



**SOUTHSIDE
C H U R C H**

EXPLORING SOUTHSIDE

**Discover how our church functions
and how we apply the theology
we understand the Bible to teach.**

Welcome!

We thank God that you have taken interest in Southside Church. We believe that it is within God's plan that we should come to know you and be part of your life as you also become part of ours. We, at Southside Church, seek to be a home for all of God's people.

This class doesn't merely introduce you to this church and its congregation. It's designed to introduce you to Christ's church in general. The Church is God's idea. We glean from His word who we are and how we are to function as a body together! Southside roots itself in the Word of God so that we follow God's pattern for growth and not the trends of the age.

Jesus told his disciples that they were "in" the world but not "of" the world (John 17:14-21). This class explains in greater detail what this means. At Southside Church, we are not looking for people to become members so that we can add their names on a list. Rather, we desire to see them grow in their faith in Christ by being part of a community of believers. Part of not being "of" the world is to resist the temptation to live out our faith in isolation apart from a local church. Simply put, a person cannot please God, grow in their walk with Him, and be fruitful in life without involvement in a community of fellow believers. Church membership is thus a commitment to the Lord by committing to a group of Christians who although different are equal in salvation in Christ.

We hope you enjoy this class, learn from the lessons, and prayerfully consider signing the membership covenant. Jesus will not return to earth for just select individuals. Scripture tells us that he will return for his church. I trust this class is the next step in your growing love for and devotion to Christ's church.

Much Grace,

Pastor Ben

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Lesson 1 - The Church	6
Lesson 2 - Scripture	10
Lesson 3 - God and Man	14
Lesson 4 - Sin and Salvation	17
Lesson 5 - The Person and Work of Jesus Christ	24
Lesson 6 - The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit	27
Lesson 7 - The Distinctives of Southside	30
Lesson 8 - Dealing with Conflict	34
Lesson 9 – Getting Involved and Next Steps	39

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Southside Church. We're glad you've decided to participate in this class because it indicates that you would like to know more about who we are as a church. As you will soon see in this class, we are a group of people seeking to live out our relationship with God through Christ. Our ultimate goal is that you will grow closer to God through this process. Let's start by learning who the people of Southside are.

During this course, you will meet several teachers that will guide you through the material. They are

They are other important people that make possible the ministry of Southside Church. Let's look at who they are.

The Staff _____

The Elders _____

The Deacons _____

Other Ministry Leaders _____

History of Southside Church

Southside Church was founded by Phil Spry in 1997. The church initially met at Rand Road Elementary School in Garner. In 2002, the church moved to its present location when the land was donated by the developer of the local neighborhood. When Pastor Spry retired, James Harmeling was hired to replace Pastor Spry.

The church continued to grow and in 2006 launched Southside Christian School with grades K4-2. A new grade level was added each year until it became K4-12 in 2016. In 2018, the school became a separate entity and continues to serve the families of Johnston County.

Pastor Ben Myers was called as the Associate Pastor of Discipleship in 2010. Both Pastor Jim and Pastor Ben are graduates of the Master's Seminary, founded by John MacArthur, in Sun Valley, CA. In mid-2017, Pastor Jim was called to start a seminary in Singapore. His last Sunday as Senior Pastor was December 31, 2017. Pastor Ben was called to the position of Senior Pastor in January 2018.

The Organization and Theology of Southside

We are an elder led church, where major decisions are made by a group of men who welcome input from all sources. Our theology aligns well with that of Reformed Baptist churches. In order to become a member of Southside, a person must be baptized by immersion after coming to faith in Christ. Being baptized at Southside is not a necessity. If you were baptized at another church by immersion as a believer we will accept your baptism. We will go into more detail regarding the sacraments and Reformed Baptist theology in subsequent classes.

It is not necessary that members agree with everything the elders believe and teach. What we do ask, if you disagree with something that is being taught, is that you examine the Scriptures then speak directly to the teacher (or elders) to discuss the issue. We understand that there are certain doctrines with which godly men and women disagree. Sometimes people just have to agree to disagree and live together. We desire peace, but not at the expense of what we believe to be truth. We fully understand that we are not infallible. If you believe the leadership to be in error in the interpretation or application of Scripture, we encourage you to discuss this with us. It is important that effort be made to resolve all differences.

One of the more frustrating aspects of church dynamics is when people who have been part of a church, sometimes for many years, suddenly leave with no apparent reason. It is similar to a husband of 25 years coming home one day and announcing that he wants out of the marriage.

There are biblical reasons for leaving a marriage and there should be biblical reasons when someone leaves a church. In neither case should a person just leave without trying to resolve the issues. Running away from a problem is not the answer in a marriage, nor is it the answer in a church. Unresolved problems stick like glue.

The Outline of this Class

Over the next nine weeks, we will explore the following topics together.

Week 1 - What is the purpose of the Church?

Week 2 - The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture

Week 3 - Who is God and who is Man?

Week 4 - What is sin and our need for salvation

Week 5 - Who is Christ and what did he do?

Week 6 - Who is the Holy Spirit and what is his role in our lives?

Week 7 - The Distinctives of Southside Church

Week 8 - Church Unity and Conflict Resolution

Week 9 - Next steps?

If, at the end of this class, you wish to become a member of Southside Church, we will ask you to do two things. One is to write a summary of your conversion experience, describing 1) how God worked in your life to bring you to faith in Christ and 2) how your life has changed since becoming a Christian. After submitting the written testimony we will conduct an interview with you to review your testimony.

This is a time of encouragement, not intimidation. Some people have grown up in a Christian home and have not wandered into gross sins, so they do not have a dramatic conversion experience. Others, due to their pre-conversion lifestyle, may have a very dramatic conversion experience. We do not ask anyone to share the gory details of their life prior to coming to faith in Christ. It is important to understand that recognizing one's sin is a necessary step in the conversion process. We all are sinners and we will always fall short of God's standard of holiness for our lives. However, if you are in Christ, your sins are removed as far as the East is from the West, and you will increasingly hate your sins and seek to live for the glory of God.

LESSON 1 - THE CHURCH

When you ask someone to identify and describe their church, you will receive a myriad of answers. Some identify their church by its physical location and structure, its denominational affiliation, its various ministries, and sometimes, even by its pastor. In this lesson, we want to examine Scripture to define what it means to be a church, what its purpose and function are, and why we have church membership.

What is a church?

