

Preamble

It is to be remembered that the real charter and constitution of Berean Covenant Church is God's Holy Word¹.

The Church is to operate in love, kindly caring for one another.² However, as required by law, the following articles and bylaws provide for the orderly function of this church. These articles and by-laws are always subject to reconsideration as to their full and indisputable agreement with God's Word. As such, we, the members of the Berean Covenant Church, do ordain and establish the following articles, to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

It is our desire that these articles help facilitate and never frustrate the work of the Church.

Article I - Purpose

In obedience to the clear teaching of the Scriptures that we should not forsake the assembling of ourselves together³, we form the Berean Covenant Church. We desire to glorify God by:

Worshiping Him in Spirit and in truth⁴

Fellowshipping with and upholding one another

Studying and applying the Scriptures⁵

Praying for our church, our families, our public officials, our outreach and that God's will be done on earth⁶

Establishing an outreach, both domestic and foreign⁷

Article II - Statement of Faith

We express what we believe by the Nicene and Apostles Creed (See Appendix). These summarize the tenants taught in the Scriptures, the New and Old Testaments. We hold these Scriptures to be God breathed and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness⁸. The Board of Elders shall have authority over all matters of doctrine and faith, as interpreted from the Scriptures, and shall be vested with the power to alter, amend, or repeal the Statement of Faith to adopt a new Statement by unanimous resolution. The Berean Covenant Church document Our Scriptural Foundation further addresses our beliefs.

Article III - Membership

The criteria of receiving individuals into the membership of this church are only fallible and human. Every endeavor, however, shall be made in order that no one, either by profession of faith or transfer from another church, may be accepted into the membership of this church unless evidence is given that such a person honors the Lord Jesus Christ by voluntarily and circumspcctly walking in the way of the Lord Jesus Christ⁹. Therefore, everyone indicating a desire to join this church shall be instructed accordingly that a person becoming a member of this church witnesses to the character of the whole body of believers known as Berean Covenant Church. Such a person should be thoroughly examined regarding a profession of faith and a holiness of character.

Section 1 - Purpose of Membership

Membership provides the privileges of being identified as a member, having the spiritual covering of the Elders, entering into gracious accountability for one's Christian life, voting on Church matters presented by the Elders, nominating and examining potential elders and deacons, serving Christ in and through this local body, and utilizing one's spiritual gifts and talents to and through this body to the world to fulfill the Lord's purpose for His church.

Church membership is a covenant relationship between believers. This covenant relationship is established when the believers are immersed by the Spirit into the body of Christ¹⁰.

Church membership facilitates:

- Defining who belongs to our local fellowship.
- Knowing who is entitled to the privileges and responsibilities of our local fellowship.
- Providing adequate watch-care and shepherding for every individual belonging to us.
- Exercising authority in discipline and restoration of the wayward among us.

Section 2 - Becoming a Member

No one shall become automatically a member of Berean Covenant Church by mere transfer of letter. An applicant for membership in this church will be welcomed in that decision, but in fairness to the individual and to this church, it will be necessary, before being approved for membership and able to share in all the privileges and responsibilities of this local body of believers, that the individual will give a verbal testimony of conversion and walk with Christ to the Elders. In addition, each applicant for membership must complete the new member's requirements as specified in the Berean Covenant Church document Our Scriptural Foundation.

1. Complete the Covenant inductive study course.
2. Complete and submit an application for church membership.
3. Complete an interview with the Elders.
4. Upon consent of the Elders, the new member will be presented to the church body following the next Sunday worship service.

If anyone finds a Scriptural reason why this candidate for membership should not become a member at this time, that person will bring the reason to one or more of the Elders for their consideration. If any elder believes the reason is legitimate, it will be addressed, with the possible ceasing of this process. If no elder believes the reason is legitimate or the issues have been adequately addressed and resolved, the process will continue. After completion of these requirements, and on the acceptance of this individual by the Elders, the candidate will be presented to the church by the Elders and welcomed into the membership of the church.

Interim membership may be granted to those who desire membership in Berean Covenant Church, but have not had an opportunity to complete the *Covenant* course required for membership. Interim membership allows one to make public his intention to participate in the blessings of which church membership facilitates (see Section 1). Interim membership is valid only until the person has had an opportunity to complete the membership requirements, and does not include voting privileges. Those wanting to apply for interim membership must submit a completed application to the Elders. Upon consent of the Elders, interim membership will be granted. If the membership requirements have not been met in a reasonable time, the Elders will

consult with the interim member to determine his membership intentions.

Section 3 - Admission of Members

Applicants admitted to membership shall publicly, at a worship service designated by the Pastor-Teacher and Elders, present their testimony, affirm their membership commitment, and be acknowledged as members.

Section 4 - Responsibilities of Members

By joining this church, members are committing themselves to give and receive spiritual watch-care within the fellowship and to serve in the ministry of the church. Every member is responsible for working to build up Christ's church¹¹.

Every member is important to this church and is responsible for being informed concerning the ministries and other affairs of the church. Each member is responsible to seek the Lord's direction when decision-making matters are brought to the congregation.

Each member must work to maintain purity, unity, and love in the fellowship. It is expected that members will strive to live according to the teachings of Scripture by avoiding the works of the flesh and receiving the fruit of the Spirit¹².

