

VERTICAL CHURCH

“If I be lifted up...” ~ John 12:32

Our core belief system is outlined in the following document. We believe these things and practice them in our daily lives. Beliefs that do not change our daily actions are not beliefs.

We are Baptist by belief. We use the Book of Acts as our church model. Jesus lifted up is our theme. Discipleship over denomination is our focus.

Gathering – Assembly of Believers

Growing – Holding to Biblical teachings and maturing in the Word

Giving – Being servant-minded with our time, talents, and resources

Going – Striving to reach the lost and further God’s Kingdom

Gathering

Unless we are providentially hindered, we should be excited to be together for discipleship, fellowship, and worship.

The Scriptures tell us, “This is the day that the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalm 118:24 NKJV). When we do not gather, it is a witness to the lost world that these things are not important.

Hebrews 10:25 (NKJV) – “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Reference Acts 5:42, 20:20

Growing

Spiritual maturity has to be grounded in a belief, so the following is what we believe in major doctrine. And from the doctrines, we strive to mature and grow.

1. THE HOLY TRINITY

God has eternally existed in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

a. GOD THE FATHER

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe.

Reference Genesis 1:1, 26-27; Psalms 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2;
2 Corinthians 13:1

b. JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the Son of God and also God the Son.

Jesus Christ is the creator and co-equal with the Father. He lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of ALL people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return someday to Earth to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Reference Matthew 1:22-23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5, 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14-15;
1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Romans 1:3-4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14-15; Titus 2:13

c. THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and Jesus. He is our Helper, sent by God at salvation. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for salvation through the conviction of sin. He also lives in every Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer at least one spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under his control daily.

John 14:15-18 (NKJV)

"If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you."

Reference 2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16, 7-14, 16-17; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 1:13,
5:18; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Galatians 5:25

2. THE BIBLE

The Bible is God's Word. It is the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God that was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living.

2 Timothy 3:16 (NKJV) – "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,"

Reference 2 Peter 1:13, 20-21, Psalms 12:6, 119:105-106, Proverbs 30:5

3. HUMAN BEINGS

People are made in the image of God and are to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "sin". Sin causes separation from God for the lost, but also serious consequences for the saved.

a. BREATH OF LIFE

Vertical Church believes that life begins at conception and that all life should be protected and valued. Therefore, we strongly disagree with all forms of abortion and euthanasia.

4. MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY

a. MARRIAGE

We believe that Scripture defines marriage as the permanent, exclusive, comprehensive, and "one flesh" covenant union between one man and one woman.

Reference Genesis 1:27, 2:18-24; Matthew 19:4-9; Mark 10:5-9;
Ephesians 5:31-33

b. SEXUAL IMMORALITY

We believe that sexual acts outside of Biblical marriage are sinful. Members of Vertical Church should resist and refrain from any and all sexual acts outside of marriage – including but not limited to: adultery, fornication, cohabitation (living together while not married), and homosexuality.

Reference Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 18:7-23; Deuteronomy 5:18; Matthew 5:27-28; Romans 1:26-27 ; 1 Corinthians 6:9-13 ; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 13:4; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 4:17-19; Colossians 3:5

c. SEXUAL IDENTITY

We believe that God created mankind in His image: male (man) and female (woman), sexually different but with equal personal dignity. As such, members of Vertical Church should affirm their biological birth sex. We believe that gender is exclusively decided by our Creator. The Bible says while we are still in the womb, He knows us and we are wonderfully made.

Reference Genesis 1:26-28; Romans 1:26-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 14:34-35; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:5-9; Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelations 19:7-9, 21

d. SEXUAL REDEMPTION

We believe that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Vertical Church encourages all to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ by grace, through faith, and encourages all to live their lives unto Christ redemptively. We are all broken by sin and each of us struggles with its effects in our daily lives and relationships. Yet, the regeneration, sanctification, and justification that are ours by faith in Jesus Christ, allow us to walk in complete forgiveness and provide true hope.

