hebrews 13:5). Like a powerful drug, “the love of money” can delude the judgment of even the best men. Those who love silver and gold can easily be tempted to lust after it. Money-loving, materialistic elders set the wrong example and will inevitably fall into unethical financial dealings that



disgrace the Lord's name. So elders must continually guard themselves against "the love of money."

**13. Manages his household well. (v. 4, 5)**

The elder's control of his children is especially relevant. A biblical elder is best tested by how well he handles his children, not by how rich, successful, or well-known he may be. A Christian elder must have obedient and submissive children (age not indicated), controlling his children in an honorable, respectful, and dignified way. As overseers, elders give the thought, time, and energy to see that church needs are met, much as a father meets the needs of his household. Since it follows that, "if a man does not know how to manage his own household," he will not be able to manage the demanding task of caring for God's church. An elder's relationship with his children will manifest itself in his relationship with the congregation. If one wants to know what an elder will be like, observe how he manages his children.

The questions of whether or not God has blessed a man with one or more children, or whether they be his bona-fide children or his by adoption, are not the focus here; but rather that the man who desires to be an elder must know that it is his God-given responsibility to be a good manager of his household if, and when, God blesses him with a wife and children. God is emphasizing the fact that an elder must be a good example to the rest of the flock. (Compare 1 Timothy 3:4, 5 with 1 Peter 5:3.)

**14. Not a new convert. (v. 6)**

"A new convert" is a beginner in the faith, a baby Christian, and a recent convert. No matter how spiritual, zealous, knowledgeable, or talented a new convert may be, he is not spiritually mature. Maturity requires time and experience for which there is no substitute, so "a new convert" is simply not ready for eldership. An elder, however, must be mature and know his own heart. The position of elder carries considerable honor, authority, and recognition. For a recent convert, the temptation of pride would be too great. Pride would destroy the man and hurt the church.

**15. A good reputation. (v. 7)**

A man's image before his Christian brethren must not be different than his image at work, in the family, or in the neighborhood. The real test of a man's character, then, is from Monday through Saturday, not on Sunday morning. [The unsaved's] opinion of a Christian leader's character cannot be dismissed, for it affects the entire church's witness. A Christian leader with an unfavorable testimony in the local community will "fall into reproach" in a far more destructive way than those he leads. His influence for good will be ruined. In order to avoid great problems, a potential overseer's reputation in the world must be examined. (Note 1 Peter 2:12, 15.)

All the qualifications mentioned in First Timothy indicate that an individual must be mature in order to qualify as an overseer. He must be mature spiritually and morally as well as mature in his ability to teach the Word and manage his own home. Men such as these are the ones God chooses to shepherd His flock.

## **DEFINING THE MINISTRY OF AN ELDER**

The following are general duties of elders.

**1. They are to set a good example for the flock of God to follow.**

“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 3:7). “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:3).

**2. They must take time to study the Word and apply it to their own lives.**

An elder needs to lead by example. It is important therefore that elders lay aside a definite time each day to study the Word of God systematically, consistently, and prayerfully. (2 Timothy 2:15).

**3. They are to feed the flock.**

This means they must exhort and teach the Word diligently, “line upon line, precept upon precept” (Isaiah 28:10). They must be careful to teach the doctrines of the New Testament clearly (1 Timothy 5:17). They must teach the Word systematically. They must teach the Word consistently (2 Timothy 4:2) even when it is difficult to do so (2 Timothy 4:3).

**4. They are to encourage the faint-hearted.**

An elder should look for and seek out the sheep that are weak and spiritually sick and then minister appropriately to their needs (1 Thessalonians 5:14 NASB).

**5. They are to comfort the grieving.**

The elders must be able to show compassion and empathize with those who have lost their loved ones or for any other reason may find themselves in grief. They should be ready to help a mourning family to make the necessary funeral arrangements, offering counsel and advice as needed (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

**6. They are to warn the unruly.**

Guarding the assembly from deceitful and wicked men who would seek to create problems within the flock and at times attempt to spoil them with their unbiblical teachings, is indeed a very serious responsibility that is laid upon the elders (Acts 20:28 -31; 1 Thessalonians 5:14).