Members shall seek to exercise their spiritual gifts for the mutual benefit of all the church body and shall submit to the loving rule of the Elders.

It is the nature of the Body of Christ to be a caring body. Therefore, any member should at any time feel free to share with an elder(s) any suggestions or concerns for the betterment of the church body in the light of pertinent Scripture.

Section 5 - Voting Privilege

Membership in Berean Covenant Church shall not vest in any member any proprietary rights in the Corporation, but shall only entitle the member to vote at a meeting of the members. In such cases, voting privileges are restricted to members who are in good standing, who are not under any disciplinary action, and who have passed their eighteenth birthday. It is important that the members not view voting as their "right" but as a privilege for giving input and affirmation for decisions being made.

Section 6 - Termination of Membership

All terminations from the membership shall be made only after due counsel and consideration by the Elders. Such a removal from the membership roll shall be made for the following reasons:

- A. Transfer of Letter. Any member in good standing may request that a letter of membership be transferred to another fellowship of like faith. No letter will be granted to a member who is under the corrective discipline of this church or to a member who seeks to transfer to a church which, based on the judgment of the Elders, is not loyal to "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints"¹³.
- B. Non-Letter Transfer. Any member who unites with another church without a letter will be dropped from the membership.
- C. Personal Request. Any member who requests that his/her name be dropped from the

- membership roll shall be dismissed after due admonition and counsel from the Elders.
- D. Physical Death. A member who dies shall be removed from the active membership roll.
- E. Disciplinary Termination. The Elders may terminate a person's membership for disciplinary reasons (including non-attendance) based on the guidelines in Article IX Section 3.

Section 7 - Readmission

No one is automatically readmitted as a member of Berean Covenant Church. An applicant to be readmitted into the membership in this church will be welcomed in this decision, but in fairness to the applicant and to this church, it will be necessary, before being approved for membership and able to share in all the privileges and responsibilities of this local body of believers, that the applicant assure the Elders that the verbal testimony of conversion is still applicable and that there is still a walking with Christ. In addition, the Elders may require the applicant to complete some or all of the membership requirements specified in the Berean Covenant Church document, Our Scriptural Foundation. Upon approval by the Elders, the individual will be readmitted according to the guidelines in Article III, Sections 2 and 3.

Article IV - Church Government

Section 1 - The Chief Shepherd

The Lord Jesus is the Chief Shepherd of this congregation. It is before Him that all other leadership must bow¹⁴. He communicates His will for the church through His Word, the Holy Bible. He gives additional guidance by means of the specific leading of the Holy Spirit who indwells the heart of each believer. He also shepherds the flock through the leaders of the church to whom He has given specific gifts.

Section 2 - Biblical and Historical Background of the Government of the Local Church

A. The Kingdom of God.

As presented in the New Testament, the Kingdom of God is not to be conceived as a kingdom of this world, a political kingdom. His kingdom is sovereign and does not depend on the acceptance or rejection of the general populace. Therefore, it is not the believers who acclaim the Lord Jesus Christ as King, but it is the Lord Jesus Christ who came into this world to bring His kingdom, His rule within the human heart, and finally His outward rule in the world.

B. The Foundation of The Church.

Christ left a small body of disciples under the direction of the Apostles with a charge to preach the Gospel to the world; but He gave nothing which can be called either a constitution or bylaws. However, He did give certain general principles for us to follow. The Pastoral Epistles and Third John provide the guidelines for a cohesive and disciplined set of principles in view of the fact that the local churches needed to be organized for an effective ministry.

C. The Priesthood of All Believers and the Rulers of a Local Church.

The priesthood of believers is without doubt an established fact in the New Testament¹⁵. The church is made up of both the leaders and the individual believers. The local church made up of all believers accepts these leaders as their representatives appointed by God (not to represent them before God but to rule among them with God's sanction, having been endowed with special gifts)¹⁶. All Christians, however, are priests alike before God and have

direct access to God without intermediaries¹⁷.

Section 3 - Elder Leadership

In its operation, the church will be governed by a group of godly men called elders. These shall be men in whose lives the working of the Holy Spirit is evident, who have given a worthy witness of the authority of Christ in their lives, and who have met the qualifications given in the Scriptures. The decision-making authority of the church is vested in the Elders who function under the Lordship of Christ¹⁸. The Elders shall function as humble leaders who are sensitive to God and to the needs of the church.

The members of the church fill an important role in assisting the Elders in reaching decisions. For all substantial church decisions the membership shall be fully informed and shall be given the opportunity to review and offer input on such matters. Convictions related to decision-making matters should be submitted in writing to the Elders when such matters are brought to the congregation.

