

Core Beliefs

Harvest Community Fellowship

The central ministry of the local church is the continuous communication of the Scriptures to the people of God so they may know God and serve Him in worship and in ministry.

Through study, prayer, and experience, the elders have come to convictions regarding major truths of the Bible. These core beliefs reflect the heart of the teaching and ministry of Harvest Community Fellowship.

THE BIBLE

The Bible is the written revelation of God, being fully inspired, absolutely inerrant, infallible, and God-breathed. It is the only authority for all faith and practice.

[Psalm 19:1-14; Hebrews 4:12; Isaiah 30:8; 1 Corinthians 2:6-16; Matthew 5:18; Matthew 24:34-35; John 10:35; John 16:12-13; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11; Revelation 22:18-19](#)

GOD

There is only one true and living God who is perfect, personal, infinite, and He exists eternally in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

[Matthew 28:19; Genesis 1:26; Psalm 139:8; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:4-6; Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4; John 4:24; Mark 12:29; John 1:14; Acts 5:3-5; Revelation 1:4-6](#)

God is the first Person of the Trinity. He orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace. He is sovereign (supreme ruler) in providence (His will) and redemption.

[Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:33](#)

He is the sole Creator of the universe, which He accomplished from no pre-existing substance, but by the creative power of His spoken Word.

[Genesis 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-3; John 1:1-3](#)

He is immutable (unchanging over time or unable to be changed), omnipotent (having unlimited power; able to do anything), omnipresent (present everywhere at the same time), and omniscient (knowing everything).

[Psalm 102:25-27; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17; Hebrews 13:8; Isaiah 40:28; Psalm 115:3; Psalm 33:6; Romans 4:17; Isaiah 44:24; Hebrews 1:3; Jeremiah 23:23; Psalm 139:1-24; Isaiah 40:13; Romans 8:28; Psalm 104:24; Matthew 6:25-33; 1 Corinthians 4:5](#)

JESUS

Jesus is the second Person of the Trinity, is co-equal with the Father, and true Man at the same time.

[Philippians 2:5-8; Micah 5:2; Colossians 2:9; John 14:9-11; 1 John 5:20; Jude 25](#)

He is the virgin born Son of the living God and was God in human flesh.

[Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:22-25; Luke 1:26-35; John 1:1, 3, 14, 18; 1 John 1:3](#)

He lived a sinless life, died on the cross in the place of our sins, rose physically from the grave, ascended to sit at the right hand of God to intercede on every believer's behalf, and is returning to receive His church and rule and reign forever.

[2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:24; Romans 3:25; Romans 5:8; Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Hebrews 9:24-28; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 7:25; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 2:17-18; Hebrews 4:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20](#)

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity. A divine Person, eternal and co-equal with the Father.

[Hebrews 9:14; Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:2-6](#)

The Holy Spirit convicts of sin, glorifies Jesus Christ, regenerates the unsaved, dwells in the believer, comforts the afflicted, equips the saints with gifts, sanctifies, unifies the body, assures us of our salvation, teaches us the Word of God, and the evidence of His presence in our lives will be the fruit of the Spirit.

[John 16:8-11; John 15:26; John 3:5-8; John 14:16-18; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; John 14:16, 26; Romans 12; Ephesians 4; 1 Corinthians 12; Romans 15:16; Ephesians 4:3; 1 John 3:24; John 14:17, 26; Galatians 5:22-23](#)

MAN

We believe man was created by God in His image and likeness to live in perfect fellowship with his creator. By Adam's sin, this fellowship was broken bringing the penalty of physical death and spiritual separation from God to all mankind. Therefore, man is by nature a sinner.

[Genesis 1:26-27; 3:23-24; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Psalm 51:5; Ephesians 2:3; Romans 5:18-19](#)

SALVATION

Salvation does not come as the result of something we have done but rather because of what God has done. It is a free gift that cannot be earned or is deserved.

[Romans 6:23](#)

Salvation is by **grace alone** through **faith alone** in **Christ alone**. [Ephesians 2:8-9](#)

By Grace alone... [Titus 3:5-7; Romans 11:6](#)

Through Faith alone... [Romans 3:28; Romans 4:4-5](#)

In Christ alone... [John 14:6; Acts 4:12](#)

Jesus Christ did all the work to save us from our sins.