**7. They are to rule well.**

Although God expects the elders to be good leaders in at least two critical areas, in the home and in the church, they must nevertheless have the heart of a servant (Compare Luke 22:25, 26 with 1 Timothy 3:4, 5.). At the same time they must not forget that God has not made them bosses to “lord it over” His people (1 Peter 5:3) but rather they are to be “gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose...” (2 Timothy 2:24, 25). Ruling well involves good administration. They must therefore know how to make wise decisions, sometimes quickly.

**8. They must prepare the saints for the work of the ministry.**

One of the great responsibilities of elders is to equip the saints to do the work involved in all aspects of ministry in order that the body may mature to the point where it is able to edify

itself in love (Ephesians 4:12-16). This means looking for and recognizing gifts that God gives to individuals, and delegating responsibilities of ministry to those so gifted.

**9. They are to exercise discipline when necessary.**

It is the responsibility of those that oversee the flock to discern when disciplinary action is necessary and also to determine the disciplinary measure that is appropriate. (See **Lesson 10 on Church Discipline**). Such an exercise requires all the wisdom, patience, boldness, humility, and love that the elders can muster in order that discipline be done in the spirit of meekness.

**10. They are to judge between saints in conflict.**

There are times when serious problems arise between believers and they may be tempted to settle their differences in court. Such an action between Christians is unbiblical; instead, God has designed such matters to be judged within the body of believers. “Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?” (1 Corinthians 6:3). Overseers must be prepared therefore to seek special wisdom from God to judge in these different situations. Believers who are willing to be guided by the Word of God will not find it too difficult to accept the judgment of their spiritual leaders (see Hebrews 13:17 and 1 Corinthians 6:1-8).

**11. They are to exercise godly, loving care over the flock (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:2; 1 Timothy 3:5).**

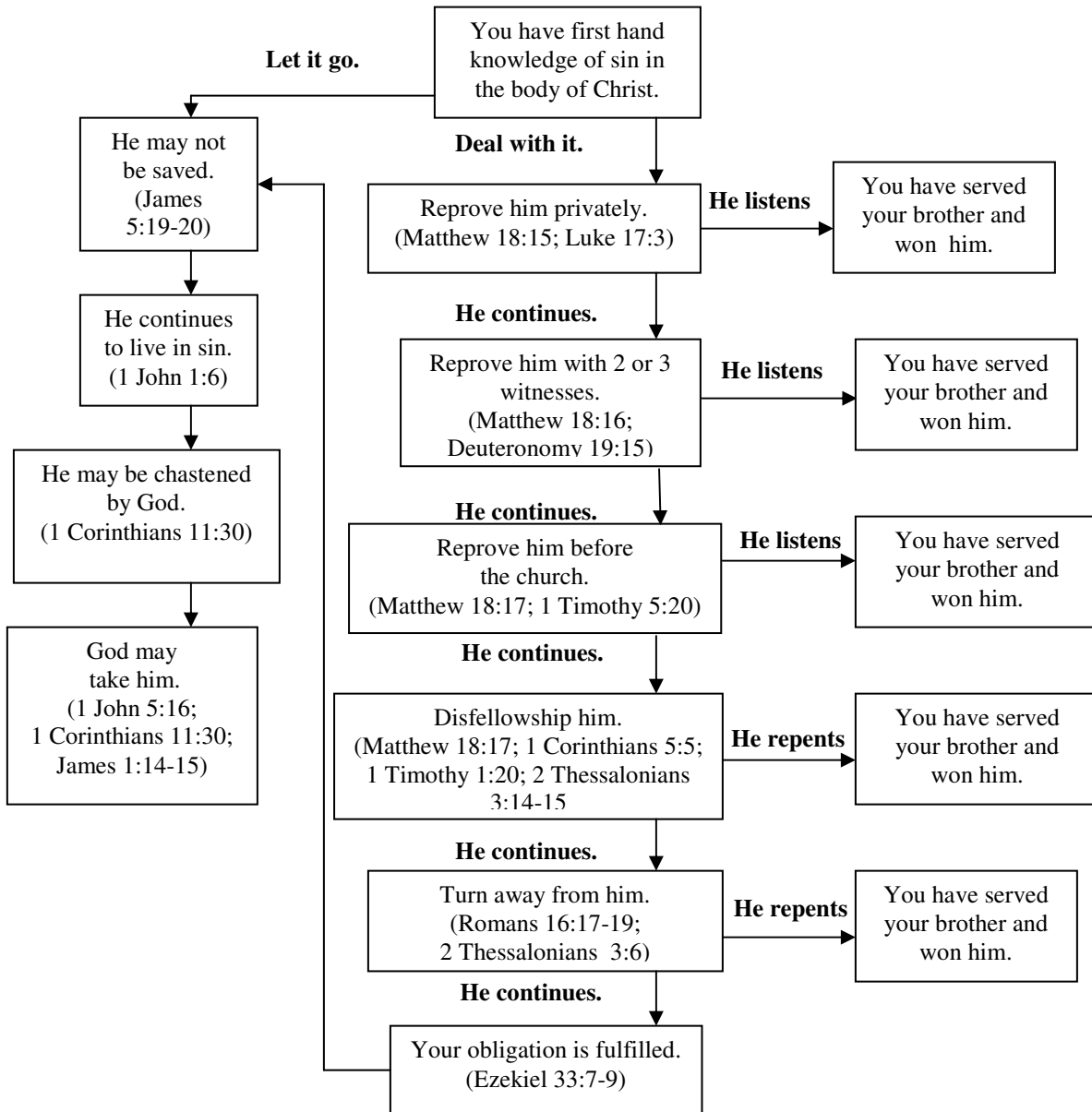
In order to effectively care for the flock, the elders must be willing to observe the following:

- a. They must schedule regular meetings with all other fellow elders at which time any and all matters affecting the welfare of the church are attended to. Proper minutes must be kept of these meetings, responsibilities delegated, schedules drafted, deadlines set, and decisions made.
- b. The elders must visit members of the flock. They must maintain contact with others of the congregation who are troubled, sick, disabled, grieving, hurting, or negligent. This ministry can prove to be most rewarding when done consistently. Although deacons and others in the assembly may also do visitation, this ministry must never be neglected by the elders.
- c. There will always be opportunities for new ministries at SAYSF Bible Church, but the inclusion and supervision of ministries are the responsibilities of the elders.
- d. The elders work with an appointed Staff Evaluation Team in the hiring (and terminating if necessary) of staff members. This process is contained in our **Staff Evaluation Process** handbook.

## Appendix K: Problems Requiring Discipline

1. Open sexual immorality (1 Corinthians 5:1-13)
2. Unresolved personal conflicts (Matthew 18:15-20)
3. Divisiveness (Romans 16:17, 18; Titus 3:10)
4. False Teaching (Galatians 1:8, 9; 1 Timothy 1:20; 6:3-5; 2 John 9-11; Revelation 2:14-16)

**The Goal and Objective of all discipline must be restoration.**



Taken from notes by John MacArthur Jr.  
Grace Community Church, 13248 Roscoe Blvd., Sun Valley, CA.

## **Appendix L: The Basic Approach to Counseling of the Pastoral/Elder Staff of SAYSF Bible Church**

**Presupposition:** The Scriptures are our Standard by which we counsel and the authority upon which we counsel. In any counseling situation there are always at least three persons present: The ever-present Holy Spirit who alone can affect good and lasting change; the counselor; and the counselee.

**Methodology:** We basically use the nouthetic approach to counseling in that we seek to give scriptural direction through words of encouragement (e.g. instilling hope and seeing one's worth in the eyes of God) and/or words of reproof that will hopefully lead to correct behavior and righteous living. We believe that the source of all of man's problems and dysfunctions is the sin problem and therefore intrinsically spiritual in nature. The basic solution to man's problems then must be directed to our spirit in the power of the Holy Spirit using the spiritual solutions, tools, and weapons found in the Word of God. As counselors we must look to Jesus Christ as our Counselor.

**Technique:** The Holy Spirit works through biblical techniques, not through gimmicks. We must rely on Him for our wisdom, for conviction of sin, for power, and for restoration. We may at times use "spoiling the Egyptian" (Exodus 3:22) techniques in which a counseling technique or tool is used that is commonly used in secular counseling, but it would not be used in an unbiblical way. In any technique used, the vital question we ask is whether the technique is good (biblical) or bad (unbiblical).

## **Appendix M: Ministry Guidelines For Members of SAYSF Bible Church**

We are happy to have you serve the Lord with us in the SAYSF ministries. The joy of seeing coming to our Lord and Savior and growing into mature believers is a reward of great value. We desire to have a freedom of using our spiritual gifts as well as an awareness of the ministries of others and how we touch one another in the local testimonies. These guidelines are provided to help accomplish this goal.