Article V - Elders

Section 1 - Authority and Responsibility

The affairs of the Berean Covenant Church shall be governed and managed by men the Church will refer to as "Elders", in accordance with Scriptures.¹⁹ They shall serve as the shepherds, directors and officers of the corporation and will have the final authority in all matters as they oversee the ministries of the Church. They will gain input, counsel, and affirmation of direction and decisions from the deacons and church family. Specifically, the duties of the Elders shall include, but are not limited to the following:

- A. Consistently study, preach and teach God's Word.²⁰
- B. Maintain doctrinal purity.²¹
- C. Devote themselves to prayer and ministry of the Word of God.²² (The ministry of the apostles apparently became the ministry of the Elders.)
- D. Give diligent labor, caring leadership, and guided counsel in the Word.²³
- E. Exercise pastoral care²⁴ and hospitality.²⁵
- F. Select and remove all officers, staff, and employees of the Church; prescribe such duties and job descriptions for said persons; establish the terms of offices and employment; and establish levels of compensation and raises.
- G. Make disbursements from the funds and properties of the Church as are required to fulfill its purpose.
- H. Conduct, manage, and govern the ministries, finances, and all activities of the Church.
- I. Establish rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and practices for the Church consistent with the Scriptures, the purpose of the Church and the By-Laws.
- J. Carry on any business in which the Elders may legally engage and apply any revenue from that exclusively for religious, charitable or education purposes as will qualify the Church as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The borrowing of money and the incurring of indebtedness for the purposes of the Corporation is prohibited.
- K. Confirm or deny all membership applicants.

Section 2 - Number of Elders

The total number shall be as many as are qualified and needed to carry out the duties of an elder.

Section 3 - Nomination and Selection

Any man being considered for the office of elder shall be placed into office in the sequence that follows:

- A. Any member in good standing may at any time submit in writing a nomination to the office of elder. This letter will include a statement to the effect that the person making the nominations believes that the nominee meets the Scriptural qualifications. This letter will include a statement to the effect that the nominee has been notified, has prayerfully considered the qualifications for elder, has agreed to serve if elected, and that he and his wife, if married, believe this to be God's will.
- B. The Board of Elders will join into a season of prayer and will research each candidate to determine if the nominee meets the Scriptural qualifications.
- C. If, after this process, God and His Word still confirm this to be His will, the man will be presented to the Church members as a candidate for elder. The Church members will then have twenty-one (21) days to pray and examine the man based upon the qualifications of an elder. If anyone finds a Scriptural reason why this man should not serve at this time, that person will bring the reason to one or more of the Elders for their consideration. If any elder believes the reason is legitimate, it will be addressed, with the possible ceasing of this process. If no elder believes the reason is legitimate or the issues have been adequately addressed and resolved, the process will continue.
- D. If, after this process there has been no Scriptural reason presented from the Church members to disqualify him, and the Elders have unanimously endorsed this candidate, the candidate will be presented to the Church for confirmation.
- E. The church membership will have the opportunity to vote by written ballot for each candidate for elder. Approval of a candidate will require 75% of the votes cast. Every voting member will receive a ballot by mail. This ballot must be returned within fourteen days.
- F. After approval of the Church, the Elders will set a date for a public laying on of hands thereby ordaining him officially to his office, with all of the privileges and responsibilities listed herein.
- G. The Board of Elders will inform any disqualified nominee of the fact and the reason for the denial. Nothing herein shall preclude a disqualified nominee from being nominated and reconsidered for the office in the future.

Section 4 - Tenure

Elders are to be appointed for life. An elder may from time to time request a sabbatical from the Board of Elders. An elder may resign from the board and be considered later for reinstatement.

Section 5 - Qualification

Each member of the Board of Elders must be an active member of this church and possess the qualifications described in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9²⁶. He shall be:

- A. Blameless as a steward of God, above reproach - not merely un-accusable but un-accused; one who has nothing upon which an adversary could base an accusation upon his character.
- B. Husband of one wife, a one-woman man - a man whose heart, eyes, and desires are loyal and dedicated to his wife; not flirtatious (this does not exempt a single or widowed man from

- serving). See Our Scriptural Foundation Appendix A and B for further clarification.
- C. Temperate, sober, vigilant - sound in mind and judgment necessary to the service of God; well-balanced; consistent in his Christian walk
 - D. Sober-minded, prudent, self-controlled -discreet, self-disciplined; one who wisely and voluntarily places limitations on his freedom for the benefit of others, restraining passions and desires by the power of the Holy Spirit
 - E. Of good behavior, orderly, respectable - well-mannered; of good behavior, modest, and orderly in dress, demeanor, and inner life
 - F. Given to hospitality - showing hospitality publicly and privately to both believers and unbelievers; relates well with people
 - G. Apt to teach, able to teach, he can exhort believers and refute false teaching - he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it; an ability to teach and instruct because of his developed knowledge of God’s Word; mental and intellectual achievement in order to offer advice and doctrine to inquirers
 - H. Not given to wine - no excessive drinking or consumption of alcoholic beverages
 - I. Not violent, not pugnacious - not physically abusive or contentious
 - J. Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle - patient, reasonable, forbearing, fair, equitable; can lead with a firm, yet gentle heart
 - K. Not a brawler, not soon angry or quick-tempered - without strife; not prone to anger; not “hot-headed”; reasonable without being argumentative
 - L. Not covetous, not a lover of money, not greedy of base gain - not seeking personal or financial gain or profit through shameful or disgraceful motives or actions; rather one who is wise and disciplined with finances; if a man cannot be an excellent steward of his personal resources, he should not have care of the Church’s resources; he should “bring all the tithe to the storehouse” as all of the flock should do, in obedience to God, because “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”
 - M. Rules well his own house, his children are faithful, not accused of rebellion to God - leading with care, diligence, and dignity in one’s own household, and whose children living under his roof follow that leadership in obedience, faith, respect, and character
 - N. Not a novice, not a new convert - not a beginner in the faith
 - O. Has a good report or reputation with outsiders - that those outside the Church who know and relate to him on a regular basis also give a good report of the life he lives
 - P. Not self willed or overbearing - not arrogant; not dominated by self-interest; not self-centered; rather, one who is courteous and respectful of other’s interests, feelings, and opinions
 - Q. A lover of good men and things - a lover of goodness; having a disposition both to being kind and doing good
 - R. Just, fair, upright - righteous and just, whether by God’s standards or according to human standards of what is just; he is considered a Godly man
 - S. Holy, devout - unpolluted with wickedness; undefiled; devoted to God

