

COVENANT PARTNERSHIP

*Partnering in Purpose.
Building the Body.*

1 JOHN 1:1-3



BY PASTOR VERN PELTZ

WORD OF LIFE MINISTRIES

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Word of Life Ministries

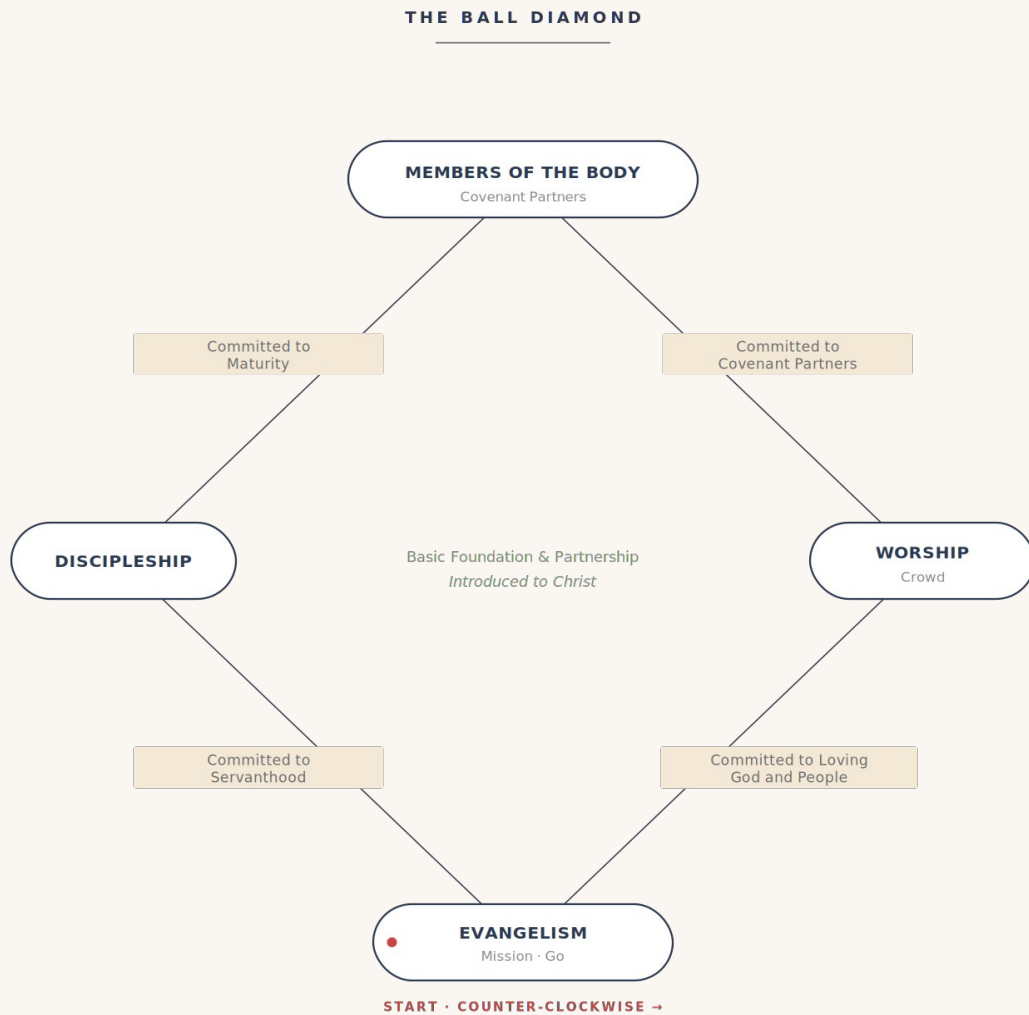
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The notes from the two messages on Isaiah 54 are available online at wordoflifemn.org.



God-Given Purpose for the Church

1. **Evangelize**
2. **Worship**
3. **Members of a Body**
4. **Discipleship**
5. **Service / Ministry**

- Matt. 22:37-40
- Matt. 28:19-20
- Eph. 4:1-16
- Acts 2:42-47

Statement of Purpose

“To introduce people to Jesus, enabling them to grow in love for God and their fellow man, so establishing Covenant Partnership, for the purposes of: developing Christlike maturity, and developing their God-ordained ministry and anointing.”

Vision of Word of Life

We are a **“How To”** church

“To help people to know how to...”