The first place we find the word “church” in Scripture is Matthew 16:18. Here, Jesus is speaking to Peter and states, “I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” The Greek word for church is *ekklesia*, which means “called out ones.” Literally, the church is the people who are called out of the world. It is ironic that most people think of a building when they think of church. In Romans 16:5, Paul emphasizes that the church is not a building, but people, when he refers to the home of Priscilla and Aquilla and says, “Greet also the church in their house.”

What are some important characteristics of the church found in Scripture?

- It belongs to _____ . (Matthew 16:18)
- Jesus’ role in the church is that he is _____
(Ephesians 1:22-23)
- The purpose of the church is _____

_____ (Ephesians 3:7-11) and _____

_____ (Ephesians 3:14-21)

The church is *NOT* a building. It is the *body of Christ* - all those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation (John 3:16, 1 Corinthians 12:12).

Local vs Universal Church _____

Invisible vs Visible Church _____

What does a church do?

So, what does this group of people called the body of Christ do? What is their purpose? What are some important characteristics that should be present in every church?

- Acts 2:42 _____
- Matthew 28:19-20 _____
- Acts 1:8 _____
- 1 Timothy 3 _____
- 2 Timothy 4:1-5 _____
- 1 Peter 5:1-5 _____
- Ephesians 4:15-16 _____
- James 1:27 _____

Paul’s metaphor in 1 Corinthians 12 that the church is the body of Christ is a great way to explain its purpose. When organized and functioning correctly, the church is God’s hands, feet, and mouth in this world. We are to be doing the things that Jesus Christ would be doing if He were physically present on the earth. The church is to be “Christian”, “Christ-like”, and “Christ-following.”

Who is the church?

Let’s look a little more closely at this group of people called the church. We know they are supposed to be acting as Jesus in the world. But what is God doing with and within them?

- They are called _____ (Romans 1:7, 1 Corinthians 1:2, Galatians 1:1-3, Ephesians 1:1, Colossians 1:1, Philippians 1:1, 1 Thessalonians 1:1)
- Christ is attempting to _____ (Phillipians 2:14-16)
- God is making _____ (Ephesians 2:18-22)
- The church stands for _____ (1 Timothy 3:15)

How does the Bible describe the church?

A church is a gathering of people who are set apart from the rest of the world in order to be progressively transformed by Jesus Christ as an eternal witness to his truth, power, and glory.

As a result of being called out of the world to be transformed by God and to act as His hands, feet, and mouth, there are some principles that should describe every church. Let's look at how the Bible describes the church in its everyday comings and goings.

- The church is dead people made *alive* (John 3:3, Ephesians 2:1-4, 2 Corinthians 5:17)
Principle: _____
- The church is the *body* of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-27, Ephesians 4:11-16)
Principle: _____
- The church is *living stones* constructing a building of God (Ephesians 2:19-22, 1 Peter 2:4-5)
Principle: _____
- The church is a flock of *sheep* (John 10:11, 14-15)
Principle: _____
- The church is a group of branches on a *vine* (John 15:5)
Principle: _____
- The church is a *bride* (Ephesians 5:25-27, Revelation 19:7-9)
Principle: _____
- The church is a group of *warriors* (Ephesians 6:10-20, Philippians 2:25, 1 Timothy 1:18)
Principle: _____
- The church is a group in an *athletic contest* (2 Timothy 4:7, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Hebrews 12:1)
Principle: _____

How does God view the Church?

Clearly, God places high value on the church. What do these verses say about God's view of the church?

- Acts 20:28 _____
- 1 Peter 1:18-19 _____
- Ephesians 5:25-27 _____

- Colossians 1:28-29 _____
-

What does membership in a church mean?

Certainly all the things described above can be accomplished without officially becoming a member of a local church. Church membership is an additional step of commitment to a group of believers. What commitments are being described in the following verses?

- Commitment to _____ (Galatians 6:1-2, Hebrews 13:17)
- Commitment to _____ (1 Peter 4:10, Galatians 6:9-10, Hebrews 10:24-25)
- Commitment to _____ (Ephesians 4:11-16, Hebrews 5:11-14, James 1:2-4)
- Commitment to _____ (Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10).

Although there is no scriptural mandate for official church membership, the early church was structured in such a way that people clearly knew if someone was “in” or “out” of the church (1 Corinthians 5:1-13, Matthew 18:17). Church membership is a way of identifying oneself with a local body of believers and of making oneself accountable to proper spiritual leadership (Hebrews 13:17). Church membership is a statement of solidarity and like-mindedness (Philippians 2:2). Church membership is also valuable for organizational purposes (Acts 6:3). But church membership also has a spiritual aspect – a locking of shields with other believers to advance the cause of Christ. God uses marriage language to describe His Church – she is Jesus’ bride. Therefore Church membership should be entered into carefully and once committed should not be quickly abandoned.

When should you leave a church?

1. Are there Biblical reasons to leave a church and if so what are they?
2. How does having a superficial commitment to a church hinder Spiritual Growth?
3. What is the cost to the cause of Christ when members leave?
4. What practical considerations might there be to leave a church? Are these valid?

Case Studies:

1. **We disagree with the church's mask policy.** While no church has handled this unprecedented event perfectly, we think your lack of mask wearing while promoting normal weekly events and home gatherings has been irresponsible. I view promoting safe practices during the pandemic as a wasted opportunity to show selflessness, leadership, and demonstrate love for the marginalized and fragile.
2. **A loss of relationships in the congregation.** Many of our close friends have left the church over the years. We've lost a feeling of commonality with those who remain. School choice for our children, how we lead our families in the faith, how we spend our recreation time, how we view politics, and even how we are to pragmatically interact with the world as believers often seem at odds with the majority of the congregation.
3. **Differences in philosophy of ministry.** We sensed a more family oriented ministry approach (for example having children at the women's dinner).
4. **Time to move on.** We have been going to this church for a long time and perhaps it's just time to move on. We just have a "feeling" that we don't fit in or belong in the same way we once did.

LESSON 2 - SCRIPTURE

At Southside, everything we do and believe is based on Scripture. Any discussion of Scripture leads to the discussion of terms such as “authority”, “infallibility”, “inspiration”, and “reliability”. At the conclusion of this lesson, you should have a good understanding as to where Southside stands on these issues and why.

What does it mean for Scripture to be “inspired”?

