

Harvest Bible Church

Harvest Bible Church is a new church located in the Fairfield community. We began with two men praying for God's direction back in April of 1997. Since that time we have assembled a group of committed believers who truly want to spread the truths of God's Word to an ever-growing area of Houston. We believe our task is reflected in the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20: To *present* Christ, *pursue* obedience to Him, and *prepare* others for Christian service.

MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Our Mission

The supreme mission of the church, and so also of every individual believer, is to glorify God and to serve Him forever (Eph. 3:21; Rom. 11:36; 1 Pet. 4:11). Our mission comes from the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20: *to know Christ and to make Him known*. This is in keeping with the Great Commandment: *to love the Lord your God with your heart, soul, & mind*.

B. Our Goals

Our goals are to serve God and bring glory to Him. Certain God-ordained goals are established in Scripture for the local church.

1. Equipping Believers

Equipping the saints unto the work of the ministry in all its aspects along with their spiritual maturity in the Lord is the second great goal of this church (Eph. 4:12-16; Col. 1:28-29).

2. Evangelization of the Lost

Reaching the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ, both at home and abroad, is to be one of the goals of this church (Rom. 1:14-16; 1 Thess. 1:8; Acts 1:8).

C. Our Objectives

1. Internal Objectives and Functions

a. Instruction in the Word of God—Teaching: To stand for the historic, fundamental truths of Scripture, and through Scripture, to equip the saints for service, and for the building up of the body of Christ for unity, knowledge of the Son of God, and maturity, measured by the stature of the fullness of Christ, and for protection against the deceitful scheming of Satan (Eph. 4:12-16).

b. Fellowship: To encourage and provide for means of developing meaningful relationships among believers (expressions of sharing and caring for, and loving one another, warning, stimulating, and encouraging one another to love and good deeds (Heb. 10:24-25; 13:1-2; Acts 2:42-47). We have a variety of small groups to achieve this objective.

c. Worship: To provide the means for developing and expressing meaningful worship in prayer, songs of praise, adoration, admonishment, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord, and to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper (Heb. 13:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 11:23-34; Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:42).

d. Ministry: To provide the means for developing and exercising spiritual gifts for the edification of the body and the evangelization of the lost (Rom. 12:3-8; I Pet. 4:10-11).

2. External Objectives and Functions

a. Outreach: To present the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who have never trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior, and to encourage them to trust in Him (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; 1 Thess. 1:2-10).

b. Holy Behavior: To live holy lives in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation acting as salt and as lights in the world (Phil. 2:15; Matt. 5:13-14; 1 Pet. 2:11-15; Col. 4:5).

c. Showing Mercy: To do good to all men whenever there is the opportunity and the means to do so within biblical principles and precepts (Gal. 6:10; Luke 10:29-37).

Our **mission, goals, and objectives** set forth our philosophy of the local church and its ministry. This, in turn, must form the foundation for our thinking and activities as a body of people. It directs us in what we ought to be doing. Anything which does not contribute to this philosophy of our mission, goals and objectives should then be either corrected, rejected or alleviated from the activities of the church.

Our Core Values:

1. **Authority of Jesus Christ...** We value the person and work of Jesus Christ and the Christian's submission to Him as Savior and Lord of their lives (Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Cor. 11:3).
2. **Bible-centered teaching...** We value biblical expository preaching for the sake of equipping the saints (Acts 2:42-43; 2 Tim. 4:2; Eph. 4:12).
3. **Community...** We value the fellowship of believers and strengthening our relationship with God through each other (Acts 2:44-46).
4. **Excellence...** We value excellence in all things working to glorify God through the gifts He bestows on all believers (Colossians 3:23).
5. **Fervent Prayer...** We value personal and corporate prayer in the expectation that God answers all requests (Matt. 7:7-11; Acts 2:42; 1 John 3:21-22).
6. **Simple structure...** We value leadership in the church as coming from the elders and daily operations belonging to the church staff (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-3).
7. **World Outreach...** We value local evangelism and world missions in route to fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20).
8. **Worship of God...** We value the worship of God in an effort to thank Him for who He is and what He has done (Ps 150; Rom. 15:9; Heb. 2:12; James 5:13).