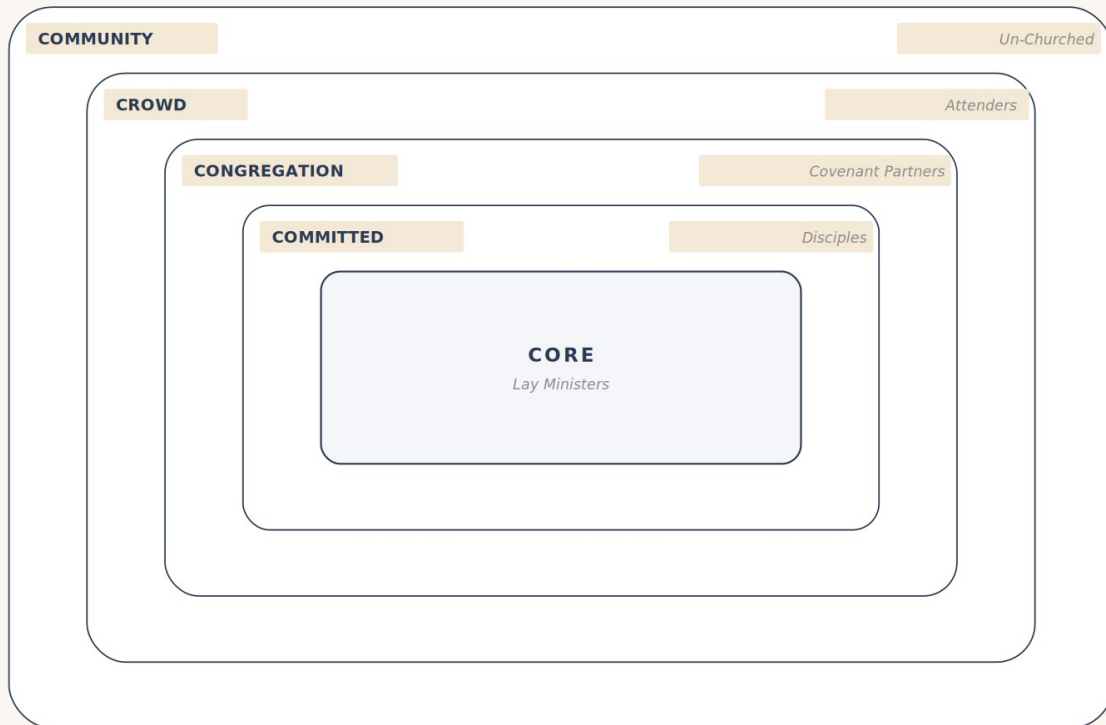
Expanding the Purposes

Purpose	Task	Acts 2:42-47	Objective	Target
Evangelize	Outreach	<i>"...added to their number daily those who were being saved."</i>	Mission	Community
Worship	Exalt	<i>"They devoted themselves to... breaking of bread and prayers... praising God."</i>	Magnify	Crowd
Partnership	Encourage	<i>"...devoted to the fellowship... all the believers were together... they ate together."</i>	Fellowship	Congregation
Discipleship	Edify	<i>"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching."</i>	Maturity	Committed
Service	Equip	<i>"They gave to anyone as he had need."</i>	Ministry	Core

Purpose	Life Component	Basic Human Need	The Church Provides	Emotional Benefit
Evangelize	<i>My Witness</i>	<i>Purpose to Live For</i>	<i>A FOCUS for Living</i>	Significance
Worship	<i>My Worship</i>	<i>Power to Live On</i>	<i>A FORCE for Living</i>	Stimulation
Partnership	<i>My Relationships</i>	<i>People to Live With</i>	<i>A FAMILY for Living</i>	Support
Discipleship	<i>My Walk</i>	<i>Principles to Live By</i>	<i>A FOUNDATION for Living</i>	Stability
Service	<i>My Work</i>	<i>Profession to Live Out</i>	<i>A FUNCTION for Living</i>	Self-Expression

Target Groups

TARGET GROUPS



Word of Life — Ministry

1. Evangelism (Target → Community)

a. Individual Ministry.

- Spiritual Adoption and Mentoring.

b. As a team — Plan, Promote, and Oversee:

- All Bridge Events.
- Seeker Groups.
- Evangelistic Activities and Programs.
- Evangelistic Training.
- Organize whatever it takes to reach the Community.

