



MEMBERSHIP CLASS

“To clarify the gospel and reclaim the purpose of the kingdom.”

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE?

- What does it mean to “Seek first the Kingdom of God?” (Matt 6:33)
- How does this apply to the local church?
- How does this apply to our everyday life?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE REFORMED?

1) Calvinism

- 5 points of Calvinism (TULIP)
 - Total Depravity
 - Unconditional Election
 - Limited Atonement
 - Irresistible Grace
 - Perseverance of the Saints

2) Covenantalism

- Tri-covenantal
 - Covenant of Redemption
 - Covenant of Works
 - Covenant of Grace

3) Confessionalism (further explanation below)

- 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith

4) Law/Gospel Distinction

- Law = do this and live
- Gospel = declaration of what has been done

5) Ordinary Means of Grace

1. *Preached word*
 - a. Fellowship around the word
 - b. Music
 - c. Teaching
2. *Prayer*
 - a. Praying together
 - b. For each other
3. *Sacraments*
 - a. Baptism
 - b. Lord's Table

WHY DO WE SUBMIT TO A CONFESSION?

- Do all Christians agree on what the bible teaches?
- What is an easy way to explain what you believe is true about scripture?
 - Statement or Confession
- How accurate do you believe your statement or confession to be?

Confessions are born out of controversy.

- a. We are not the first to read and misuse Scripture.

Confessions bring unity and direction

- b. What can we unify on?
- c. What is most important about Scripture?

Confessions protect the church.

- d. Church discipline
- e. Leadership

PURPOSE OF CHURCH MEMBERS?

Let's begin by answering this question:

What do you believe is the primary purpose of the local church?

Eph. 4:1 ¶ I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,

Eph. 4:2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,

Eph. 4:3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

QUESTION: What do you believe is the greatest threat to the church today?

This next section is Paul pointing to every reason why we are to be one group of people seeking to function in peace and unity.

Eph. 4:4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—

Eph. 4:5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

Eph. 4:6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

The moment we come into the family of God through the gospel, we all have this same confession. Nothing separates you from me. Therefore, there is not a reason for us to be separated.

Eph. 4:7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

In context, we will learn that Paul is not speaking of salvation but spiritual gifts here. We know this because of how Paul concludes that this grace is used.

Eph. 4:11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, [each one of these are described as being giving from the Spirit, these are spiritually gifted people. What is their purpose?]

Eph. 4:12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

Eph. 4:13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ

Notice how the progression works: Those gifted with teaching and preaching equip the “saints” so that they live successful lives as Christians.

NO! It is so that they can do the work of ministry. Ministering what? The gospel. To whom are they ministering the gospel? The body of Christ.

The teachers and preachers are using their gifts to equip the body to use their gifts for one purpose...building up the body of Christ.

And what is the end goal?

THERE ARE TWO SPECIFIC GOALS FROM PAUL:

1) The Protection of the Church

Eph. 4:14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

2) The spiritual health of the church

Eph. 4:15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,

Eph. 4:16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, [remember the gifts he gave earlier?] when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

This is why teaching and preaching God's word is vital to us.

COMMON QUESTIONS / MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE CHURCH

WHAT IS DISCIPLESHIP?

1. All of church is discipleship.

- a. Preaching / Teaching
- b. Bible study
- c. Grace groups

2. We are not trying to become better individuals but members of Christ together.

- a. Discipleship is not about my growth but our growth together
- b. Discipleship is not the next step in Christianity
 - i. All Christians are disciples
 - ii. Matt 28 makes them the same
- c. Discipleship is being trained with God's people to learn how to love and serve God's people...not to be separated from them in isolation.

WHAT IS WORSHIP?

Worship = To ascribe worth or value to something.

Ex. 34:14 (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God),

1Cor. 14:26 ¶ What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

Eph. 5:15 ¶ Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,

Eph. 5:16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

Eph. 5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Eph. 5:18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,

Eph. 5:19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart,

Eph. 5:20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Eph. 5:21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Col. 3:12 ¶ Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,

Col. 3:13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Col. 3:14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Col. 3:15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

Col. 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Col. 3:17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

WHAT ARE THE CHURCH OFFICERS?

1. Elders (plurality)
 - a. Dedicated to the spiritual health of the church by means of studying the Word and prayer
2. Deacons
 - a. Dedicated to the physical needs of the church

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ELDER LED?

1. Elders are leading the church spiritually, making decisions that reflect that goal.
2. Elders are equal in responsibility and decision making
3. Congregation votes on significant decisions, and new officers

WHAT IS CHURCH DISCIPLINE?

1. **Biblical mandate**
 - a. Gal 6:1
 - b. Matt 18
2. **Designed for the protection of the Christian and the unity of the church**
 - a. Protect the struggling Christian
 - b. Protects the unity of the family

DEALING WITH CONFLICT BIBLICALLY

1) Dealing with sin

Matt. 18:15 ¶ "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.

2) Dealing with controversies

Titus 3:8 The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

Titus 3:9 But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.

Titus 3:10 As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him,

Titus 3:11 knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

3) Dealing with disagreements

Heb. 13:17 ¶ Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Follow the biblical structure God has put in place; it is for the protection of your souls. If you have a conflict, concern, or disagreement, go to your elders and discuss this with them.

WHY BE A MEMBER?

1. You desire to be cared for and care for others
2. You want to be known, not just seen
3. The church is more than just what happens Sunday

NEXT STEPS:

1. Read through:
 - a. 1689 London Baptist Confession
 - b. Read our book "REST."
 - c. Read through our constitution and bylaws
2. Meet with an elder:
 - a. To answer any questions about our doctrine or church practices
 - b. To give your testimony of faith