

## **Core Principles for Leaders and Teachers**

(Amended November 10, 2024)

### **The Trinity**

There is one God. He is our perfect, holy, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Creator. In the unity of the Godhead, there exists three separate, equal, and eternal persons--the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Genesis 1:26 | Deuteronomy 6:4 | Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19

### **God the Father**

God the Father is perfect in love, justice, wisdom, grace, and mercy. He is in control of all things and works all things to the good of those who love Him. God is actively involved in human affairs and listens and responds to prayer. He rescues from destruction those who place their faith in Jesus.

Deuteronomy 32:4 | Job 12:13; 42:2 | Psalm 145:8-9 | Matthew 7:7-11 | 1 Peter 5:10 | 1 John 4:16-18

### **Christ Jesus**

Jesus is the one and only Son of God. He is both fully God and fully human. Jesus is the Head of the Church. He was before all things, which were created through Him and for Him. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. Jesus lived a sinless life on earth so He could die on the cross for our sins. He conquered death three days later by physically rising from the dead in order to bring new life to those who choose to follow Him. After appearing to over 500 people, proving His resurrection, He ascended to Heaven where He rules at the Father's right hand, interceding for His people until the time of His return.

Matthew 1:18-23 | Luke 24:1-8 | John 1:1-5 | Acts 1:11 | 1 Corinthians 15:6 | 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 | Colossians 1:15-20 | Hebrews 4:14-15; 10:12-14 | Revelation 19-20

### **The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is fully God and dwells within believers upon their salvation. The Holy Spirit convicts man of sin, righteousness, and judgment. The Spirit empowers believers, equips them with spiritual gifts for the advancement of His kingdom, and marks believers as God's own.

John 16:8-11 | Acts 2:38 | 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 | 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 | Galatians 5:22-23

### **Scripture**

We believe Scripture--both Old and New Testament--to be the inspired Word of God. We believe the original writings are without error and are pivotal to having a whole view of God. Each book and letter should be interpreted based on its specific context, audience, and genre in order to understand God's purpose. All believers are called to be eager students of the Word so they may fervently apply it. The Word of God is not to be added to, subtracted from, or changed in any way. All doctrine and teaching must be tested against Scripture for accuracy.

Psalm 1:2 | 2 Timothy 3:16-17 | 2 Peter 1:20-21

## **Humanity**

God created man--male and female--in His image. We were created without sin and in perfect relationship with God. However, tempted by Satan, mankind rebelled, turning away from God, introducing sin into the world. We are all sinners, responsible for our own rebellion, subjecting us to God's perfect and righteous wrath. God, in His love, grace, and mercy, desired to restore His relationship with us and sent His Son to die on the cross where God's wrath was absorbed for all those who put their faith in Jesus. Apart from Christ, a person is still lost and without hope of salvation no matter how "good" or "righteous" he or she may be.

Genesis 1:26-27 | Romans 3:23; 5:6-21; 6:23

## **Sanctity of Life**

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. All human life, from conception to natural death—including pre-born babies, the aged, and the physically or mentally challenged—holds immeasurable value and dignity. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life.

Gen. 1:26-27, 9:6 | Psalm 139 | Matt. 9:36; 14:14, 18:1-6 |

## **Salvation**

Salvation, deliverance from sin into a renewed relationship with God, is only possible by God's grace, through a confession of faith in Jesus as Savior, expressed through repentance from sin and baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. Only Jesus' sacrifice on the cross has the power to erase our sins which separate us from God. No amount of good works or rituals can achieve the saving grace that Jesus offers. Upon salvation, we receive the Holy Spirit, God dwelling in us.

John 1:12; 3:3-7; 5:24 | Acts 2:38 | Romans 6:4 | Ephesians 2:8-10 | Titus 3:5

## **Baptism**

We believe that baptism by immersion, in conjunction with repentance, is the proper, Scripturally dictated response to believing in the Gospel of Jesus.

Acts 2:28

## **Communion**

Communion is the remembrance of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. The bread signifies His broken body, and the cup signifies His blood poured out, showing us the true cost of our sins. It is a time for believers to examine themselves against the Gospel. We partake of communion weekly and invite all believers to join us in this fellowship.