2. Worship (Target → Crowd)

a. Individual Ministry.

- Personal Worship with a Focus.
- Spiritual Adoption and Mentoring.

b. As a team — Plan and Oversee:

- All Services and Activities regarding Praise & Worship.
- All Special Worship Emphasis and Events.
- Provide Music & Worship for all Word of Life departments.
- Provide Sound and Video Management & Support.

3. Covenant Partners (Target → Congregation)

a. Individual Ministry.

- Personal Ministry to Covenant Partners.
- Spiritual Adoption and Mentoring.

b. As a team:

- Purpose: Fellowship and Care of the Flock.
- Involvement: Weddings / Funerals; Pastoral Care / Hospital Visitations; Counseling; All Major Interactive Gatherings.

4. Discipleship (Target → Committed)

a. Individual Ministry.

- Spiritual Adoption and Mentoring.

b. As teams — Develop Deeper Spiritual Commitment and Maturity:

- Involved with the Internal Word of Life Departments.
- Continuing Education.
- Bible Studies.
- Growth & Specialized Groups.
- Specialized Trainings.

5. Ministry / Go (Target → Core)

a. Individual Ministry.

- Spiritual Adoption and Mentoring.

b. As a team — Involvement with all Outreach Ministries:

- Help turn Covenant Partners into ministers.
- Helping every Covenant Partner to find a meaningful place of service that best expresses their gifts and abilities.

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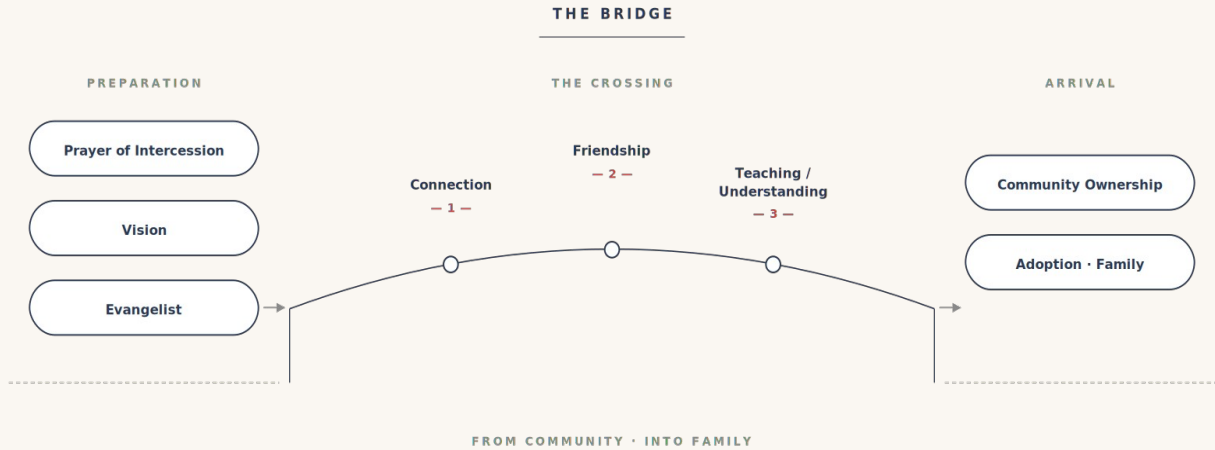
“To help people to know how to...”

1 John 1:1-3 — Shows the “How To”

- a. **“That which was from the beginning.”** This has to do with none other but God. He is what everything is built around. As we read on, we’ll see that it specifically is dealing with Jesus.
- b. **“Which we have heard.”** We’ve come in contact with him and learned of him via hearing.
- c. **“Which we have seen with our eyes.”** We’ve come in contact with him and learned of him via sight.
- d. **“Which we have looked at.”** (AMP — “Whom we have gazed upon.”) We have fixed our attention on him and studied him.
- e. **“Our hands have touched.”** This involves personal contact and interaction.
- f. **“This we proclaim.”** This is the heart of our message — what we’ve learned and interacted with.
- g. **“That you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.”** “Fellowship” — Greek: *Koinonia*. *Koinonia* speaks of Covenant. We’ve Covenanted with each other. We’ve Covenanted with our God.
- h. **“We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us.”** Our emphasis is “Inclusive” — not “Exclusive.” Evangelism is to be at the heart of this organization.