[Romans 3:10](#) as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one;
[Romans 3:23](#) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
[Romans 5:8](#) but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
[Romans 6:23](#) For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
[Romans 8:1](#) There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
[Romans 10:9](#) because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
[Romans 10:13](#) For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Justification is a one-time act of God by which He declares us righteous who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins and confess Him as Lord. This righteousness is not of our own doing or works, but involves Christ taking our sin upon Himself and giving us His righteousness in its place.

[Romans 8:33; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 3:19; Acts 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6-7; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11; Romans 3:20; 4:6; Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:26](#)

Every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint.

This position of being sanctified by our justification should not be confused with the process of sanctification (becoming more Christ like). Every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness (sanctification), becoming more and more like Jesus Christ.

[Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2; John 17:17, 19; Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9](#)

WATER BAPTISM

What

Baptism is a commandment from Jesus and a proclamation (public announcement) of one's faith in Him.

It is a beautiful picture of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection and represents the spiritual union with Christ in death to sin and resurrection to a new life.

Baptism is a sign of fellowship and identification with the body of Christ – the church.

[Matt 28:18-20; Romans 6:1-11; Galatians 3:27; Acts 2:41-42; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13](#)

Why

In Scripture, baptism is commanded of believers and is the response for people who trust in Jesus.

When people accepted Christ as Savior in New Testament times, they believed in Him, repented of their sins, confessed Christ as Lord, and were baptized.

As a modern-day Church following biblical standards, our elders believe we should "do what they did" and "teach what they taught" in Scripture.

[Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38-41, 8:36-38](#)

How

When Paul and other authors wrote of baptism, they always used the Greek word ("baptizo") that means "to dip or immerse."

Christ models immersion in water in His own baptism.

Immersion was the commonly accepted form of baptism in the church for hundreds of years. Only in the later centuries did men begin to substitute different modes of baptism.

[Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22](#)

ETERNAL SECURITY

The Bible does not teach unconditional security. The condition to our security is that we must truly be saved.

Someone who claims to be saved, yet lives a life of continual, habitual sin is like the person Paul warned Jude about. The person who lives like this is not saved and is living with a false security.

[Jude 3-4; 1 John 3:6; Matthew 7:15-23; Hebrews 10:26-31](#)

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to the body for the accomplishment of the Lord's mandate to the church. The exercise or use of spiritual gifts should be in accordance with Scriptural principles.

[Romans 12; Matthew 28:18-20](#)

THE CHURCH

The Bible teaches that all who place their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are immediately baptized by the Holy Spirit into one, united spiritual body. The head of this body is Jesus.

[1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 5:23b, Colossians 1:18](#)

The purpose of the church is to glorify God... [Ephesians 3:21, Colossians 1:28-29](#)

- ◆ by building itself up in the faith, [Ephesians 4:13-16](#)
- ◆ by instruction of the Word, [2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-17](#)
- ◆ by fellowship, [Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3](#)
- ◆ serving and edifying one another through the use of spiritual gifts and talents, [Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11](#)
- ◆ by keeping the ordinances, [Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42](#)
- ◆ and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world. [Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8](#)

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

When an individual is saved, he becomes a member of the body of Christ (Universal Church). Because they are united to Christ and the other members of the body in this way, they are qualified to become a member of a local expression of that body (local church).

The idea of experiencing salvation without belonging to a local church is foreign in the New Testament. When individuals repented and believed in Christ, they were baptized and added to the church.

More than simply living out a private commitment to Christ, this meant joining together formally with other believers in a local assembly and devoting themselves to the apostles' teachings, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer.

In the book of Acts, much of the terminology fits only with the concept of formal church membership. Phrases such as "the whole congregation", "the church in Jerusalem", "the disciples" in Jerusalem, "in every church", "the whole church", and "the elders of the church" in Ephesus, all suggest recognizable church bodies with well-defined boundaries.

According to the practices found in scripture, a believer should formally commit oneself to an identifiable, local body of believers. When one becomes a member of a church, they submit themselves to the teaching, care, and the authority of the elders that God has placed in that assembly.