The *inspiration* of the Bible is of great importance because from it, ALL Christian doctrines are developed. The final authority in all matters rests upon the Bible. It is the record of God’s communication through men, what we would call *revelation*. When it comes to our ability to understand Scripture so that we can properly form doctrine, God himself drives this work. Let’s look at how this is accomplished.

What does 2 Timothy 3:16 say about Scripture? _____

How does Job 32:8 say that we are able to understand it? _____

Both verses above refer to the breath of God. The word *theopneustos* in 2 Timothy literally means divinely breathed in. It tells us that God enabled man to correctly record his revealed truth, i.e. inspiration. *Neshāmâ* is the word used in Job to refer to the breath of God. Here, we see that God *illuminates* man so that he can understand that which he has revealed.

Of course, this raises the question that if God illuminates man so that he can understand, how is that there can be varied interpretations of his words? We believe that taken as a whole, Scripture will not contradict itself and turn to that perspective to correct any heretical viewpoints. Lesson 8 on Unity will address matters that are not outright heresy and are legitimate differences of interpretation.

How did God accomplish this work of inspiration?

There are four broad views on the method God used to inspire the men who wrote the Bible.

- 1) _____ - men were inspired by some innate ability to create meaningful descriptions of “religious” themes

- 2) _____ - God gave men the words to pen, while overriding their personalities, i.e. they were like robots
- 3) _____ - some portions of the Bible are true and others are false. The stories involving miraculous events - the virgin birth, the resurrection, the creation account - are usually considered false.
- 4) _____ - God superintended the authors work so that the words they used were the ones he wanted. This differs from a *mechanical* view in that God used the life experiences of the authors as preparation for their writings. This view is the position held by the leadership at Southside.

An examination of both the Old and New Testament Scriptures reveals at least three different ways in which God transmitted his Word to his people.

- Deuteronomy 4:33, Matthew 3:17, Matthew 17:5, and John 12:28 _____

 - The phrase “thus says the LORD” occurs _____ times in the Old Testament.
 - Expressions such as “the Lord said”, “the Lord spoke”, “the word of the Lord came” are found _____ times
 - In explaining Creation in Genesis, Moses claims to transcribes the words of God no less than _____ times.
 - Throughout the Old Testament, the Lord speaks to _____

- Exodus 31:18, Exodus 32:16, 1 Chronicles 28:19 _____

- Exodus 4:10-12, Jeremiah 1:7, Ezekiel 3:10-11, Habbakuk 2:2 _____

Despite these methods, the men did not necessarily understand the words and predictions which they either spoke (John 11:50-52) or wrote (1 Peter 1:10-12). Some things are hidden from certain members of mankind (Deuteronomy 29:29) and others will not be revealed until the last days (Daniel 12:4,9). Even as the New Testament writers were recording their words, they had some sense that their words were inspired and therefore Scripture. Paul understood that the words he wrote were Scripture (1 Corinthians 2:13, and 14:37). Peter echoed this sentiment in his second epistle (2 Peter 3:15-16).

What are the grounds for the authority of the Bible?

One would think that accepting the Bible as God’s word would be sufficient to establish its authority. While we at Southside affirm both of those ideas, it is appropriate to examine how we see the authority of Scripture affirmed within its own words.

Throughout the New Testament, we see the prophecies of the Old Testament confirmed.

- Matthew 1:22 All this took place to _____ what the Lord had spoken by the prophet.
- Matthew 2:15b This was to _____ what the Lord had spoken by the prophet . . .
- Mark 12:36 David himself, in the Holy Spirit, _____, “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet.’”
- Acts 1:16 Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit _____ beforehand by the mouth of David . . .

Jesus affirmed the Old Testament Scriptures.

- He regarded them as _____ in their entirety. He showed this by _____

- He _____ the whole Scripture to himself
 - He said the _____ in Isaiah 61:1 spoke of _____ (Luke 4:16-21).
 - He said the Jews searched the Scriptures looking for eternal life, but he said the Scriptures _____ (John 5:39)
- In Matthew 4:4,7,10, he demonstrated the _____ of Scripture when he _____ Satan and forced him to _____ when he quoted from Deuteronomy.
- He upheld the _____ of Scriptures in Matthew 5:17-18.
- He accepted the _____ of the Old Testament as actual events
 - Genesis 7 _____
 - Genesis 19 _____
 - Jonah 1-4 _____
 - Daniel 9-12 _____

How reliable are the Scriptures?

Criticism of the Bible often takes the form of questioning the reliability of its text. How do we know that the text we have today has been properly copied and translated through the centuries? While not exhaustive, here are some facts that testify to the reliability of today's text.

- The Jews were very careful to accurately copy Scripture, for they understood them to be the very words of God. The discovery of the _____ in 1947 demonstrated that this process of making copies was amazingly accurate. Manuscripts written _____ were virtually identical to these scrolls.
- More than _____ of the New Testament are known to exist. These copies are dated as soon as _____ after the last book of the New Testament was written. By comparison, there are _____ partial copies of _____ and there is a _____ between its writing and its oldest known copy.

In terms of translation, there are many English translations available today. We believe that the Bible is inerrant and infallible, meaning that the original manuscripts are exactly the words that God had intended. We believe that no errors have crept into the "good" modern translations. By "good", we mean that a team of respected scholars performed the translation.

Translations fall along a spectrum of formal vs. dynamic equivalency. Formal equivalency indicates a word-for-word translation. Dynamic equivalency is a thought-for-thought translation. Examples of formal equivalency are ESV, ASB, NASB, KJV, and NKJV. The NIV is an example of a dynamic equivalency method.

As a whole, all of these issues are important because of the place Scripture has in our lives as Christians. It defines who God is, his attributes, and his character. It tells us who man is, his purpose, and how he should/should not live. Scripture defines sin and reveals why we are separated from God. It reveals the plan of salvation and how we can be redeemed. Scripture provides instructions on how to conduct every aspect of lives - our families, our work, our business, and our government. Scripture defines the function of the church and we are to worship God.

LESSON 3 - GOD AND MAN

This lesson will examine the nature of God and man, as well as their relationship with one another. Volumes upon volumes have been written about the nature of God, and yet it is a subject that has not yet been exhausted. Keeping that in mind, we will approach this daunting subject systematically by examining groups of Scripture to determine what they tell us about God and ourselves.

What are some essential attributes of God?