Our Vision: We envision a community of people who worship the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, coming together as one to bring light to the dark and sinful world we live in. We see people coming to know the true God of the Bible and having a changed life as a result. Building strong families and sending out people to preach the good news of Jesus Christ is the need we see, and it's the vision we pursue in our quest to know God on a deeper level.

Our Strategy: We are committed to teaching God's Word "in season and out of season." From Sunday morning Bible teaching to small group studies during the week, to our children's programs, our mission, *to know Christ and make Him known*, is to spread God's Word to those who have both heard it and never heard it in any and all situations. Our lives have been impacted by God's revealed Word, and we seek to change lives by teaching that Word.

Harvest Bible Church (HBC) Doctrine & Basic Membership Beliefs

Membership at HBC is based upon what we believe which is based upon the Holy Scriptures. Our fundamental and core beliefs are listed below. Belief in these points is essential to being a member of HBC. Adhering to these beliefs is essential to having any part in the various teaching ministries of HBC (i.e., small group teaching, youth ministry, pulpit supply, etc.). Membership at HBC is encouraged for reasons of accountability, reviewing elders, and discipline. Each member is expected to contribute in areas where God has blessed them for the purpose of building up the body of believers and bringing glory to God Almighty.

The *Core Beliefs* for membership at Harvest Bible Church are as follows:

- ◆ **Authority & inerrancy of Scripture...** We believe God's Word is complete and without error in the Bible. The Bible offers the solution to all of man's difficulties and problems.
- ◆ **The Trinity...** We believe that God is one and that He exists eternally in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. All other "gods" are idols.
- ◆ **The full deity and humanity of Christ...** We believe that Jesus Christ is eternal, having existed from eternity long before receiving his human body at birth through the virgin Mary. Jesus Christ is God Almighty. He is also fully human. Jesus Christ's sacrifice for mankind was perfect because he was fully human and able to sympathize with the weaknesses of all mankind, yet he is fully God, making him the perfect sacrifice.
- ◆ **The spiritual depravity of the human race...** Mankind from his mother's womb is sinful in need of the Savior Jesus Christ. Only God can draw lost man to Himself, for in man's sinful state he is unable, spiritually dead, to ever seek God on his own.
- ◆ **Salvation by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone...** We believe that man's soul is saved

strictly on the basis of Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross apart from works. Salvation comes by God's grace alone, through faith in Christ alone, and unto good works which are a manifestation of God's grace being shed upon those who place their faith in Christ.

◆ **The physical return of Christ...** We believe that Jesus Christ died for the sins of all, ascended into heaven 40 days after his resurrection from the dead, and will return to the earth to set up his kingdom in the future.

Biblical truth must be the standard of every thought, word, and deed. Church work is primarily a task of communicating God's truth to the nations, so biblical doctrine is primary. Any church that does not concern itself with biblical doctrine, or generalizes its doctrinal statement in order to maintain fellowship with the greatest number of professing Christians, has lost its very purpose and possibly its very soul. *

THE SCRIPTURES. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.

GOD. There is but one God, the Maker, Preserver and Ruler of all things, being completely perfect, and being infinite in them all; and to Him all creatures owe the highest love, reverence and obedience.

THE TRINITY. God is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

PROVIDENCE. God from eternity, decrees or permits all things that come to pass, and perpetually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and all events; yet not in any way as to be the author or approver of sin nor to destroy the free will and responsibility of intelligent creatures.

ELECTION. Election is God's eternal choice of some persons unto everlasting life - not because of foreseen merit in them, but because of God's mercy. As a result, the elect are called, justified, and glorified.

THE FALL OF MAN. God originally created man in His own image, and free from sin; but, through the temptation of Satan, he transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; whereby his posterity [i.e. descendants] inherit a nature corrupt and wholly opposed to God and His law, are under condemnation and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors.

THE MEDIATOR. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God is the divinely appointed mediator between God and man. Having taken upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, He perfectly fulfilled the law, suffered and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners. He was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended to His Father, at whose right hand He lives forever to make intercession for His people. He is the only Mediator, the Prophet, Priest, and King of the church, and Sovereign of the Universe.

REGENERATION. Regeneration is a change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, who makes alive those who are dead in trespasses and sins enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the Word of God, and renewing their whole nature, so that they love and practice holiness. It is a work of God's free and special grace alone.