Evangelism

(Pastor Mary Peltz)



Praise and Worship

(Seven Old Testament Words)

In the Old Testament, the original Hebrew Scriptures had many different words which express the various forms of praise. However, when the Old Testament was translated into English in the King James Version, all of these Hebrew words were translated as the word “praise.” Therefore, in the translation, much of the original meaning was lost.

Below you will find the seven Hebrew words, what they mean, and a few of the Scriptures in which they are found. This should help you grasp the true meaning of the word “praise” when you read it in the King James Version.

1. YADAH

- a. Definition: To throw out the hand; to worship with extended hand; to submit yourself in all your problems and difficult circumstances to God — releasing it to God rather than wringing the hands in despair, worry, etc.
- b. Scriptures: 2 Chron. 7:3; 20:21
Ps. 9:1; 30:9; 42:11; 44:8; 45:17; 54:6; 107:8, 15, 21; 138:1, 2, 4; 139:14

2. TOWDAH

- a. Definition: To extend the hand and offer an offering of thanks, adoration, acceptance, and praise to God. To first recognize our own personal lack and defilement that comes via living in this world, and then express gratitude, appreciation, and our love for what he has done and is doing for us through the work and blood of Jesus.
- b. Scriptures: Ps. 42:4; 50:23; 56:12; 100 (title)

3. HALAL

- a. Definition: To boast; to celebrate; to tell of God’s greatness. To be clamorously foolish (clamorous: loud, noisy, confused — i.e., everyone talking at the same time).
- b. Scriptures: 2 Sam. 22:4; 1 Chron. 16:25; Jer. 20:13; Ps. 18:3; 48:1; 96:4; 104:3; 146:1, 2, 10; 147:1, 12; 150:1-6

4. SHABACH

- a. Definition: To address in a loud tone; to shout; to command.
- b. Scriptures: Ps. 63:3; 117:1; 145:4; 147:12; Eccl. 4:2

5. BARAK

- a. Definition: To kneel; to bless God in reverence, awe, and expectation.
- b. Scriptures: Judg. 5:2; Ps. 72:15
- c. Scriptures in which the Hebrew word “Barak” is translated “bless” (KJV):
 - 1 Chron. 29:10, 20; Neh. 9:5; Ps. 16:7; 26:12; 34:1; 63:4; 96:2; 100:4; 103:1, 2, 20–22; 104:1, 35; 134:1–3; 145:1, 2, 10, 21.

6. ZAMAR

- a. Definition: To celebrate in song and music; to touch the strings or part of a musical instrument; to make music accompanied by the voice.
- b. Scriptures: 2 Sam. 22:50; Ps. 7:17; 9:11; 27:6; 47:6, 7; 68:4; 92:1; 98:4; 108:1; 135:3; 144:9; 147:1, 7; 149:3

7. TEHILLAH

- a. Definition: To sing, and to laud; a more spontaneous and unprepared flow from deep within.
- b. Scriptures: Deut. 10:21; 2 Chron. 20:22; Neh. 12:46; Ps. 22:3; 34:1; 51:15; 66:2; 71:6, 8; 79:13; 100:4; 106:12; 111:10; Isa. 42:10; 61:3

Praise & Worship

Why Do We Stand When We Sing?

"Then some Levites... STOOD UP and praised the Lord the God of Israel, with a very loud voice." (2 Chron. 20:19)

"... I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, STANDING before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.'" (Rev. 7:9-10)

Why Do We Lift Our Hands?

"I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will LIFT UP MY HANDS." (Ps. 63:4)

"LIFT UP YOUR HANDS in the sanctuary and praise the Lord." (Ps. 134:2)

"I want men everywhere to LIFT UP HOLY HANDS in prayer, without anger and disputing." (1 Tim. 2:8)

Why Do We Clap Our Hands?

"CLAP YOUR HANDS, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy." (Ps. 47:1)

Why Do We Dance?

"Praise his name in DANCE." (Ps. 149:3)

In the following verses, the Greek word for "Joy, Rejoice" is "Agalliao" (Strong's #21). It means: "to jump for joy; exult; rejoice greatly; jubilant exultation."