Here are some of the many activities in which you may get involved: SAYSF Small Groups, Sunday School classes (nursery through and including adult), nursery and toddler care, Youth Group meetings and activities, Bible studies, Women's Ministries, Men's ministries, Awana, 5-Day Clubs, Vacation Bible School, Music, Singles Ministries, Young Adults Fellowship, Young At Heart, Dinner for Eight, Circle of Friends, Retreats, and other outreach programs, including Church Planting. (See **Opportunities for Service and Ministry** brochure).

As leaders, our commitment includes our testimony in life situations and our example of participation in all assembly meetings which demonstrates the challenges of the Word to, "present our bodies a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1), and "set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:2).

All teachers/leaders must be born again Christians who have testified to the fact of their salvation and have satisfied the elders of their Christian walk and maturity.

Teaching a class/group entails really caring about each member, not just showing up for the hour or two the class/group meets.

- a. Adults need to build a spirit of spiritual closeness and trust in one another in applying scripture to every day needs and prayerfully and practically upholding one another. Adult class leaders are spiritual shepherds.
- b. Children need to feel they belong, that they are important to the class or group and that their teacher is someone "special." Also, the teacher/parent relationship is important to the spiritual growth of each child and a strong contact for unsaved parents.

We have legal and moral responsibilities to the local church (the Word of God expresses this). Therefore, to protect the testimony, we need to be diligent in safety (example: water hazard of Green Holly Pond and driveways around buildings) and to be careful in our actions and reactions to things we feel need to be corrected including during socials and activities. (We should have no physical discipline.)

Any student (child or youth) that comes to a class or group is the responsibility of the leader. He/she should not send or allow the student to leave, unsupervised, until in the parents care or to the next activity. (See **Appendix O: SAYSF Child Policies**).

In scheduling any and all activities that are not on the regular schedule, an Event Coordination Form must be filled out and given to office personnel for consideration and scheduling. It will be put on the calendar when approved. The leader will be notified through the office. This includes information for time, spaces, equipment, public relations, etc.

We should always be aware of leading unsaved people to the saving knowledge of Christ. If a person in your group accepts the Lord, be sure the pastors/elders are informed and that complete information is given (address, phone #, etc.)

## **Appendix N: Christian Education Team (CE Team)**

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of the SAYSF CE Team is to assist the Elders by encouraging and supporting SAYSF's ministry of Christian Education for adults, youth and children. This includes, but is not limited to, the activities and programs of Sunday School, Children's Church, Awana, Youth programs, Vacation Bible School, Special Education, as well as Small Group and Seminars that may be conducted.

### **CE TEAM COMPOSITION**

The SAYSF CE Team will be composed of members of SAYSF Bible Church who are volunteers or recruited candidates that have an interest in Christian Education. Each CE Team member is encouraged to commit to serve on the team for a minimum period of one (1) year, coinciding with the SAYSF Education Program Year (June 1<sup>st</sup> of one year to May 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year). All volunteer and recruited Team members will be approved by the Elders. One Team member will be selected by the Team as Team Chairman to coordinate the activities of the team. The Elders will designate an Elder to serve as their representative on the Team to coordinate and communicate with the Elders. Coordinators or each CE Ministry are welcome/encouraged to attend the monthly meetings.

### **CE TEAM KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

All responsibilities of the SAYSF CE Team will be carried out with accountability to the Elders.

#### **1. Christian Education Activities:**

The CE Team will oversee, supervise and develop educational opportunities for church members and attendees to help them form a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and grow in their likeness to and faith in Him. Responsibilities include:

- A.** Develop goals and objectives for the SAYSF CE program at all levels in line with the strategic plan set forth by the Elders.
- B.** Assess educational needs for all ages by setting and achieving goals for education through formation and developing programs and activities.
- C.** Identify, review and test age-level curriculum resources, whether commercially produced or developed by the members and staff of SAYSF.
- D.** Identify and plan for both ongoing CE programs and short-term or one-time educational events.
- E.** Recruit, train and work with teachers in coaching and strengthening their teaching abilities and strategies.
- F.** Maintain the SAYSF Resource Center to provide and update Christian education resources, including books, videos/DVDs and other materials.
- G.** Assist the Small Group Coordinator as required.