Mark 14:22-25 | 1 Corinthians 11:23-32

## **The Church**

The Church is the body of believers who put their faith in Jesus. The Church exists to bring glory to God. We believe the Church is commanded to devote themselves to worship, studying and receiving God's Word, prayer, fellowship, and service to one another. We believe the Church is also commanded to take the message to the Gospel to all the world. All members of the Church are under the authority of Christ and are, therefore, accountable to encourage, teach, correct, and rebuke one another in love to God's glory.

Matthew 28:18-20 | Acts 2:42-47 | Colossians 1:18 | 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 4:2

## **Sanctification**

Sanctification, the process of becoming more like Christ and less like the world, is the work of the Holy Spirit. Sanctification renews our minds and our lives by putting to death our sinful nature and instead pursuing with our whole selves the things of God such as love, compassion, and forgiveness. Although sin is an ever-present adversary, we become more equipped to fight it as we recognize the power of the Spirit living in us and the victory of Christ over sin and death. Through spiritual disciplines such as studying Scripture, prayer, worship, confession, fasting, and meeting with fellow believers, the Holy Spirit makes the heart of God known to us. We recognize that sanctification will not be complete until Christ returns and makes all things new.

Romans 7:15-8:17 | 1 Corinthians 2:9-16 | 2 Corinthians 5:17 | Galatians 5:16-26 | Philippians 3:12-21 | Colossians 3:1-17

## **In the End**

We believe in a bodily resurrection in which each individual is judged. For those who have found salvation in Jesus Christ, they will live and reign with God forever in glory; they will be free from sin, pain, and death. Although salvation is not dependent upon works, believers will be rewarded for their actions in this life. For those apart from Christ, they will be eternally separated from God and His grace. They will be cast down with Satan and all those hostile towards God into an eternity of torment. Although the eternal reward for following Christ is great and the consequence for remaining apart from Christ is severe, Christianity is not about fear of the end but about following Christ because of an understanding of His love and what He has already done for us. We follow Christ out of love and appreciation, not out of fear.

Mark 10:29-30 | John 5:19-30 | 1 Corinthians 15 | 2 Corinthians 5:8-10 | Ephesians 2:8-9 | 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 | Revelation 19-21

## **Marriage, Gender, Intimacy and Appropriate Behavior**

The First Christian Church of Noble Illinois functions on the belief that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is rejection of the image of God within that person. (Genesis 1:26,27 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So, God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

The First Christian Church of Noble Illinois operates on a strongly held belief that marriage relationship has been established by God as a solemn union between a biological man and a biological woman. (Genesis 2:24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. Ephesians 5:31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.")

The First Christian Church of Noble Illinois further holds that, in accordance with Scripture, sexual intimacy and sexual activity is appropriate only within marriage relationship, between (biological male) husband and (biological female) wife. (1 Corinthians 7:2 But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband.; Hebrews 13:4. Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.)

Accordingly, the following are viewed by the First Christian Church of Noble Illinois as inappropriate and contrary to Scripture:

- Any marriage or civil union that is not between a biological man and a biological woman.

· Any sexual intimacy or sexual act between individuals who are not married to one another. · Any other activity, teaching, or behavior that is contrary to a biblical view of marriage, and appropriate behavior as outlined in this provision.

All individuals involved in the operations, activities and events of the First Christian Church of Noble Illinois are expected to uphold the ministry's perspective on marriage, sexual intimacy, and appropriate behavior as set forth in this provision.

Individuals and organizations who desire to use the facilities of the First Christian Church of Noble Illinois must also act in accordance with this provision.

I \_\_\_\_\_ agree with, adhere to, and practice the beliefs of the preceding statement of faith. I affirm that my conduct represents Christ and His Church in a **manner glorifying to God. I am not walking in any secret sin that would disqualify me from any** form of leadership within the church. I understand that if at any time while I am in leadership/teaching/volunteer position at the First Christian Church of Noble, I cease to agree with, adhere to, and practice the beliefs of this statement of faith I may be asked to resign from my leadership/teaching/volunteer position.

This \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_

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