

The Purpose and Practice of this Local Assembly

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- 1) The church's overweening purpose is doxological¹ in nature.
- 2) Every policy, practice and movement of this local assembly shall be aimed at the ultimate goal of bringing glory to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3) The church shall seek to meet this objective through the following means:
 - a) Evangelism – the calling out of God's elect through the publication and preaching of the *good news* message:
 - i) Salvation is freely given by grace and apprehended by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone.
 - ii) Salvation is only made possible by the meritorious and efficacious work of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross.
 - iii) The vicarious atonement of Christ was demonstrated as efficacious by His bodily resurrection from the dead after three days.
 - iv) Salvation, therefore, is appropriated by simple faith in the efficacious quality of the Lord's sacrifice on behalf of that individual.
 - v) Salvation is eternal in nature and can never be appropriated nor negated by human works, good or bad, moral or immoral. Thus, the believer's salvation is both eternal and secure (unalterable).
 - b) The exaltation of the Word of God:
 - i) The written Word of God shall be the central focus of every meeting of the local church.
 - ii) The living Word, our Lord Jesus Christ, shall be the only Person exalted before this congregation of believers. To exalt anyone else would be to detract from the church's doxological purpose and would thus dishonor the Lord.
 - iii) Care shall always be taken to present the written Word in its exegetical, historical and dispensational contexts.
 - iv) It shall be the responsibility of the elders of the church to insure that no one is allowed to address the congregation who has not demonstrated (1) sufficient maturity and/or (2) proficiency in handling the scriptures which would qualify him/her to do so. The only exception being a occasional testimony that honors the Lord Jesus.
 - c) Discipleship:
 - i) Discipleship, a vital part of the Great Commission,² is the responsibility of every believer, not the church's leadership alone.

¹ The word *doxological* is a theological term that comes from the Greek word (*doxa*), which means *glory*. The fact that the Church's purpose is primarily doxological simply means that *her primary purpose is to glorify God in all that she does*.

² **Matthew 28:19-20**: "[Jesus said] Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

- ii) The leadership will be diligent to instruct and encourage the local assembly to identify and disciple those believers to whom the Lord has placed in their lives as their *personal ministry*.
- d) The two Christian rituals:
 - i) The Lord's Table shall be observed once monthly with both the cup and the bread to remember the Lord's sacrifice until His return in accordance with the scriptures.
 - ii) The individual believer, instructed in the fundamentals of the Christian faith, brings glory to the Lord in baptism by making a public profession of his/her faith before the assembled body of believers. The church shall conduct scheduled opportunities for believers to make this public profession.
- e) Worship:
 - i) It will be the responsibility of the leadership to provide an environment and ambiance within the local assembly that is conducive to worship.
 - ii) The selection of music will be such that leads the congregation into the Lord's presence through songs that are contemplative, meditative, tranquil and doctrinally sound.
- f) Praise:
 - i) Public adoration of the Lord will be promoted by the leadership at every gathering of the local assembly.
 - ii) Worship will be always be conducted in an orderly, God-honoring manner that would not (likely) be an offense to either an unbeliever or believer at any level of maturity.
- g) Giving:
 - i) Giving is an important expression of our commitment to the furtherance of the work of the church under the ultimate headship of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - ii) The offering will be conducted in manner which is honoring to the Lord in every way:
 - (1) In accordance with the scriptures, an offering will be taken once per week on the first day of the week, the Lord's Day (Sunday).³
 - (2) No devotional on the subject of finances will accompany the taking of the Sunday offering; it shall be received in a manner that respects the privacy of the believer and honors the Lord (i.e., without fanfare).
 - (3) If the church has legitimate needs, these needs will be laid before the congregation without an emotional appeal.
 - (4) Giving should be conducted in accordance with the principle of grace. Any manipulation or appeal that motivates a believer to give is inconstant with this local assembly's doxological purpose. Grace glorifies the Lord; human effort in the form of manipulation does not.
 - (5) No offering shall be taken at any mid-week service. An offering box shall be made available to those believers who wish to offer a financial gift during the week.
- h) Public Prayer:

³ **1 Corinthians 16:2:** "On the *first day of every week* let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." (italics mine)

- i) Each meeting of the church will include a time of public prayer, conducted in a doctrinal and God-honoring, orderly manner.
- ii) We will not permit public prayer in *other tongues*.