#### **2. Teacher Supervision and Development**

- A.** Identify teacher resources and needs in Christian Education
- B.** Oversee, plan and implement staff recruitment, training and development.
- C.** Coordinate with the Vacation Bible School Leadership to support them in their goals, objectives and needs
- D.** Research, order and distribute curriculum materials and other educational resources.

- E. Conduct periodic teacher evaluations and provide ongoing performance feedback, reporting to the Elders regarding ministry activity and performance.

**3. Administration:**

The CE Team will strengthen the CE programs and activities with adults and young people through:

- A. The development of short and long-term goals and plans for educational ministry.
- B. The development and implementation of annual calendar of activities and programs that are inclusive and promote relationship development and discipleship at levels appropriate to every group.
- C. The development and management of the annual budget for Christian Education.
- D. Attendance at conferences and participation in educational training events to strengthen the knowledge and skill bases in Christian Education.
- E. Consistently work with the Elders and other church/ministry leaders to integrate educational offering and opportunities into other SAYSF ministries (i.e., missions, youth ministry, evangelism, multi-cultural outreach, etc.)



## Appendix O: SAYSF Child Policies

The leadership of SAYSF Bible Church is strongly committed to providing a safe and secure environment of the children and workers in the church. We are well aware of the serious problems other churches have experienced in recent years in the area of Child Abuse. Accordingly, we have set up detailed policies to address this difficult issue. We desire to minister the grace of Jesus to our children in the most secure and loving way we can.

- **SAYSF Membership is a prerequisite for working with nursery through teen ministries.** Exceptions to this policy may only be granted in consultation with a pastor, elder.
- All new workers, **18 years old and older**, who desire to minister with children **Nursery through Teens** are required to fill out SAYSF's **Ministry Screening Form**. This ministry may be on a weekly or "ongoing" basis, or on an "infrequent" basis. "Infrequent" service includes areas of ministry that only occur a few times a year like special events, overnight trips, emergencies substitutes, evening meetings, or any event other than a regularly scheduled ministry.
- All **Teen helpers**, ages 13-17, will be teamed up with an approved adult.
- Forms shall be reviewed and references contacted by the Administrative staff. All forms shall be kept in a secure location. Any applicant found to have a criminal conviction involving children or physical assault, or who has plead guilty to sexual or child abuse **will not be accepted** to work with children.
- SAYSF will make every attempt to have at least 2 adults supervising each class of children at all times. On occasion there will be one adult and one teen helper supervising the class. **Our goal is to minimize the times that children are supervised by one worker.**
- Workers should not normally be alone in a bathroom with a child. For those cases when a youngster needs assistance, the bathroom door should be propped open.
- Parent/Guardian permission must be received in writing for all church sponsored "Off Campus" activities or programs.
- Detailed instructions regarding working with children are contained in SAYSF's Child **Safety and Supervision Guidelines** brochure.

**Note:** The video, "**Reducing The Risk**" is available to view for information and an overview of the issues regarding Child Abuse and Sexual Harassment.

## Appendix P: Child Abuse

### WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse is any act of omission or commission that endangers or impairs a child's physical or emotional health and development. This includes:

- Physical abuse
- Physical neglect and/or inadequate supervision
- Sexual abuse and/or exploitation
- Emotional abuse
- Emotional deprivation

Child abuse usually is not a single act of physical abuse or neglect, but is typically a repeated pattern of behavior.

A child abuser is most often a parent, stepparent, or other caretaker of a child. He or she can be found in all cultural, ethnic, occupational, and socioeconomic groups.

### DEFINITION OF TERMS:

"Abuse" and "neglect" may be defined as follows (derived from the Washington, D.C. Code, Section 16-2301):

"Abuse" A Child whose parent, guardian, or custodian inflicts or fails to make reasonable efforts to prevent the infliction of physical or mental injury upon the child, including excessive corporal punishment, or an act of sexual abuse or molestation, or exploitation.

"Neglect" refers to a child:

1. Who has been abandoned by his or her parent, guardian, or other custodian; or
2. Who is without proper parental care or control, subsistence, education as required by law, or other care or control necessary for his or her physical, mental or emotional health (and the deprivation is not due to lack of financial means); or
3. Whose parent, guardian, or other custodian is unable to discharge his or her responsibilities to and for the child because of incarceration, hospitalization, or other physical or mental incapacity; or
4. Whose parent, guardian, or custodian refuses or is unable to assume the responsibility for the child's care, control, or subsistence, and the person or institution which is providing for the child states an intention to discontinue such care; or
5. Who is in imminent danger of being abused and whose sibling has been abused.