Section 6 - Removal

Any elder may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the Board if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to Scripture, including I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9)²⁷. He shall be removed only after thorough corroborating investigation by the Elders (or a duly appointed Committee of the Board, per

Article V, Section 12 of these Bylaws, at the sole discretion of the Board), in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture.²⁸ He shall be given the right to appear before the Board and refute any charges against him prior to the vote of removal. An elder being considered for dismissal has the right to face his accusers before the Board of Elders. An elder does not have the right to be present during the vote of the Board regarding his removal. When an elder is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from shepherding, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal shall be accompanied by a public rebuke, and notice shall be made before the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly-scheduled worship service as prescribed in I Timothy 5:20²⁹.

Section 7 - Elders' Meetings

The Board of Elders shall establish regular meeting times and places determined by resolution. Regular meetings may be held without further notice other than as scheduled in such resolutions. Elders' meetings will be chaired by the Chairman of the Board of Elders or his designee. The regular meetings shall be conducted at least once a month. Minutes shall be kept. Regular meetings will be open to the church members.

Special meetings of the Board of Elders may be called at any time by order of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, or by any two elders. Each elder will receive a personal notification at least forty-eight hours in advance of such a meeting.

Special sessions may be closed for disciplinary and personal membership issues. Anyone desiring to approach the Elders on any matter or need may feel free to arrange to meet with them.

Meetings by conference telephone may be conducted provided that each member and the secretary in such a meeting can hear each other.

Section 8 - Quorum

A quorum of the Board of Elders is two-thirds of the board. Proxies are not to be used.

Section 9 - Right of Inspection

Every elder shall have the right to examine, at any reasonable time, all books, records, minutes, and other documents of the church, and to inspect the physical property of the Church, for any purpose reasonably related to his interest as an elder. Church members desiring to see such documents are to make a request in writing to the Elders stating the request and the reason. The Elders will respond to the request at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 10 - Decisions of the Board of Elders

Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration by unanimous vote in a spirit of humility, with each elder regarding one another before himself. Decisions that are not unanimous shall be tabled for prayer and fasting by all elders.

If all the Elders are guided by the same Spirit and all have the mind of Christ, there should be unanimity in the decisions they make.³⁰ If there is division, all the Elders should study, pray, and seek the will of God together until consensus is achieved. Unity and harmony in the church at large begin here.

Section 11 - Fees and Compensation

Elders shall not receive any stated or fixed salary for their services, except those specifically hired in full or part-time vocational capacities. However, nothing herein contained shall be construed to preclude any elder from serving the Church in any other capacity, including staff positions, and receiving compensation in that capacity.³¹ Any person receiving compensation directly or indirectly from Berean Covenant Church shall not be in a position to determine the nature or the amount of said compensation.

Section 12 - Councils and Committees

The Elders will establish councils and committees as they deem necessary to oversee Berean Covenant Church, its members, ministries, facilities, personnel, finances, administration and the like. An elder will be assigned oversight of each council and committee. Deacons and members of the Church may serve on these councils and committees. The councils and committees will perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and powers specifically delegated by the Elders and exist for the period specified by the Elders. These councils and committees will exist and function at the discretion and direction of the Elders. Their ultimate accountability will be to the Elders as the final authority in all matters. Their role is an extension and expression of the hearts of those they are serving; ultimately the One we are all serving, the Lord Jesus Christ. Minutes shall be kept of each meeting of each council and committee, and made available to the Elders at all times for their oversight and direction.

Section 13 - Pastor and Staff as an Elder

Scriptures do not denote a clear difference between the role of elder and pastor. However, it may serve the Elders to denote this distinction for whatever purposes they deem helpful to the congregation.

The Pastor serves on the Board of Elders and shall have no more authority than any other elder.

The staff of the church may serve as elders if so elected, and there shall be no distinction in their function as elders from those who do not constitute paid staff. Being paid staff, however, does not automatically render a person as an elder for there may be those who may be engaged from outside the ranks of the membership of the church for specific and expert services they may render in various fields. All who serve as elders must be qualified according to Scriptural qualifications.

Paid staff, if appointed as elders, will be of equal authority with non-paid elders and employment will be a matter of separate and distinct consideration. A paid member of the staff may cease to be an employee of the church, either voluntarily or otherwise, but may still continue to be an elder, and an unpaid elder may become a member of the staff and receive commensurate compensation for specific services rendered.