[1 Corinthians 12:13; Acts 2:41-42, 2:47; 5:14; 6:5; 8:1; 9:26; 14:23; 15:17; 16:5; 20:17; Hebrews 10:24-25](#)

COMMUNION

JESUS says, "Do this in remembrance of me."

The Bible does not set a prescribed time for observing communion, but we make it available each Sunday.

Although the elements of the Lord's Supper are symbols of the flesh and blood of Christ, participation in communion is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ, who dwells in every believer, and so is present, fellowshiping with His people.

We believe only repentant believers who have carefully examined themselves should partake of this communion.

[Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32](#)

WORSHIP AND PRAISE

We are commanded to praise the Lord and worship Him.

Our worship and praise to God may express itself in many forms: clapping and shouting, singing, bowing and kneeling, lifting hands, or by playing musical instruments.

Worship is the pouring out of all that we are in adoration to Him for all that He is.

[Psalm 150, Psalm 47:1, Psalm 95:1-2, Psalm 95:6, Psalm 63:4, 1 Corinthians 14:40](#)

CHURCH GOVERNMENT

The Bible teaches that the local church is to be governed by a plurality of godly leaders called elders. The primary responsibility of an elder is to serve as a manager and caretaker of the church.

[1 Timothy 3:5; 1 Timothy 5:17](#)

The qualifications for these men are found in [1 Timothy 3:1-7](#) and [Titus 1:6-9](#).

As spiritual overseers of the flock, elders are to...

- ◆ determine church policy. [Acts 15:22](#)
- ◆ oversee the church. [Acts 20:28](#)
- ◆ ordain others. [Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5](#)
- ◆ rule, teach, and preach. [1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; 1 Timothy 3:2](#)
- ◆ exhort and refute. [Titus 1:9](#)
- ◆ and act as shepherds, setting an example for all. [1 Peter 5:1-3](#)

ELDER PRAYER

The Bible teaches that if someone is sick they may call for the elders of the church to come, anoint them with oil, and pray for them.

[James 5:14](#)

CHURCH DISCIPLINE

The Bible teaches that we are to follow the steps Jesus gave in the case of a brother or sister guilty of sin. All church discipline should be redemptive and restorative in nature. Sins such as immorality are to be dealt with lovingly and precisely. Believers are instructed in Scripture to judge other believers. And they are to be obedient and submissive to the spiritual leaders God has placed in the church.

[Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-2; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 1 Corinthians 5:12; Hebrews 13:17](#)

The steps of church discipline as outlined in Matthew 18:15-17 are as follows:

Step one – You have first-hand knowledge of sin in someone’s life. You go to them privately and confront them ([Matthew 18:15; Luke 17:3](#)). If they repent, you have won them back.

If they don’t repent...

Step two – You go back and confront them again with two or three others who have witnessed this sin and can verify it ([Matthew 18:16; Deuteronomy 19:15; 1 Timothy 5:19](#)). If they repent, you have won them back.

If they don’t repent...

Step three – You take this matter before the leaders of the church ([Matthew 18:17; 1 Timothy 5:19-20](#)). If they repent, you have won them back.

If they don’t repent...

Step four – You withdraw fellowship from this person ([Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Timothy 1:20; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15](#)). If they repent, you have won them back.

If they don’t repent...

Step five – Have nothing to do with them. You have done everything you can do. [Romans 16:17-19; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; Ezekiel 33:7-9](#)

MARRIAGE & INTIMACY

Marriages of believers are to illustrate the loving relationship of Christ and His church, with the husband loving his wife as Christ loves the church and the wife responding to her husband’s loving leadership as the church responds to Christ.

The term “marriage” has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single exclusive union.

God hates divorce, permitting it only where there has been unrepentant sexual sin or desertion by an unbeliever.

God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

[Ephesians 5:18–33; Genesis 2:23–24; Malachi 2:14–16; Matthew 5:32, 19:9; 1 Corinthians 7:12–15; Hebrews 13:4](#)

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

Jesus is coming back bodily to rule and reign. Our Lord promised it, the apostles confirmed it, and the entire book of Revelation celebrates it.

The return of Christ will be visible. He will not come in secret; He will not come "mystically," or only to those with eyes to see Him. All humanity will witness His coming.

[John 14:1-3; Matthew 26:64; Luke 21:27; Acts 1:9-11; Matthew 24:29-30; Revelation 1:7](#)