- God is _____
There are several words in the Bible that are translated as “holy”. Each carries its own nuance about God’s holiness.
 - Joshua 24:19 _____
 - Ezekiel 20:41 _____
 - Exodus 15:11 _____
 - Matthew 3:11 _____
 - Matthew 5:48 _____

- God is _____
 - Jeremiah 23:23-24
 - Psalm 139:7-10

- God is _____
 - Genesis 18:14
 - Ephesians 3:20

- God is _____
 - Job 37:16
 - 1 Corinthians 2:10-11
 - Matthew 11:21-23

- God is _____

- Genesis 1:1

- God is _____
 This is demonstrated in several different arenas:
 - Amos 4:7 _____
 - Proverbs 16:33 _____
 - James 5:13-15 _____
 - Psalm 139:16 _____
 - Ezra 1:1 _____
 - John 6:37 _____

- God exists in _____
 - Genesis 1:26
 - Genesis 18:1-3
 - Matthew 4:16-17
 - Ephesians 4

Who is man?

- Man is _____
 - Genesis 1:26-30
 - Genesis 2:7
 - Psalm 139:13-14

- Man is created _____ Genesis 1:27
 This image is:
 - _____ Genesis 1:28; 2:15, 19-20
 - _____ Genesis 3:8; Romans 2:14-15
 - _____ Genesis 2:8

- Man was created _____
 - Psalm 86:9

- Isaiah 60:21
- Romans 11:36
- 1 Corinthians 10:31

- Man _____
 - Genesis 3:1-7
 - Romans 3:23
 - Romans 5:12

In summary, God is the perfect creator and ruler of everything in existence. As his creatures, we have been given the privilege of being made in his image. We are to worship him perfectly. Unfortunately, that image has now been corrupted. That sin prevents us from being able to commune with him as designed. In the next lesson we will explore how sinful man can be redeemed by a loving and just God.

LESSON 4 - SIN AND SALVATION

Last week's lesson ended with the bad news. After having been created in God's image and enjoying daily communion with God in the garden, Adam sinned. This week we will look at the consequences of that event more closely. More importantly, we will look at the solution to a problem we cannot solve by ourselves. Let's define sin, look at its consequences, and rejoice as we learn how God has solved the problem we cannot solve on our own.

What is sin?

The biblical definition of sin is _____

- Acts of sin - Exodus 20:2-17
- Attitude of sin - Matthew 5:22, 28
- Sin nature - Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:3

Where did sin come from? Yet another question for which large amounts of time, energy, ink, and paper have been spent. We know that, in his sovereignty, God has allowed sin to come into existence. Why he did and continues to do so is not the subject of this class. We can, however, point at two events in history that explain the origin of sin.

- Ezekiel 28:11-19
 - _____ (Isaiah 14:12 KJV), a cherub, had been created _____ (v15)
 - He became proud because of his _____ (v17).
 - His pride led to his _____ (v16)
 - These acts precede Adam's fall by an indeterminate period of time.
- Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-24
 - God provided _____ (2:16), including _____ (3:22)
 - God _____ only one thing, the _____ (2:17)
 - The serpent (under the control of Satan) _____ (3:13) into considering how _____ (3:5). She ate and Adam did also when _____ (3:6).

- Both the man and the woman _____
(3:7)

As a result of Adam's sin, _____ entered the world (3:23), man was _____
_____ (3:24), and the possibility of communion with God was taken away.

Why do we sin?

The consequences of Adam's sin have been felt by every human born since and will be felt by everyone yet to come (Romans 3:23). Why?

- Romans 5:12-20 _____ view of sin
As the first man, Adam was our _____. As representative for our race, his actions determined the fate for the rest of us.
- _____
 - Psalm 51:5
 - Psalm 58:3
 - Romans 7:18
 - Jeremiah 17:9
 - John 15:5

Clearly, this is very bad news indeed. The necessity for a plan of salvation should be obvious. We are all guilty of sin and that sin keeps us forever separated from God. Additionally, there is nothing we can do about. We are so affected by sin that we cannot make amends for it. Thankfully, God has some good news for us.

God's Plan of Salvation

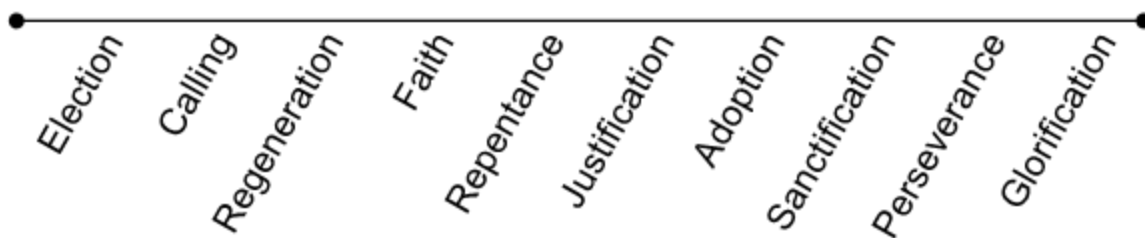
In our last lesson, we briefly explored some of the essential attributes of God. Because he is holy, we must be holy if we are to be in his presence (Isaiah 6:7). He is sovereign, so nothing happens without his authority. He is omniscient, so he knows everything that has happened, will happen, or could happen. Therefore, we can confidently say he has had a plan forever.

- He foretells the plan when _____ (Genesis 3:15).
- By grace, he considers _____
_____ (Romans 5:12-20).
- He gave his _____ as the only price that could _____ us with God and _____ us from our sin (John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:19-21, Hebrews 9:12).

When we explore more specifically the person and work of Christ Jesus, we will talk more about each of the bullet points above. Let's turn our attention to how the Holy Spirit accomplishes this work in our lives.

Ordo Salutis

The Ordo Salutis is the "order of salvation." It is our attempt at conceptualizing the consecutive steps in the Holy Spirit's work in appropriating salvation unto us. Different theological and doctrinal traditions order these steps in various ways. At Southside, we adhere to a Classical Calvinist view on the order of salvation.¹



Election

Election is the act of God before creation in which he chooses some people to be saved, not on account of any foreseen merit in them, but only because of his sovereign pleasure. The following verses from the New Testament affirm the doctrine of election.

- Acts 13:48
- Romans 8:28-30
- Romans 9:11-13
- Ephesians 1:4-6
- 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13
- 2 Timothy 1:9
- Revelation 17:8

¹ The material which follows has been taken from Wayne Gruden's *Systematic Theology*.

Calling

Effective calling is an act of God the Father, speaking through the human proclamation of the gospel, in which he summons people to himself in such a way that they respond in saving faith.