Reference 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 10:13; 1 Timothy 6:19; Matthew 11:28-30; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:1-10; Hebrews 2:17-18, 4:14-16; Genesis 1:27; Psalms 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6, 59:1-2

With grace, Vertical Church members should always welcome and treat all who experience and struggle with sin and sexual immorality with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Members should work to lead, guide, and direct ALL to come to behavior consistent with Scripture. We must remember to show compassion, not contempt, for ALL. The goal is not to build a wall to keep people out, but that God might build up His church in truth and grace.

5. SALVATION

Salvation is God's free gift to us. We believe that salvation is available to everyone through true repentance and the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. In John 14:6, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (NKJV) Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offering of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith, we are saved. Eternal life begins that moment one receives Jesus Christ into their life.

Reference Romans 6:23, 5:1; Ephesians 2:9, 1:12; Titus 3:5, Galatians 3:26

6. ETERNAL SECURITY

Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot “lose” your salvation. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and the keeping power of God that gives us this security. We cannot lose our salvation, but we can lose our fellowship with God due to our own actions.

Reference John 10:29; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10-14; 1 Peter 1:3-5

7. ETERNITY

Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence. The lost will live eternally separated from God in Hell. The saved will live in eternal union with God in Heaven.

Reference John 3:16; 1 John 5:13-15; Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:11-15; Matthew 16:24-28

8. CHRIST’S RETURN

Vertical Church believes that Biblical prophecy should be studied for understanding. Approximately 25% of the Bible is about prophecy and we are encouraged to know it and apply it in our daily lives. All Scripture, both prophetic and non-prophetic are equally inspired by God.

We believe the end-time prophecy that there is a rapture that takes believers into His presence in the clouds. We believe in the seven-year Great Tribulation, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ for His kingdom reign on Earth, and the Great White Throne Judgement for the unsaved.

Reference 1 Thessalonians 4:13, 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 15; Revelation 4:22; Zechariah 14, Ezekiel 26-38; Matthew 24

Giving

Vertical Church believes that New Covenant giving, joyfully giving with your heart, is what the Lord expects of us and is part of our worship. We believe that generosity is at the heart of every Christian believer.

2 Corinthians 9:7-15 (MSG)

"I want each of you to take plenty of time to think it over, and make up your own mind what you will give. That will protect you against sob stories and arm-twisting. God loves it when the giver delights in the giving. God can pour on the blessings in astonishing ways so that you're ready for anything and everything, more than just ready to do what needs to be done. As one psalmist puts it,

*He throws caution to the winds,
giving to the needy in reckless abandon.
His right-living, right-giving ways
never run out, never wear out.*

This most generous God who gives seed to the farmer that becomes bread for your meals is more than extravagant with you. He gives you something you can then give away, which grows into full-formed lives, robust in God, wealthy in every way, so that you can be generous in every way, producing with us great praise to God. Carrying out this social relief work involves far more than helping meet the bare needs of poor Christians. It also produces abundant and bountiful thanksgivings to God. This relief offering is a prod to live at your very best, showing your gratitude to God by being openly obedient to the plain meaning of the Message of Christ. You show your gratitude through your generous offerings to your needy brothers and sisters, and really toward everyone. Meanwhile, moved by the extravagance of God in your lives, they'll respond by praying for you in passionate intercession for whatever you need. Thank God for this gift, his gift. No language can praise it enough!"

Going

1. BAPTISM

Vertical Church believes that all followers of Christ should experience Baptism as a testimony of inward rebirth, but also affirms that baptism is not essential to salvation. Baptism is simply an outward picture of what has happened on the inside through salvation; the death, burial, and resurrection of a new life.

Matthew 28:19-20 (NKJV)

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Colossians 2:12 (NKJV)

"buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."

2. TELLING OTHERS ABOUT CHRIST

It is the responsibility and the privilege of every believer to tell someone about his or her faith in Jesus. You don't have to know the whole Bible, you don't have to have some witnessing plan memorized – all you need to do is tell someone, "This is what God did for me. I don't even understand it all, but my life is different because of Jesus."

Much like Jesus' disciples, we should always strive to be "fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19 NKJV).

1 Peter 3:15 (NKJV)

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;"

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