REPENTANCE. Repentance is an evangelical grace, wherein the Holy Spirit makes a person aware of the manifold evil of his sin, so that he humbles himself with godly sorrow, detesting sin, and abhorring [i.e. hating] self, with a purpose and endeavor to walk before God so as to please Him in all things.

FAITH. Saving faith is the belief, on God's authority, of whatsoever is revealed in His Word concerning Christ; accepting and resting upon Him alone for justification and eternal life. It is wrought [created] in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and is accompanied by all other saving grace, and leads to a life of holiness.

JUSTIFICATION. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal of sinners who believe in Christ, from all sin, through the satisfaction that Christ has made; not for anything wrought in them or done by them; but on account of the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, they receiving and resting on Him and His

righteousness by faith.

SANCTIFICATION. Those who have been regenerated are also sanctified by God's Word and Spirit dwelling in them. This sanctification is progressive through the supply of Divine strength, which all saints seek to obtain, pressing after a heavenly life in cordial [i.e. willing] obedience to all Christ's commands.

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS. Those whom God hath accepted in the Beloved, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere to the end; and though they may fall, through neglect and temptation, into sin, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the Church, and temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be renewed again unto repentance, and be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

THE CHURCH. The Lord Jesus is the Head of the Church, which is composed of all His true disciples, and in Him is invested supremely all power for its government. According to His commandment, Christians are to associate themselves into particular societies or churches; and to each of these churches He hath given needful authority for administering that order, discipline and worship which He has appointed. The regular officers of a church are Bishops or Elders, and Deacons.

BAPTISM. Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer, wherein he is immersed in water in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as a sign of his fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ, of remission of sins, and of his giving himself up to God, to live and walk in newness of life.

THE LORD'S SUPPER. The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Jesus Christ, to be administered with the elements of bread and wine, and to be observed by His churches till the end of the world. It is in no sense a sacrifice, but is designed to commemorate His death, to confirm the faith and other graces of Christians, and to be a bond, pledge, and renewal of their communion with Him, and of their church fellowship.

THE RESURRECTION. The bodies of men after death return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God - the righteous to rest with Him; the wicked, to be reserved under darkness to judgment. At the last day, the bodies of all the dead, both just and unjust, will be raised.

THE JUDGMENT. God hath appointed a day, wherein He will judge the world by Jesus Christ, when everyone shall receive according to his deeds: the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment; the righteous, into everlasting life.

Harvest Bible Church Testimony Outline

As part of HBC membership and leadership the elders require all candidates for membership to write out their personal testimony as to how they came to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This exercise benefits not only the elders who oversee the "flock," but it also benefits you as you think through and tell the story of your conversion. Below is a brief outline of what we're looking for if you need help working through your Christian "story." Using a separate sheet of paper please complete all sections of the testimony outline.

A. Briefly tell about your life prior to coming to Christ. You don't have to list the specifics of your past sins (unless you choose to), but please give insight into your lost state of being apart from Christ – prior to your conversion.

B. Some folks have a "radical conversion" in that they were struck down, so to speak, by the power of God when they realized how lost they were apart from Christ. Folks who fit this description have little trouble sharing their conversion experience. Other folks have a

conversion experience that is subtle over time – after growing up in a Christian home and/or attending church all of their lives, for instance. However, because going to church and knowing who God is does not make for a true conversion, if this latter conversion describes you please elaborate on how *you* came to understand the saving power of Jesus Christ.

C. Explain in as much detail as you can about the meaning of the cross of Christ and his subsequent resurrection from the grave.

D. Read the following passages, and give your own comments as to their meanings. Be as thorough as you can.

1. Romans 3:23
2. Romans 6:23
3. Romans 5:8
4. Ephesians 2:8-10
5. Romans 10:9-10
6. Romans 8:1

*** Please sign your testimony after completion and turn it in to one of the HBC elders. Thanks!

Membership at Harvest Bible Church carries, at a minimum, the following responsibilities:

1. Taking an active role in service at HBC (possibly a simple prayer ministry at home).
2. Consistent attendance at church worship services and if possible small group studies as well (Heb. 10:24-25).
3. Faithful financial giving – the first-fruits of ones wealth (1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 9).
4. Being accountable and submissive to the elders and the other believers at HBC in reference to the aforementioned points and to proper Christian behavior.

*** Members, should they persist in sin, are liable to church discipline (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:1-5; 1 Tim. 1:20).