"At that time, Jesus, full of JOY (KJV — "rejoiced") through the Holy Spirit, said, 'I praise you Father, Lord of heaven and earth...' " (Luke 10:21)

"REJOICE, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven..." (Matt. 5:12)

Other references: Luke 1:47; John 8:56; Acts 16:34; 1 Pet. 1:6, 8; 4:13.

Why Do We Sing In Tongues & In English?

"For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind."

I will SING WITH MY SPIRIT, but I will also SING WITH MY MIND.” (1 Cor. 14:14-15)

Why Do We Have Audible Praise?

“I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.” (Ps. 34:1)

“And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God...” (Acts 4:24)

Why Do We Shout To The Lord?

“SHOUT for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.” (Ps. 100:1-2)

See Rev. 7:9-10 (above) — “... out in a LOUD VOICE.”

“SHOUT ALOUD and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.” (Isa. 12:6)

Why So Many Musical Instruments?

“Praise him with the sounding of the TRUMPET... with the HARP and LYRE... with TAMBOURINE and DANCING... with STRINGS and FLUTE... with the CLASH OF CYMBALS. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.” (Ps. 150:3-6)

Why Do We Sing Choruses, Hymns, and Sing Spontaneously?

“Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord.” (Eph. 5:18-19)

“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and Truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.” (John 4:23)

Covenant Partner — Basics of Operation

Entering into Covenant Partnership, we need to understand what it is all about. Below is a list of questions that you need to know the answers to before you commit to this aspect of your life for God, and for Word of Life.

“Privilege of the Gospel”

“Accountability to the Gospel”

“Responsibility for the Gospel”

1. What is a Church?

A. Ekklesia.

G1577 — Church (Ekklesia)

“From a compound of 1537 and a derivative of 2564; a calling out, i.e. (concretely) a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation (Jewish synagogue, or Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both): assembly, church.”

EKKLESIA: An assembly of those called out and responsible for declaring war, planning military strategy, and electing those to lead in war and other officials. It was responsible for nominating and electing magistrates, it had the final say on legislation, and the right to call magistrates to account after their term of office.

2. What is the purpose for a Christian church? (Word of Life)

- a. Evangelize.
- b. Worship.
- c. Members of a Body.
- d. Discipleship.
- e. Service / Ministry.

(Matt. 22:37-40; 28:19-20; Acts 2:1-47; Rom. 12; Eph. 4:1-16)

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Vision

We are a “How To” church

3. Why be a Covenant Partner / Member?

- a.** To be part of the only organization on earth that represents God and his Kingdom. Jesus is focused on and involved with his church. (*Matt. 16:18; Rev. 2-3*)
- b.** To be a contributor to Jesus' church and not a user. Work. (*Eph. 4:7-16*)
- c.** Partnering with an anointing. (#3126, #3128 — *1 John 1:3; Acts 2:42-47; Phil. 1:5; Philem. 1:17*)
- d.** Establishing a Covenant type of relationship. (*See references under c above.*)
- e.** Security of relationship. (*1 Cor. 12 — picture of a body; Heb. 10:19-25*)
- f.** Place of belonging and accountability. (A family.)

God designed humans to form into groups. We are asked by God to form a group that is safe, gives permission to grow, and validates in truth. If the church doesn't do that, people will form some other group that will give those things to them.

4. What are the requirements of partnership?

The Covenant Partner Commitment.

5. What are the responsibilities of partnership?

- a.** The Covenant Partner Commitment.
- b.** Realize that what we do, say, and how we act has an effect on others. Word of Life is an evangelistic-minded organization. Keep in your conscious awareness that you are affecting new Christians, and the unsaved, with what you do, say, and how you act! Somebody is always watching. We are not trying to build an "exclusive" team, but an "inclusive" team. Our goal is to grow and mature so that by our life others are drawn into Christ, and not repelled from him.

6. How is Word of Life organized?

a. Flow of Anointing

Smith Wigglesworth → Kenneth Hagin → Jim Kaseman → Us (Word of Life)

b. We are an AFCM church (Association of Faith Churches and Ministers).

afcminternational.org · (918) 392-0511

c. Word of Life Spiritual and Governmental Flow:

SPIRITUAL	GOVERNMENTAL
Bishop · Overseer	Elder Board <i>(Decision-Making Board)</i>
Deacon(s) · Deaconess	Deacon Board <i>(Department Heads · Leaders / Advisory Board)</i>
Team Members	Ministry Teams
Covenant Partners <i>(Established Relationships · Commitment)</i>	Covenant Partners <i>(Volunteers · Support Ministers)</i>
Crowd	Community

d. Constitution and Bylaws

We are an IRS-recognized 501(c)(3) organization.

