

CORE VALUES

1. GOD IS SUPREME: The triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is the supreme and only eternal being. God created us to live for him and his glory, not for ourselves. In his grace, God also created us to live with him in a loving relationship. God created us to live by him too as dependent creatures who need God's help for everything we do. We must joyfully worship and serve God in all of life, loving him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

2. GOD'S WORD IS AUTHORITATIVE: God has revealed himself to mankind, partly through his created world and providence over it, but most fully in the Bible, especially the Bible's testimony to his Son, Jesus Christ. God's Word is the ultimate authority for determining what we as Christians are to believe and how we are to live. Our own ideas must be subordinate to God's revealed truth. We need to learn and live as much of the Bible as we can, being mindful of God's primary commandments to love him and to love others.

3. THE GOSPEL IS VITAL: All people are sinners facing God's judgment, but God graciously made a way to save people from their sins. Jesus Christ, God's own Son, became a man and lived a perfect life, died a sacrificial death, and victoriously rose from the dead. Those of us who believe this message—the gospel—and turn from our sins to embrace Christ as Lord and Savior share in the benefits of his saving work. We are rescued from our sins and granted life everlasting in a real relationship with God. On the basis of the gospel, God provides for us the grace and mercy we need to live the Christian life. We must spread the gospel to all people and demonstrate Christ's undeserved love to others in all our deeds.

4. JESUS CHRIST IS PREEMINENT: Jesus Christ and his work of redemption are the central focus of the Bible as a whole. God the Father has exalted his Son because of the mission of salvation that Christ accomplished. The Holy Spirit continues to point the world to Jesus. Christ is the preeminent one over all of creation and is the Head of the Church. We need to submit to him at all times as our exalted Lord, and we need to make much of him in all things. As we work for the expansion of his kingdom, we also must look for Christ's return when he will establish his kingdom fully in a newly created earth and heaven.

5. DISCIPLESHIP IS IMPERATIVE: When Christ saved us, he became our Lord and we became his disciples. He is the perfect image of God and the only example of perfectly righteous humanity, so we must follow him and imitate him in every part of our lives. Jesus also has commissioned us as his disciples to go into all of the world to make new disciples for him and to teach these new followers to obey all of his commandments. We have the privilege and responsibility of being involved in God's kingdom work by inviting people to embrace Jesus Christ as their Lord and teaching Christ's disciples how to follow him.

6. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS ESSENTIAL: When Jesus returned to heaven following his resurrection, he sent the Holy Spirit to carry on his work. The Holy Spirit works to conform us to the image of Christ, operating in our hearts to produce the fruit of righteousness and Christlikeness in us. The Holy Spirit also strengthens us and gifts us for service in God's kingdom. Much of our service to God consists of service to other people, so we must diligently serve God and others with the ability that the Spirit provides. We need to allow the Spirit to control our lives, and we need to rely on his power for spiritual growth and service.

7. FELLOWSHIP IS CRUCIAL: God created us as relational beings as he himself is a relational being, enjoying the mysterious eternal unity of Father, Son, and Spirit. He has invited us into fellowship with him through Christ's restoring work of salvation. We enjoy this fellowship with God not just as individuals but as a family of believers. We serve God together, grow in Christ together, and worship God together. We must seek to provide for one another's needs and help one another to grow in our walk with God through mutual edification, encouragement, and accountability.