Members of the staff who are also elders may extend their services to areas other than those pertaining to their eldership functions, and unpaid elders may call upon such to help them in the execution of their responsibilities.

A paid staff elder will be held accountable to the Board of Elders just as are all unpaid elders, without distinction.

Section 14 - Officers of the Board of Elders

In a regular scheduled meeting in January of each year, the Elders shall elect or reaffirm a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary. These will also serve as the designated corporate officers as required by Georgia Statutes and the Articles of Incorporation. They will work as a team in overseeing the ministry of the Elders. The officers serve at the pleasure of the Elders. No paid elder shall be eligible to serve as an officer of the Board of Elders.

Section 15 - Other Staff

The Board of Elders may appoint, and may empower the Chairman to appoint, such other staff as the business of the church may require, each of whom shall hold office for such period, have such authority, and perform such duties as are provided in the Bylaws or as the Board of Elders may from time to time determine.

Section 16 – Membership-initiated Gifts for Elders

The Elders will establish a standing committee whose purpose is to initiate, obtain approval, and distribute funds as a gift for an Elder(s) in accordance with the Scriptural command to honor and provide for those leaders of the church who rule well.³² The Church Treasurer will be an ex-officio member of this committee, but may not serve as chairman. The committee must review the feasibility of any request to provide a gift on behalf of the membership to an Elder(s). The Elder Gift Committee is not required to report its decisions or deliberations to the Elders, nor is it required to receive their permission for its actions. The committee will determine if the gift should come from the church treasury, or from a special offering.

A. Gifts by Special Offering

If the gift is to be by special offering, the Elder Gift Committee will determine a method for communicating the need to the congregation, the time period for collection, and for disbursing the gift to the Elder(s). The funds must be collected and counted by the Counting Committee in accordance with the procedures for collecting regular weekly offerings and special missions offerings.

B. Gifts from the Church Treasury

If the Elder Gift Committee determines that a gift should be given from the church treasury, they must inform the congregation by letter (excluding the Elder for which the gift is intended, and his wife) of their recommendation, to include the intent and the cost of the gift. The committee will develop a petition that states the amount and intended recipient of the gift. The petition must be signed by three-fourths of the members, excluding the Elder for which the gift is intended, and his wife. Upon receiving the necessary signatures, the Elder Gift Committee chairman is authorized to receive the funds from the Church Treasurer and distribute the gift. The signed petition must be filed in the church records, and be made available for any member who requests to see it.

Article VI - Deacons**Section 1 - General Statement**

Members who are qualified and who desire to serve Berean Covenant Church by giving assistance in the various ministries of this church may serve as deacons. This body shall be one of servants and not one which exercises authority over or rules the church. The government of the church shall rest upon the Elders, whereas the deacons shall serve to relieve the Elders of the

burdens of carrying out many of the daily operations of the church in order to free the Elders to principally devote their time to prayer, worship, and teaching.

Section 2 - Duties of Office

Subject to oversight by the Elders, the deacons shall be responsible for the temporal affairs of Berean Covenant Church. They shall carry out the duties and responsibilities delegated and assigned to them by the Elders.

Section 3 - Qualifications

Members of the Berean Covenant Church who desire to serve as deacons and who possess the qualifications stated in I Timothy 3:8-12³³ are eligible to be elected to serve. These qualifications are similar to those stated in Article V Section 5. The primary difference is that deacons are not required to be able to teach.

Deacons' wives must meet the qualifications in I Timothy 3:11³⁴:

- A. Decent and dignified. Decent and dignified refers to behavior and dress.
- B. Not a slanderer. No one should serve as a deacon in a local church whose wife is a false accuser.
- C. Sober in regard to alcoholic beverages. She should not be given to wine and there should not be excessive drinking or consumption of alcoholic beverages.
- D. Faithful in all things. The word *pistas* refers to both the adherence to the Scriptural content of their faith being identical to apostolic teaching and to their behavior. The husband must be able to depend upon his wife in all things and particularly in his service as a deacon.

Section 4 - Nomination and Selection

At a time designated by the Elders, but not less than once a year, any member of the church can present in writing to the Elders the names of those men they believe God is raising up to serve as deacons of Berean Covenant Church. The Elders will then follow the same process of confirmation for deacons as listed under Article V, Section 3, for the Nomination and Selection of Elders.

Section 5 - Tenure

Deacons are to be appointed for life. A deacon may from time to time request a sabbatical from service. A deacon may resign and be considered later for reinstatement.

Section 6 - Removal

Any deacon may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Elders if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to Scripture, including I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9)³⁵. He shall be removed only after thorough corroborating investigation by the Elders (or a duly appointed Committee of the Board, per Article V, Section 12 of these Bylaws, at the sole discretion of the Board), in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture.³⁶ When a deacon is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from serving, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal shall be accompanied by a public rebuke, and notice shall be made before the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly-scheduled worship service as prescribed in I Timothy 5:20³⁷.