When talking about the call of the Gospel, it is important to differentiate between the external and the internal call. The external call is the general gospel call that is offered to all people through human speech. By contrast, the effective call of God is that which actually brings about a willing response from the person who hears it and happens internally. It is important to note that the effective calling of God does not diminish the importance of the Gospel call (Romans 10:14). It is the means through which God has appointed the effective calling will come.

Regeneration

Regeneration is the secret act of God in which he imparts new spiritual life to us.

- John 1:13
- John 3:3-8
- 1 Peter 1:3
- James 1:18
- Ezekiel 36:26-27

What happens after regeneration?

- Ezekiel 36:26-27
- 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Ephesians 2:8-9

Faith

Saving faith is trust in Jesus Christ as a living person for forgiveness of sins and for eternal life with God. Trust is the key word. We tend to use the word “believe,” but belief does not necessarily require any type of commitment. The more we get to know God, the more we can trust in what he promises to do. This trust is personal in nature. Here are some verses which underscore the idea of a personal trust.

- John 1:12 We _____ Christ
- John 3:16 We believe _____
- John 6:37 & John 7:37 We _____ to him

Repentance

Repentance is a heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ. Repentance is an intellectual understanding - sin is wrong. It is an emotional approval of the teachings of Scripture regarding sin - a sorrow for and hatred of sin. And it is a personal decision to turn from it - a decision to renounce sin and live in obedience to Christ. The following verses illustrate that all three elements must be present in order to be true repentance.

- 2 Corinthians 7:9-10
- Hebrews 12:17
- Isaiah 55:6-7

Justification

Justification is an instantaneous legal act of God in which he (1) thinks of our sins as forgiven and Christ's righteousness as belonging to us, and (2) declares us to be righteous in his sight.

- Justification comes _____ our faith and as God's _____ our faith (Romans 3:26-28)
- Justification comes _____ in Jesus Christ, not _____ (Galatians 2:16, 2 Cor 5:21)
- Justification is an act of being _____ (Romans 4:5)

Adoption

Adoption is the act of God whereby he makes us members of his family.

- John 1:12
- Galatians 3:23
- 1 John 3:1-2

Because we are adopted into God's family, we have special privileges as his children.

- We are able to _____ to God and relate to him as _____. (Matthew 6:9, Galatians 4:7, 2 Corinthians 5:21)
- As our Father, he gives us _____. (Matthew 7:11)
- We become joint heirs with Christ and will receive a _____ in heaven. (Romans 8:17, 1 Peter 1:4)

- We are led by _____ . (Romans 8:14)
- He _____ us. (Hebrews 12:5-6)
- We share in his _____ and his _____. (1 Peter 4:13-14)

Sanctification

Sanctification is the progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our actual lives. Sanctification begins in the _____ and works on the _____. (Romans 12:2, Philipians 4:8, 2 Peter 1:5-8)

Sanctification occurs in three stages.

1. _____ sanctification happens at the moment of _____. We experience a _____ in that we are no longer ruled or dominated by sin. While we will never be perfect, our desires are reoriented so that our primary love and desires are no longer for sin.
 - Titus 3:5
 - 1 John 3:9
 - Romans 6:11-14
2. _____ sanctification happens throughout our lives. Just as we once grew in sin, our sanctification now increases (Romans 6:19).
 - 2 Corinthians 3:18
 - Hebrews 12:14
 - Colossians 3:10
 - Philipians 3:9-14
3. Sanctification begins in the mind and works on the heart.
 - Romans 12:2
 - Philipians 4:8
 - 2 Peter 1:5-8
4. Sanctification is completed at _____ and when the Lord _____. Our souls will finally be free from _____ sin and made _____.
 - Philipians 3:21
 - 1 Corinthians 15:23, 49

Perseverance

Perseverance of the saints means that all those who are truly born again will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again. Perseverance of the saints assures us that once we become Christians, we cannot lose our salvation. Here is a partial summary of how the doctrine of perseverance is revealed in Scripture.

- In John 10:27-29, Jesus states that we have been _____ by his Father. Earlier, in John 6:38-40, Jesus asserts that he will _____ that has been given to him. Furthermore, he declares that nothing can _____ (John 10:28).
- Paul provides evidence that God keeps us safe for eternity in Ephesians 1:13-14. We are _____ with the Holy Spirit as a _____ of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it.
- Paul gives further assurance of this guarantee in Philippians 1:6. The work that God has begun in us will be brought to completion.
- Peter echoes Paul's words in 1 Peter 1:5. God's power _____ us for the final culmination of our _____ when Jesus _____.

Glorification

Glorification is the final step of redemption when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, and reunites them with their souls, and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive, thereby giving all believers, at the same time, perfect resurrection- bodies like his own.

- Romans 8:23-24
- 1 Corinthians 15:25-26
- 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17
- Job 19:25-26
- 1 Corinthians 15:42-44,49

The Gospel is more than good news. It's GREAT news. Sin has created a problem we could never solve. God has a solution where he initiates, guides, and completes the entire plan so that we can indeed spend eternity with him.

LESSON 5 - THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

After a week of really bad news, we were blessed to have a couple of weeks of really, really good news. God's plan for salvation and our namesake as Christians arise from the person and work of Jesus Christ. This week we look at Jesus Christ, who he was, and what he did so that we might be called Christians.

At a Glance

The topic of the person and work of Jesus Christ could easily take months to cover and not be exhaustive. Knowing that, we're going to do our best to introduce the most important ideas of that topic today. Even still, we might decide at the end of this lesson that we tried to squeeze too much into one week. If we were hard pressed to explain the person and work of Jesus Christ in as little time as possible, that are a few key passages in the New Testament that would help. Let's look at those and see what they say.

- Colossians 1:15-20
- Hebrews 1:1-3
- Acts 2:22-24

Jesus Christ in the Old Testament

The passage from Acts referenced above tells us that God always had a plan regarding Jesus. He made sure that throughout history we would be prepared for his coming by providing us with glimpses of the Christ to come. These glimpses came in the form of either outright prophecy or historical figures.

In the interest of space and time, we can't hit all the prophetic references. Here are three of the most well known.

- Genesis 3:15
- Isaiah 9:2-7
- Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Several of the great historical figures in the Old Testament have been called archetypes of Christ. Their lives are imitations of the life of Jesus Christ in terms of what he did here on earth.