7. What are our basic beliefs?

See the “Tenets of Faith” section.

8. Oversight and Accountability pertaining to:

- a. Spiritual gifts and their operation in the body.
- b. Teaching and influencing in the body.
- c. Factionalism and divisiveness in the body.
- d. Involvement in all aspects of the body. There are two sides to the coin:
 - Getting involved the correct way.
 - You are more important than your ministry.

**** Oversight is not something to run from, but rather, if done correctly, it is something to run to. Every mature person on earth has oversight in some way in their life.*

9. How can I get involved in ministry?

- a. Go through the process of becoming a Covenant Partner.
 - Go through the Covenant Partner series.
 - Meet with the pastor (questions, Constitution and Bylaws).
 - Fill out an application and become a partner.
- b. While you are going through the process listed above, volunteer for various ministries and departments at Word of Life.
- c. Once you are a partner, find which team(s) the Lord is leading you to and join.

10. What do I do now that I am a Covenant Partner?

- a. Get involved.
- b. Join a team.

***** Our goal is to create a team.**

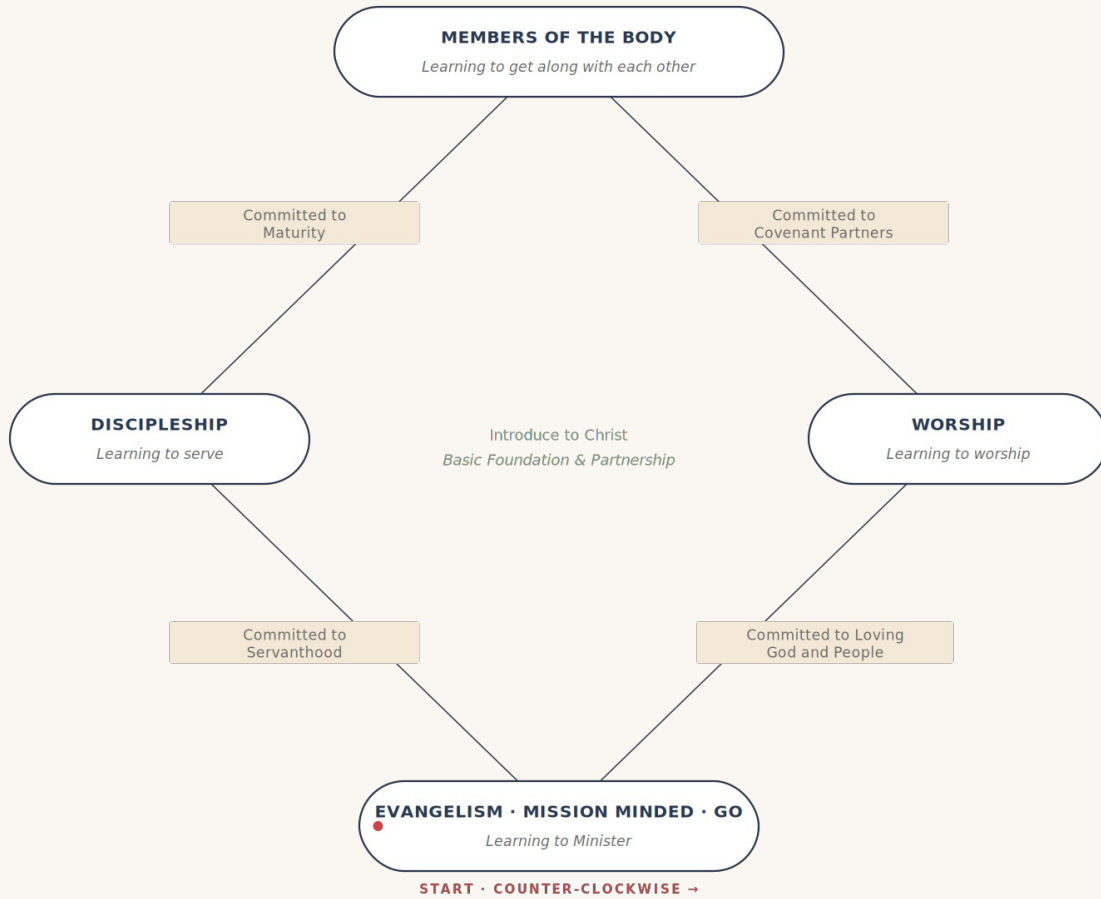
Teams:

- Learn together
- Practice together
- Are committed to each other
- Work together
- Support each other
- Build relationships
- Grow together
- Play together

Covenant Partnership

MEMBERS OF THE BODY • CHURCH

Learning to work with each other



Covenant Partner Commitment

“Privilege of the Gospel”

“Accountability to the Gospel”

“Responsibility for the Gospel”

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior, and been baptized in water, and having attended Word of Life for six months so I am somewhat acquainted with the church, and sensing that I want to make Word of Life my church home, and being in agreement with Word of Life’s statements, strategy, and structure — I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Word of Life church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

1. I will protect the unity of my church

- by acting in love towards other members.
- by refusing to gossip.
- by following the leaders.

“So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together.” (Rom. 14:19, Phillips)

“Have a sincere love for other believers, love one another earnestly with all your heart.” (1 Pet. 1:22, TEV)

“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you.” (Heb. 13:17)

2. I will share the responsibility of my church

- by praying for its growth.
- by inviting the unchurched to attend.
- by warmly welcoming those who visit.

“To the church — we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly.” (1 Thess. 1:1-2, LB)

“The Master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and urge the people there to come, so my house will be full.’” (Luke 14:23, NCV)

“So warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified.” (Rom. 15:7, LB)

3. I will serve the ministry of my church

- by discovering and using my gifts and talents.
- by being equipped to serve my pastors.
- by developing a servant's heart.

"Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you."
(1 Pet. 4:10, Phillips)

"(God) gave... some to be pastors, teachers, evangelists, apostles, and prophets, to prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up." (Eph. 4:11-12)

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interest of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus, who... (took on) the very nature of a servant." (Phil. 2:3-4, 7)

4. I will support the testimony of my church

- by attending faithfully.
- by living a godly life.
- by giving regularly.

"Let us not give up meeting together... but let us encourage one another." (Heb. 10:25)

"Whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ." (Phil. 1:27, Phillips)

"Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for offering." (1 Cor. 16:2, LB)

"A tenth of (all your) produce... is the Lord's, and is holy." (Lev. 27:30, NCV)

Commitment encompasses our time, our treasure, and our talent.

_____ Applicant _____ Date

_____ Pastor _____ Date

Article 3 — Tenets of Faith and Doctrine

This Church (Word of Life Ministries) accepts the Scripture as the revealed will of God, the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, and for the purpose of maintaining general unity, adopts these Statements of Fundamental Truths and Doctrine.

Section 1. The Scriptures Inspired

The Bible is the inspired Word of God, a revelation from God to man, the infallible rule of faith and conduct, and is superior to conscience and reason, but not contrary to reason.

(2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Pet. 1:23-24; Heb. 4:12)

Section 2. The One True God-Head

The triune God-head is comprised of three separate and distinct personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit — who are eternally self-existent, self-revealed, and function as one entity. Jesus Christ, who is God manifested in the flesh, is the second member of the God-head; co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Section 3. Man, His Fall, and Redemption

Man was created good and upright. For God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” But man, by voluntary transgression, fell, and his only hope of redemption is in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

(Gen. 1:26-31; Gen. 3:1-7; Rom. 5:12-21)

Section 4. The Salvation of Man

a. Man’s only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. On the cross, Jesus Christ became sin and sickness providing both salvation and divine healing for all mankind (Ps. 103:3); being justified freely by his Grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. For by Grace we are saved through faith.

“The Word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart — that is, the Word of Faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. For with the heart man believes, resulting in salvation.”

(Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8; Rom. 10:8-10)

b. The evidences of Salvation. The inward evidence to the believer of his salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Rom. 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness. “And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as he commanded us.” (1 John 3:23)

c. Faith and Works. Salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ and not by human works; however, our works will determine the rewards in eternity.

(Acts 16:3; Rom. 10:9-10; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10)

Section 5. Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by a burial with Christ should be observed as commanded in the Scriptures by all who have really repented and in their hearts have truly believed on Christ as Savior and Lord. In so doing, they declare to the world that they have died with Jesus and that they have also been raised with him to walk in the newness of life.