Article VII - Pastor-Teacher

Section 1 - Election

The Pastor-Teacher shall be selected by the Board of Elders and confirmed by the members of the church at its annual meeting or at a special business meeting, and such confirmation shall be a three-fourths (3/4) majority of all the votes cast. He shall remain in office for an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservations: The Elders reserve the right to remove and/or dismiss the Pastor-Teacher for immoral conduct, inappropriate conduct, doctrinal error, physical incapacitation, or mental incapacitation. The Pastor-Teacher must give at least one month's notice if he intends to resign. The Pastor-Teacher's resignation is subject to a lesser time if both the Pastor-Teacher and the Elders by mutual agreement provide otherwise.

Section 2 - Qualifications

The qualifications of the Pastor-Teacher are the same as those given for an elder in Article V Section 5. The Pastor-Teacher must become a member of the church on the acceptance of his call. In addition, the Pastor-Teacher must agree with all of the Berean Covenant Church requirements for membership.

Section 3 - Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Pastor-Teacher shall be:

- A To earnestly carry on a preaching, teaching, and training ministry, with the aim of bringing each member to a place of spiritual maturity and fruitfulness, and to place a spiritual harmony with the rest of the body;
- B. To set an example in Christian living and dedication;
- C. To endeavor to provide for the pulpit to be filled on a regular and consistent basis, including times of absence.

There shall, by all members, elders, and deacons, be respect for the office of the Pastor-Teacher. He shall be held in esteem and respect as an under shepherd of God³⁸ (I Thessalonians 5:12, 13). To aid him in carrying out his ministry, the church body shall not burden him with tasks unrelated to those duties that are absolutely necessary to his under shepherding. The main tasks of the Pastor-Teacher are prayer and preaching of the Word of God. Nothing shall be permitted to diminish the time and effort that the Pastor-Teacher needs to make such a ministry Spirit-filled and instructive.

Article VIII - Church Ordinances

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of positive and sovereign institution, appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ³⁹, the only lawgiver, to be continued in His church to the end of the world. These holy ordinances are to be administered under the supervision of the Board of Elders.

Section 1 - Baptism

Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ, and is to be a sign to the one baptized of his fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection; of being engrafted into the Lord Jesus Christ; of the remission of sins, and of that person's giving up of himself to God, through the Lord Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness

of life. Those who actually profess repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, are the only proper subjects for this ordinance. The outward element to be used in this ordinance is water, in which the person is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Berean Covenant Church believes that immersion - the dipping of the person in water - is the preferred method of baptism⁴⁰.

Section 2 - The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper was instituted by Him on the same night in which He was betrayed. It is to be observed in remembrance of His body which was broken for us and His blood which was shed for us. This remembrance is to continue until the Lord Jesus Christ returns for His church⁴¹. Only those who have received the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and who have confessed their sin should participate in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

Article IX - Meetings

Section 1 - Assemblies

Regular assemblies for the purpose of worship, fellowship, teaching, and edification shall be held as the Elders direct.

Section 2 - Business Meetings

- A. The church shall meet monthly to receive reports from the Elders on the spiritual, physical, and fiscal condition of the church.
- B. The membership shall meet annually in business session for the following:
 - to be informed on the previous year's activities,
 - presentation and review of the annual budget,
 - make decisions on previously announced concerns.
- C. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Elders for discussion and/or action on pressing matters.

Article X - Church Discipline

Section 1 - Formative Discipline

Every disciple (learner, follower, disciplined one) of the Lord Jesus Christ is to walk under the discipline of the Lord Jesus and His word (His instruction, direction, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness⁴²). Mutual submission to one another in the reverence of Christ⁴³ is a part of that discipline. Along with that, God has called the church to submission⁴⁴ and obedience⁴⁵ to the Elders He has placed over His church. This formative discipline is part of the holy walk He has commanded for each true believer and for the church as a whole. God readily supplies His grace to those who are submissive and obedient to Him and His Word, and He resists those who proudly resist His leadership⁴⁶. This is a part of His work in both formative and corrective discipline within His church.

Section 2 - Corrective Discipline

When a member of this church fails in an area of formative discipline it may be necessary for the Elders and this church body to apply corrective discipline as instructed by God in His Word.

All corrective discipline will be concentrated in the Board of Elders, and the Elders will determine whether a matter is to be brought before the church body for action. Members in the early churches were subject to confrontation for reasons such as:

- A. Unwillingness to become reconciled to an offended brother⁴⁷,
- B. Unwillingness to engage in work⁴⁸,
- C. Divisiveness in the church⁴⁹,
- D. Sexual immorality or habitual covetousness, idolatry, reviling, drunkenness, or swindling⁵⁰,
- E. False teaching⁵¹,
- F. General sinful conduct⁵².

Members of the church are expected to conduct their lives in accordance with Biblical standards of holiness as they grow to become more like Christ. The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church⁵³, to edify believers by deterring sin⁵⁴, and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct⁵⁵.