### INDICATORS OF VARIOUS TYPES OF ABUSE

One of the most important grounds for suspicion of child abuse is the one that is discussed the least: when child tells someone. It is essential that the child **not** be ignored, nor the gravity of the situation minimized. In most cases, however, an abused child will not volunteer information about abuse. Thus teachers need to recognize the physical/emotional signs of abuse in order to help the child. The following are possible indicators associated with child abuse. It is important to remember, however, that there may well be other reasons for these indicators (e.g., restlessness) not associated with abuse. Prudence and a paramount concern for the welfare of the child should always guide any decision to report suspected abuse.

## **Physical Abuse**

### Bruises:

1. Unexplained bruises and welts located on the face, lips, mouth, torso, back, buttocks or thighs which often reflect the shape of the object used to inflict the injury, e.g., electric cords, belt buckles and stick. Normal bruises or welts do not usually cause lacerations, deep discoloration or other trauma to the extent injuries from abuse do.
2. Bruises which regularly appear after absences, weekends or vacations.

### Burns:

3. Burns in unusual places, especially on the soles of the feet, palms of the hands, the back and buttocks. (These are often caused by cigars or cigarettes.)
4. Burns resembling sock-like or glove-like markings on the hands or feet, or “doughnut” burns on the buttocks or genital area. (These burns are caused by forced immersion in scalding liquids.)
5. Appliance or tool burns which leave a pattern mark of the object (iron, electric burner, fireplace tool, etc.)
6. Rope burns on the arms, legs, neck or torso. (These appear when children are tied to beds or other structures.)

### Fractures and Other Injuries:

7. Unexplained fractures (particularly to the nose or facial structures) in various stages of healing. (Fractures which are a result of child abuse frequently cannot be explained by one episode or trauma. They often have not healed properly and have some additional patterns of stress in terms of growth that are evident upon examination.)
8. Multiple fractures appearing in different parts of the body (ribs, vertebral compression or spinal fractures.)
9. Injuries which are in various stages of healing are clustered or form regular patterns over the same injured area.
10. Unexplained abrasions and lacerations to the mouth, lips, gums, eyes and external genitalia.
11. Unexplained swelling of the abdomen, localized tenderness and constant vomiting.
12. Human bite marks, especially when they are recurrent and/or appear to be adult size.

### Behavioral Indicators:

13. Unexplained behavior patterns, such as fear of adult contact, apprehension when other children cry, fear of parents or fear of going home.
14. Chronic tardiness, poor attendance, increased withdrawal, preoccupation, or simply the need to talk to someone.
15. Inability to establish good peer relations.
16. Restlessness or inability to sit down.

## **Physical Neglect**

### Physical Indicators:

17. Constant hunger.
18. Poor Hygiene.
19. Inappropriate dress for weather conditions.
20. Unattended physical or medical needs.
21. Lack of supervision in especially dangerous situations or activities over long periods of time.

### Behavioral Indicators:

22. Alcohol or drug abuse.
23. Begging for or stealing food.
24. Making statements which indicate there is no guardian or parent home.
25. Extended stays at school (early arrival or late departures).
26. Constant fatigue, listlessness or falling asleep in class.

## **Sexual Abuse**

### Physical Indicators:

27. Difficulty in walking or sitting.
28. Torn, stained or bloody underclothing.
29. Complaints of pain or itching in the genital area.
30. Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia, vaginal or anal area.
31. Venereal disease in the genital area, mouth or eyes.

### Behavioral indicators:

32. Unwillingness to change clothes for gym class or to participate in physical education class.
33. Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge in younger children, including withdrawal, fantasy or infantile behavior.
34. Verbal reports by the child of sexual relations with a caretaker or parent.

## **Emotional Abuse**

Just as physical injuries can scar and incapacitate a child, emotional cruelty can similarly cripple and handicap a child emotionally, behaviorally, and intellectually. Obviously, individual incidents of emotional abuse are difficult to identify and /or recognize. However, the interest of the child should be primary, and if it is suspected that the child is suffering from emotional abuse, it should be reported. Furthermore, if there is an indication that emotional abuse is being inflicted willfully and causing unjustifiable mental suffering, reporting is required.