- Abraham & Isaac
- Moses
- David

- Jonah

If someone had to narrow down the person and work of Jesus Christ to only the “three most important things”, one would probably say: 1) that he is fully God and fully human, 2) that he lived a sinless life, and 3) he died and then rose from the grave. In fact, it has been the experience of this writer that whenever this question is asked, the respondents always answer in this way. Where do we find this in Scripture?

Jesus was fully God

- Jesus has always been _____ with God
- Jesus has always been _____ with God
- Jesus displayed the _____ of God
- Jesus displayed the _____ of God
 - Over nature
 - Over demons
 - Over all things (_____)
- Jesus attested to his _____

Jesus was fully human

- He was _____ (Luke 2:7)
- He _____ (Luke 2:40,52)
- He _____ (John 11:35, John 13:21)
- He got _____ (John 4:6)
- He got _____ (Matthew 4:2)
- He _____ (Mark 15:37)

Jesus lived a sinless life

Jesus lived a sinless life. That fact carries two very important implications for us as Christians.

First, because he was sinless, he was the _____ to atone for our sins.

- 2 Corinthians 5:21
- 1 Peter 1:18-19
- 1 John 3:5

Second, he serves as the perfect example for us to _____.

- Hebrews 4:15
- Ephesians 5:1-2
- 1 John 2:6

From his death to his resurrection to his ascension

We've already covered the fact that Jesus died. However, it is important that we don't forget the rest of the story - he did not stay dead! What happened afterward?

Jesus said he would _____ AND he did it!

- Mark 8:31
- Mark 16:5-7
- Luke 24:6-7
- John 11:25

His resurrection makes possible _____.

- Acts 24:15
- 1 Corinthians 15
- John 6:44
- 1 Peter 1:3-5
- John 14:19

After his resurrection, Jesus eventually _____ where he

_____.

- Matthew 28:18-20
- Philippians 2:8-11
- Ephesians 1:20-22

He's coming back!

Jesus did not ascend into heaven only to leave us behind forever. One day he's coming back to claim his church and take them home.

- John 14:3
- Acts 1:11
- 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
- Matthew 24:30-31

LESSON 6 - THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Theological subjects are no stranger to controversy, but the doctrine of the Holy Spirit seems to draw more than a fair share of differing views. Some churches seem to focus their belief and practices on what they believe is the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer while others minimize their treatment of the Holy Spirit to the point that one has to wonder if that church even believes in the Holy Spirit. This week, we want to establish the personhood and divinity of the Holy Spirit while stating what Southside teaches concerning the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

The Holy Spirit is a Person

By virtue of being called “the Holy Spirit”, we often struggle with thinking about Him as a person. We tend to talk about the Spirit as if He is merely a manifestation of God’s power. Scripture makes it clear that the Holy Spirit is indeed a person, and NOT simply some force.

The use of the pronoun “He”

- John 14:26
- John 15:26
- John 16:13-14

“Counselor” or “Comforter” is only used to speak of a person who performs these actions for the benefit of another person

- John 14:16
- John 14:26
- John 15:26
- John 16:7

The actions of the Holy Spirit that Scripture describes for us can only be performed by a person.

- John 14:26
- John 15:26, Romans 8:16
- Romans 8:26
- 1 Corinthians 2:10-11

- 1 Corinthians 12:11
- Acts 16:6-7
- Acts 8:29; 13:2
- Acts 15:28
- Ephesians 4:30

The Holy Spirit is Divine

Scripture assures us that the Holy Spirit is not only a person, but a divine person that is a member of the Trinitarian Godhead.

He is shown to have a coordinate relationship with God the Father and God the Son.

- Matthew 28:19
- 1 Corinthians 12:4-6
- 2 Corinthians 13:14
- Ephesians 4:4-6
- 1 Peter 1:2

Other verses equate the Holy Spirit with God in describing him.

- Acts 5:3-4
- 1 Corinthians 3:16
- 1 Corinthians 2:10-11 & Psalm 139:7-8
- John 3:5-7

The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Believer

In week 4, we discussed God's role in calling us to salvation, giving us the faith to believe, and in regenerating our hearts so that we would repent. Regeneration and repentance are works of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The Spirit then remains active in our lives throughout the process of sanctification, enabling us to persevere until we finally reach heaven and receive our final and ultimate glorification.

- John 14:16-17 The Holy Spirit _____ the believer.
- Ephesians 3:14-19; 4:22-24 The Holy Spirit _____ us, and works to make us _____.
- Galatians 5:22-24 The Holy Spirit produces _____ in our lives as evidence of our new way of life.

LESSON 7 - THE DISTINCTIVES OF SOUTHSIDE

All Christians are part of the universal church that Jesus will one day come back so he can take them to heaven. Even though we are part of the Body of Christ, local church bodies will have their own unique aspects that are a natural outcome of being composed by a unique set of individuals. This week we will explore the characteristics that make Southside unique.

Leadership Structure

While this may seem like an obvious statement, we must begin by stating that Christ is the head of the church (Colossians 1:18). Though he is the head, he uses ordinary people to govern the church's affairs. Even in the Old Testament, God led the nation of Israel through the priests and elders prior to their insistence on a king (1 Samuel 8:4-9). There are three main types of church government. Some local churches may appear to be a blend of these but they will operate more strongly in one than the other two.

- _____ - The pastor sets the direction and committees implement the programs. Churches that operate under this type of governance are usually overseen by a bishop or other named superintendent. Examples of this style are Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, and churches in the Methodist tradition
- _____ - The congregation approves all aspects of church government. Examples are Southern Baptist and United Church of Christ churches.
- _____ - A group of elders sets the direction of the church in consultation with the congregation. Presbyterian and most Reformed churches operate with this style of church government.

Southside is an elder-led church because we believe it is the model set forth in the Bible.

- Acts 14:23
- Acts 16:4
- Acts 20:17
- Titus 1:5

1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 define the qualifications for men who would serve as elders and deacons in the church. The roles of elders and deacons are:

- Elders - _____ and _____ the people under their care
 - Ephesians 4:11-12
 - James 5:14

- 1 Peter 5:1-3
- Deacons - assist the elders by focusing on the care of the _____
of the _____ and the _____
- Acts 6:1-7

The list of qualifications for elders and deacons specify that these church leaders are to be men. This leads to our belief in Biblical male headship in the home.