Section 3 - Disciplinary Procedures

Disciplinary procedures will conform to the following guidelines:

- A. Members of this church and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the Elders, shall be subject to church discipline, including dismissal according to Matthew 18:15-18⁵⁶. Before such dismissal, however, (1) it shall be the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of the erring individual's heresy or misconduct to warn and correct such erring individual in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the erring individual does not heed this warning, then (2) the warning member shall again go to the erring individual, seeking his or her repentance, but accompanied by one or two individuals who shall confirm that the sin has occurred or is continuing to occur, and/or that the erring individual has been appropriately confronted and has refused to repent. The first and second warnings may occur with no specified time interval. If the erring individual still refuses to heed this warning, then (3) it shall be brought to the Board of Elders (or a duly appointed Committee of the Board, per Article V, Section 12 of these Bylaws, at the sole discretion of the Board). If the Board of Elders (or a duly appointed Committee of the Board, per Article V, Section 12 of these Bylaws, at the sole discretion of the Board) determines—after thorough investigation in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture⁵⁷—that there is corroborating evidence that the erring individual has sinned or is continuing to sin, that he or she has been appropriately confronted, and that he or she refuses to repent, then the Elders shall inform the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance. If the erring individual demonstrates repentance, then notice to that effect may be given at a regularly scheduled worship service. If, however, the erring individual does not repent in response to the church in its collective call to repentance, then (4) he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the fellowship and/or membership of the church and the congregation thereof at a regular scheduled worship service. If the erring individual, after such dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement before the Board of Elders (or a duly appointed Committee of the Board, per Article V, Section 12 of these Bylaws, at the sole discretion of

the Board), then he or she shall be publicly restored to all the rights, duties, privileges, and responsibilities of fellowship and/or membership.

- B. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Elders in the exercise of their discretion may proceed directly to the third stage of church discipline, (i.e. the informing of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance) or to the fourth stage of church discipline, (i.e. the dismissal from fellowship and/or membership of the church) when one or more of the following have occurred:
- Where the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public, i.e. openly and to the offense of the whole Church⁵⁸; or
 - Where the disciplined party has taught or otherwise disseminated doctrine deemed false or erroneous by the Elders, then chosen to disregard the direction and reproof of the Elders⁵⁹; or
 - When the disciplined party has been warned twice to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning⁶⁰.
- C. The members of this church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church, agree that there shall be no appeal to any court because of the dismissal or because of public statements to the congregation at the third or fourth stages of church discipline. Members who are under discipline by the church, as defined in the previous paragraphs, forfeit and waive the right to resign from this church. Resignations from membership are possible only by members who are in good standing and who are not under any disciplinary action.
- D. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Elders (or a duly constituted subcommittee thereof), a member, non-member regular attendee, or other individual may be notified that he or she is not to be present upon church premises for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others on church premises. Such required absence may, but need not, be concurrent with church discipline of that person.
- E. This church does not continue church membership on an indefinite basis for members who do not participate in the fellowship. Members who do not participate for three months or longer, unless physically hindered, will be considered to be in violation of Hebrews 10:25⁶¹ and therefore will be subject to the discipline described above.

Article XI - Amendments

The Elders shall be responsible for drafting any necessary amendments to these bylaws using the following guidelines:

- A. No bylaw in violation of the Scriptures shall be valid.
- B. Any amendments to these By-Laws must be based upon the unanimous recommendation of the Board of Elders. The voting church membership will have the opportunity to vote by written ballot for each Amendment. Approval of an Amendment will require 75% of the votes cast. Every voting member will receive a ballot by mail. Ballots must be returned within fourteen days.
- C. Notice of any proposed bylaw amendments must be made in writing to the membership at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date that the members' ballots are mailed. During that period any member may express his conviction concerning the proposed amendment by

submitting a written statement to the Chairman of the Board of Elders.

Article XII - Financial Accountability

Section 1 - Church Accountability

The Board of Elders is the primary body for financial accountability. It is responsible for establishing policies and procedures regarding church income and expenditures. The income shall come from the tithes and offerings of the members of Berean Covenant Church.⁶² Berean Covenant Church will not borrow money to finance its operations, programs, or buildings.⁶³ The Elders shall give an annual report of the financial condition of the church and shall make the financial report available upon request. An independent audit shall be performed when deemed necessary by the Board of Elders.

Section 2 - Member Accountability

Each member is responsible to provide their tithes and offerings to the Lord's Work in accordance with the directions of Scripture⁶⁴.

Article XIII - Dissolution

The Elders shall be responsible for drafting the papers to dissolve Berean Covenant Church using the following guidelines:

- A. The dissolution of this church must be based upon the unanimous recommendation of the Board of Elders.
- B. The voting church membership will have the opportunity to vote upon dissolution at a duly called special meeting. Approval of dissolution will require 75% of the votes cast.
- C. A notice of the meeting to vote on dissolution must be made in writing to the membership at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the meeting. During that period any member may express his conviction concerning the proposal by submitting a written statement to the Chairman of the Board of Elders.

Upon a unanimous dissolution recommendation from the Elders and the vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the voting members at a special called meeting, the Church may be dissolved and the assets distributed in accordance with the Church's Articles of Incorporation to another organization or church having the same objectives and purposes as Berean Covenant Church.

Article XIV - Church Year

Berean Covenant Church shall operate on a calendar year basis, commencing on January 1st and continuing through December 31st.

Article XV - Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the accepted authority to be used in conducting meetings of Berean Covenant Church and its committees.