### Behavioral Indicators:

35. Withdrawn, depressed, apathetic behavior.
36. Antisocial or “acting out” behavior.
37. Overly rigid in conforming to instruction or authority figures.
38. Displaying other signs of emotional turmoil (repetitive, rhythmic movements, inordinate attention to details, and no verbal or physical communication to others).
39. Unwittingly makes comments about own behavior: “Daddy always tells me I am bad.”

## **Emotional Deprivation**

Like emotional abuse, emotional deprivation can leave serious scars on a child. It, too, is difficult to recognize or identify. However, the same precautions apply: in the best interests of the child, suspected emotional deprivation should be reported and/or referred for some type of intervention treatment.

### Physical Indicators:

40. Speech disorders.
41. Lag in physical development, frailty, refusal to eat.
42. Failure to thrive,
43. Thumb or lip sucking (habit disorders).
44. Constantly “seeking out” other adults for attention and affection.
45. Attempted suicide.
46. Antisocial or destructive behavior.
47. Sleep disorder, inhibition of play, neurotic traits.
48. Behavior extremes (such as complaint/demanding, passive/aggressive).
49. Hysteria, phobias, or compulsive traits.

## **Parental Attitudes**

Some noticeable indicators in parental behavior that may indicate abuse:

50. Blaming and belittling the child.
51. Overly defensive or abusive reaction when approached about problems concerning the child.

- 52. Apathetic or unresponsive attitude.
- 53. Showing little concern about the child as evidence by lack of interest in what the child is doing in school and lack of participation on parent's or child's part in school activities.
- 54. Finding nothing good or attractive in the child.

**Children of Alcoholic Parent (s)**

Children of alcoholic parents frequently experience personal guilt, even fear that they may be the cause of the drinker's behavior. They may threaten or actually hurt themselves to force the love and attention of their parent (s).

**Behavioral Indicators:**

- 55. May cover up real feeling by pretending not to care.
- 56. May assume responsibility for siblings.
- 57. Covers up for what's happening at home by fabricating.
- 58. Afraid or embarrassed to bring friends home
- 59. May feel unloved or uncared for.
- 60. Bargains with the alcoholic: makes promises about behavior, "I'll get better school marks, go to church, or keep my room clean,....." in exchange for a promise that the drinking and fighting stop.
- 61. Believes no one can possible understand how he/she feels.
- 62. Refuses dates out of fear or anxiety.
- 63. Treats people (teachers, schoolmates, teammates, etc.) unjustly because he/she is angry at someone else for drinking too much.

**Regulations**

- 1. The laws of both Maryland and the District of Columbia require the filing of a report of any suspected child abuse/neglect case. If a religious educator observes an event or the effects of possible abuse that may have occurred at home or elsewhere, he or she has an obligation to ensure that a report is made. The law does not require the reporter to have proof that abuse/neglect has occurred before reporting. (Waiting for proof may involve grave risk to the child and is a violation of the law.) Any doubt about reporting suspected child abuse or neglect is to be resolved in favor of making a report.
- 2. Anyone suspecting child abuse/neglect is cautioned not to try to investigate or resolve a suspected case of child abuse/neglect. Rather, it is the individual's legal obligation to report such suspected cases to the proper authorities.
- 3. The law specifically provides that any person participating in good faith in the making of a report of suspected child abuse/neglect shall be immune from liability, civil or criminal, which might be incurred or imposed with respect to the making of such report. The good faith of the person making the report is presumed unless specifically refuted by a person bringing a suit.

<u>Necessary Oral Report Information</u>	
1.	Child's Name & Date of Birth
2.	School & Grade
3.	Type of Referral Physical Sexual Mental Injury Neglect
4.	Name of Persons Responsible for Child, Parent/Guardian, Address & Telephone Number
5.	Suspected Abuser
6.	Describe Nature of Injury

**Agencies to Receive a Copy of the  
Abuse or Neglect Report Within 48 Hours**

- St. Mary's County Department of  
Social Services  
Child Protective Services  
180 Washington Street  
Leonardtown, MD 20650  
301-475-4816  
301-475-8018 (After Hours)  
Contact Debra Walsh
  
- St. Mary's County Sheriff's  
Department  
P.O. Box 1559  
Leonardtown, MD 20650  
301-475-8008
  
- State Attorney's for St. Mary's  
County  
P.O. Box 328  
Leonardtown, MD 20650