Male Headship

In some homes, the wife may be more qualified and more motivated to be the leader than her husband. This reality does not negate the Bible's teaching that God has designed the husband to be the head and he will hold the man accountable as a result. The wife was designed to be his helper. Conflict often arises out of these differing roles. The husband may not take the lead and this can result in the wife's frustration, especially when she recognizes he is supposed to be the head. Likewise, the husband may become frustrated when he either does not feel equipped to take the lead or his wife will not submit.

This conflict has been happening since Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:14-19). The conflict is a result of _____

- She will have a desire to _____ (v.16)
- She will either perceive his headship as _____ or he will _____ it as such (v.16)
- Part of Adam's failure was he _____ Eve instead of _____ and stopping the process from taking place (v.17)

God's design is for wives to submit to their husbands and for husbands to lead their wives as Christ leads the church.

- 1 Corinthians 11:3
- 1 Peter 3:1-7
- Ephesians 5:22-29

We must point out what male headship does NOT mean, lest there be any misunderstanding.

- Wives are only to submit to _____, NOT all men.
- Submission does not mean _____. Men and women are equals as children of God (Galatians 3:28)

Discipleship Model

In obedience to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20), we at Southside are primarily concerned with making disciples of Christ, whether they are local or global. The activities through which disciples are made is not unique to Southside, only the particular way in which we practice them. Disciples are made through:

- _____ (John 4:24)
- _____ God's Word (Hebrews 5:11-14, 2 Timothy 2:15)
- _____ (Mark 12:41-44, 2 Corinthians 8:1-5, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7)
- _____ (Matthew 14:32, Acts 2:42)
- _____ (John 13:34-35, 1 Thessalonians 4:13)
- _____ (Romans 12:4-8, 1 Peter 4:10-11, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

Means of Grace

Southside does not celebrate sacraments. Sacraments are traditionally considered acts in which God conveys grace in order to make the observer more holy. Ordinances are rites that are observed as the testimony of the person observing the rite. When we use the term "ordinary means of grace," we are referring to the tools God uses to bring Christians to faith and continually grow us in grace or continual sanctification. The ordinary means of grace practiced at Southside are: the preaching and teaching of God's Word, Baptism of believers, and the Lord's Supper.

- The preaching and teaching of God's Word is accomplished through the Sunday morning sermon and the various other elective activities throughout the week.
- At Southside, we practice the baptism of believers. We do not practice infant baptism. We will carefully consider baptism younger children if they have demonstrated evidence of a true conversion. At such time that we do baptize children, we allow fathers to perform the act of baptism.
- We observe the Lord's Supper each week in our regular worship service. The only exceptions are when it may be either theologically or liturgically contradictory to do so.

Resurrection Sunday is one such exception. Children are allowed to partake in the Lord's Supper under the guidance and advisement of their parents. Membership of Southside Church is not required to participate in the Lord's Supper.

Ministries of the Church

The ministries of Southside are ways in which we serve the community around us and the global community around the world. The ministries of Southside are also opportunities to help ourselves grow in our own relationships with God.

The ministries of Southside that primarily serve to grow ourselves are

The ministries of Southside that are ways in which we serve our community are

Southside supports global ministry in two ways. We support organizations such as

We also support several missionary families who are ministering abroad. They are

LESSON 8 - DEALING WITH CONFLICT

As organizations composed of sinful human creatures, conflict in the church is inevitable. Unresolved conflict is not inevitable. In fact, because the church is composed of regenerated people that make up the Body of Christ, resolution of the conflict and reconciliation between its members should be the inevitable outcome. As with all things, a Biblical approach to conflict is necessary in order to make resolution and reconciliation possible.

The Call for Church Unity

On the night before he gave himself for our sins, Jesus prayed for all those that God the Father had given him, we who call ourselves Christians. He knew the trials and struggles we would face and the severity of each one. He knew how these troubles would affect us and how they would potentially lead to divisions. What does that prayer, found in John 17, say about unity among the believers?

- We _____ to the Father, so our approach to conflict should be different than the world's (John 17:9, 16)
- He used his _____ as the model (John 17:11, 21, 22)
- Jesus is in _____; the _____ is in Jesus; we should be _____ (John 17:21, 23)
- The Father will _____ his children unified (John 17:11) by sanctifying them in _____, which is _____ (John 17:17)

A little later in this lesson we will deal how to approach conflict when the parties do not submit themselves to His Word. If Jesus prayed for unity, what are the challenges that prompted him to pray for such a thing?

Threats to Unity in the Early Church

Almost immediately, the early church was faced with problems that threatened its unity. The writer of Ecclesiastes reminds us that there is nothing new under the sun (Ecclesiastes 1:9). The early church's challenges will be and have been our own. Their solutions should be as well. Let's look at the problems that some of the early churches faced specifically and then look at more generalized issues.

The church in Jerusalem (Acts 6:1-7)

- Problem:

- Solution:

The church in Rome (Romans 14:1-4, 13-19)

- Problem:

- Solution:

The church in Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:10-12; 3:1-9)

- Problem:

- Solution:

The church in Galatia (Galatians 2:11-14; 3:2-3)

- Problem:

- Solution:

The church in Ephesus (Ephesians 2:11-19)

- Problem:

- Solution:

The church in Philippi (Philippians 4:2-3)

- Problem:

- Solution:

The church in Colossae

- Problem:

Again, it is easy to see how the desire for self instead of putting others first battles unity.

Developing Church Unity

With all these challenges to church unity, how do we work toward unity?

- Ephesians 4:1-6: Unity has been _____ to us by virtue of the fact that we are one _____ ; there is _____ Spirit, one _____ to which we were called; one _____ , one _____ , one _____ and Father. We maintain that unity when we follow Paul's advice. He says we are to walk in a manner _____ with which we have been called. He provides advice on the attitudes we should have: _____

- Philippians 2:1-5: We should have the mind of _____. We should do nothing out of _____ or _____. In _____, we count _____ as more _____ than ourselves. We look after the interests of others, not just ourselves.