Article XVI - Credits

The members of Berean Covenant Church wish to acknowledge and give the following recognition and credit for valuable aid in drafting of these bylaws. Substantial reference was made to the bylaws and writings of these parties in the preparation of the bylaws of Berean Covenant Church.

- A. The Family Church of Gainesville, Florida
- B. Grace Community Church of the Valley of Sun Valley, California
- C. Rocky Bayou Baptist Church of Niceville, Florida
- D. Saint Stephens Church of Columbus, Georgia
- E. Woodland Park Baptist Church of Chattanooga, Tennessee

Appendix

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost the Lord, and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father [and the Son]; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one holy universal and Apostolic Church; I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. AMEN.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descendeth into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy universal Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. AMEN.

¹ II Timothy 3:16, 17 - All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

² Philippians 1:27 - Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you, or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, and with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; [NAS]

³ Hebrews 10:25 - Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

⁴ John 4:24 - God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

⁵ II Timothy 2:15 - Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

⁶ Colossians 1:9 - For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

1 Thessalonians 5:25 - Brethren, pray for us.

⁷ Mark 16:15 - And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

⁸ II Timothy 3:16,17 (See Note 1 above)

⁹ Ephesians 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

¹⁰ I Corinthians 12:13 - For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

¹¹ I Peter 4:10 - As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

¹² Galatians 5:19-23 - Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

¹³ Jude 3 - Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

¹⁴ Ephesians 1:22,23 - And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Matthew 23:8-11 - But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

I Peter 5:4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

¹⁵ I Peter 2:5, 9 - Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Revelation 1:6 - And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Revelation 5:10 - And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Revelation 20:6 - Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

¹⁶ Ephesians 4:7-16 - But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

¹⁷ I Timothy 2:5 For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

¹⁸ Nowhere in the Bible, either in the New Testament or the Old Testament, is decision making placed with a congregation and never is it assumed by any New Testament churches that affairs are decided by democratic vote.

¹⁹ I Timothy 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

²⁰ II Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

Titus 1:9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

I Timothy 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

I Timothy 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

²¹ Titus 1:9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

²² Acts 6:4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

²³ I Thessalonians 5:12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

Romans 12:9 *Let* love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

I Timothy 3:4,5 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

I Timothy 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

²⁴ I Thessalonians 5:14,15 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men*. See that none render evil for evil unto any *man*; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all *men*.

James 5:14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

²⁵ I Timothy 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Titus 1:8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

²⁶ I Timothy 3:1-7 This *is* a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a

man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Titus 1:6-9 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

²⁷ I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 (See Note 26 above)

²⁸ Matthew 18:15-18 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

I Timothy 5:19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

²⁹ I Timothy 5:20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

³⁰ I Corinthians 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Ephesians 4:3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Philippians 1:27; 2:2 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.

³¹ I Corinthians 9:7-14 Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard, and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock? I am not speaking these things according to human judgment, am I? Or does not the Law also say these things? For it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing." God is not concerned about oxen, is He? Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops. If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you? If other share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ. Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the food of the temple, and those who attend regularly to the altar have their share with the altar? So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.

³² I Timothy 5:17-18 Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages." I Corinthians 9:7-14 (See Note 31 above.)

³³ I Timothy 3:8-12 Likewise *must* the deacons *be* grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless. Even so *must* *their* wives *be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

³⁴ I Timothy 3:11 Even so *must* *their* wives *be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

³⁵ I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 (See Note 26 above)

³⁶ Matthew 18:15-18 and I Timothy 5:19 (See Note 28 above)

³⁷ I Timothy 5:20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

³⁸ I Thessalonians 5:12,13 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves.

³⁹ Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
Luke 22:19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

⁴⁰ John 1:28-33 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

Acts 8:35-39 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

⁴¹ I Corinthians 11:23-26 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

⁴² All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

⁴³ Ephesians 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

⁴⁴ I Peter 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

⁴⁵ Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

⁴⁶ I Peter 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

James 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

⁴⁷ Matthew 15:15-17 (See Note 28 above)

⁴⁸ II Thessalonians 3:6-15 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.

⁴⁹ Romans 16:17,18 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive

the hearts of the simple.

Titus 3:9,10 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject;

⁵⁰ I Corinthians 5:1-13 It is reported commonly *that there is* fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth. I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

⁵¹ I Timothy 1:20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

II Timothy 2:17,18 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

⁵² Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

⁵³ I Corinthians 5:6 Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

⁵⁴ I Timothy 5:20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

⁵⁵ Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

⁵⁶ Matthew 18:15-18 (See Note 28 above)

⁵⁷ Matthew 18:15-18 (See Note 28above)

I Timothy 5:19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

⁵⁸ I Corinthians 5:1-5 (See Note 48 above)

⁵⁹ Romans 16:17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

⁶⁰ Titus 3:10,11 A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

⁶¹ Hebrews 10:25 - Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

⁶² Exodus 35:4,5 And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This *is* the thing which the LORD commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever *is* of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD;

Exodus 36:6,7 And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.

⁶³ Romans 13:8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

Proverbs 22:26,27 Be not thou *one* of them that strike hands, *or* of them that are sureties for debts. If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?

Proverbs 22:7 The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower *is* servant to the lender.

⁶⁴ Malachi 3:10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it*.

I Corinthians 16:1,2 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.