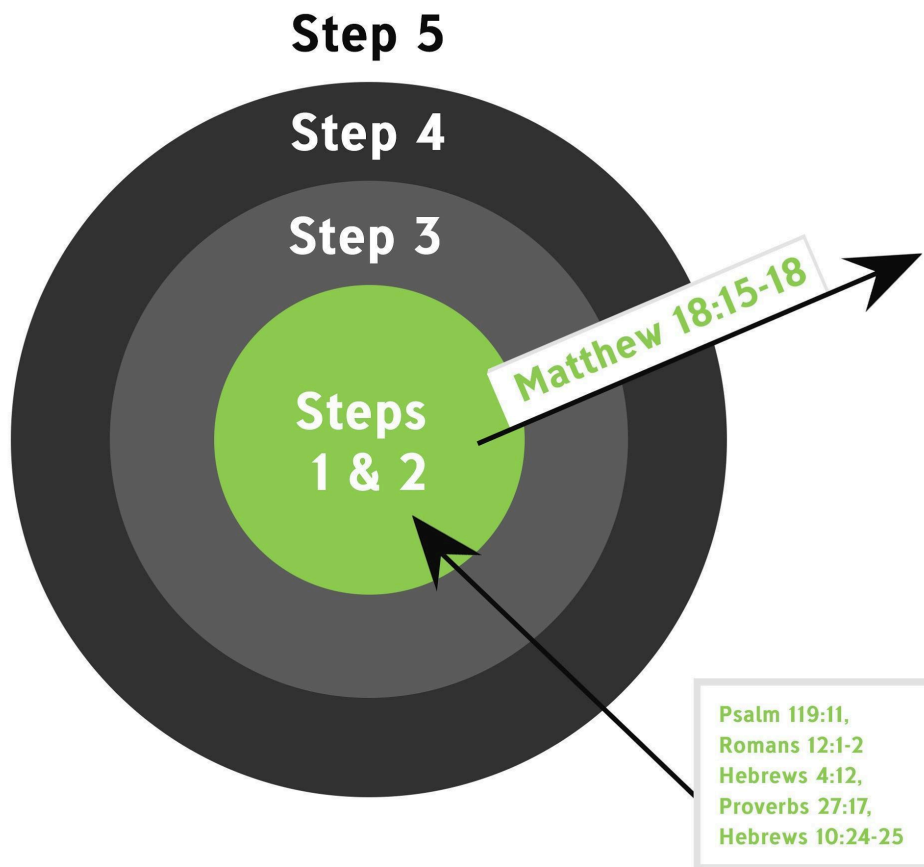
When conflicts with other believers arise, we must resolve to work through them instead of abandoning the congregation and settling into isolation and inactivity. We must pursue reconciliation, regardless of the cause. This pursuit can be modeled with the following diagram.

Step 1 - Live in close communion with God

Normally, we live and operate in the center circle. We are guided by Scripture and allow it to transform our lives (Psalm 119:11, Romans 12:1-2, Hebrews 4:12). As members of a church body, we also allow our fellow believers to examine our lives and provide correction as needed (Proverbs 27:17, Hebrews 10:24-25).

When conflict arises, we use Matthew 18:15-18 to guide our actions on how to deal with the issues.

Step 2 - We are still in the center circle here. If someone has sinned against you, go to the person privately; tell him how he has sinned against you; and be reconciled if he is willing. If the offending person repents, no more action is required. If we are honest about the conflicts we have experienced or witnessed, we would have to admit that many of them should have been able to be addressed right here in step 2. Instead, we tend to respond with our flesh and run from the situation and seek another body of believers.



Step 3 - Now we are beginning to see the possibilities for our unity to be broken. If the offending person will not listen, go back to that person with two or three witnesses to have the conversation again and establish the facts and the evidence. The goal is reconciliation and preservation of the unity we have been given in the body of Christ.

Step 4 - If the person continues to refuse to listen and continues to refuse to repent from his sinfulness, bring him before the church body and make the case against him.

Step 5 - If after step 4, the offending person still does not repent, the church is to excommunicate the sinner and give him to God for God to handle. Jesus' words are, "Let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." (Matthew 18:17).

LESSON 9 - Communication & Next Steps

You can stay up-to-date with ongoing information from Southside in a few different ways:

- Weekly Newsletter
- Social Media (@southsidechurchnc)
 - Instagram
 - Facebook
 - Youtube
- E-mails/Texts
- Website (www.southsidechurch.info)
- The Church App
- Elexio

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, contact Katelyn Woodcock at katelyn@southsidechurch.info.

What Next?

Over the last several weeks, we have looked at the beliefs and ministry of Southside Church. Before you begin considering your next steps, let's quickly review the basics.

- Southside Church is a nondenominational, independent congregation that may be described as aligning as Reformed or Calvinistic in nature. It is led by a group of elders, men who have demonstrated the qualities set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.
- The Church is simply the gathering of believers, the “called out ones” who serve as God’s representatives in this world by proclaiming his message in word and deed.
- Scripture is God speaking to us. He inspired men to record his message in writing and it provides all that we need for guidance in how to live.
- God is perfectly holy and he created everything. We were created in his image, but Adam’s sin in the Garden corrupted that image. Every person born since inherits that corruption, causing a breaking in the relationship with God for which we were created.
- God sent his son Jesus, who lived a perfect, sinless life, to ultimately give his life as payment for our sins. God is sovereign over all aspects of salvation. We cannot receive it until we have repented of our sinfulness and trusted in faith that Jesus’s death on a cross is the only way for salvation to come into our lives. We are then made new creatures and go through the continuing process of being made more holy until we received our glorified bodies.
- Jesus was fully human and fully God. His life serves as the perfect example for how we are to live our own. He is the image of God and his life also shows us who God is. His

death paid for our sins. His resurrection gives us eternal life. He ascended into heaven and will come back one day to claim his church to take to heaven.

- Southside practices believer's baptism and celebrates the Lord's Supper weekly. We advocate the position of male headship in the family.
- Conflict with fellow believers is unavoidable but not irreconcilable. Living Biblically will maintain our unity and guide us through the process of reconciling that conflict.

Questions?

What questions do you still have? Take some time to think about everything we've talked about over the last several weeks. Jot down any questions that we can address together.

How can you become more involved?

Now that you've explored some of the more important aspects of Southside, we hope that you are contemplating how you can become more involved in the life of our church body. There are two ways in which you can do that.

One way to become more involved is to become an active part in the ministry of Southside. Look back at lesson 7 and the various ministries of Southside. Which ones can you see yourself taking part in? How does your individual gifting fit into what we are doing?

The second way you can become more involved is to become an official member of Southside. If you are interested in membership, let our leadership know and we can review the requirements of membership with you. In short, the requirements are the completion of this class, baptism by immersion at some point after your conversion, an interview with the elders of the church, and a signing of a covenant between the church and you. All new members are publicly welcomed as part of our worship service.