(Matt. 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; Rom. 6:4)

Section 6. The Lord's Supper

"And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he also took the cup after supper saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' Let a man examine himself and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup."

(1 Cor. 11:24, 25, 28)

Section 7. The Promise of the Father

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the Promise of the Father — the Baptism in the Holy Ghost and Fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the endowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry.

(Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:1-31)

This wonderful experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth.

(Acts 2:38; Acts 10:44-46; Acts 11:14-16; Acts 15:7-9)

Section 8. The Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The full consummation of the Baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is evidenced by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, and by the subsequent manifestation of spiritual power in public testimony and service.

(Acts 1:8; Acts 2:4; Acts 10:44-46; Acts 19:2, 6)

Section 9. The Church

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her Great Commission. Each

believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven.

(Eph. 1:22; Eph. 2:19-22; Heb. 12:23)

Section 10. Sanctification

The Bible teaches that without holiness, no man can see the Lord. We believe in sanctification as a definite yet progressive work of grace, commencing at the time of regeneration and continuing until the consummation of salvation.

(Heb. 12:14; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 3:12-14; John 17:17; Rom. 15:16; 1 Pet. 1:2)

Section 11. Divine Healing

Divine healing is provided for in the redemption of Christ, and it is the privilege of every believer today. Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel.

(Mark 16:18; James 5:14-20; 1 Pet. 2:24; Matt. 8:17; Isa. 53:4-5)

Section 12. Total Prosperity

- a. Spiritual — John 3:3, 11; 1 Cor. 5:17-21; Rom. 10:9-10
- b. Mental — 2 Tim. 1:7; Rom. 12:2; Isa. 26:3
- c. Physical — Isa. 53:4-5; Matt. 8:17; 1 Pet. 2:24
- d. Financial — 3 John 1:2; Mal. 3:10-11; Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 9:6-10; Deut. 28:1-14
- e. Social — Prov. 3:4; Luke 2:52; Acts 2:47

Section 13. Blessed Hope

Jesus is coming again to gather all his Saints to heaven.

(1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; 2 Thess. 2:1)

Section 14. The Lake of Fire

Those who have not accepted the redemptive work of Jesus Christ will suffer eternal separation from the God-head. The devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, and anyone whose name was not found written in the Book of Life shall be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

(Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:10-15)

Section 15. The Millennial Reign of Jesus

The return of our Lord Jesus Christ with his Saints from heaven to rule and reign for one thousand years on earth, as the Scripture promised.

(Rom. 11:25-27; 2 Thess. 1:7; Rev. 19:11-16; 20:1-7)

After this there shall be a New Heaven and a New Earth. (Rev. 21)

Section 16. Human Sexuality

We believe that God instituted monogamous marriage between male and female as the foundation of the family, the basic structure of human society (Gen. 2:24). God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of the context of marriage between a man and a woman.

(Gen. 19:5; 26:8-11; 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

Hence, sexual activities such as (but not limited to) adultery, fornication, incest, homosexuality, pedophilia, and bestiality are inconsistent with the teachings of the Bible, the Church, and a Christian life.

(Lev. 18:22; Lev. 20:13)

We stand fast on the Scriptures in Rom. 1:25-27, 1 Cor. 6:9-11, and 1 Tim. 1:9-10 and believe that homosexuality is a sin. We determine to show compassion to all, with, however, no compromise.

Accordingly, neither this organization, its churches, nor its members shall conduct any marriages between persons of the same sex, and shall not condone, support, or facilitate any activities that conflict with this tenet of faith.

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a. Definition of Marriage

We believe the original definition of marriage came from God.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Gen. 2:24)

We believe Jesus Christ upheld this definition of marriage.

"'Haven't you read,' he replied, 'that at the beginning the Creator "made them male and female," and said, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh"? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.'" (Matt. 19:4-6)

We believe the early Church upheld this standard of marriage between male and female.

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." (Eph. 5:31)

We believe the Bible in its entirety condemns any form of sexual activity outside of the biblical definition of marriage.

"Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral." (Heb. 13:4)

b. Defined sexual relationships strictly forbidden by God

- Adultery — sexual union between male and female while married to another. (Ex. 20:14; Prov. 6:32; Matt. 5:28)
- Fornication — sexual union between individuals prior to marriage. (1 Cor. 6:9)
- Homosexuality — sexual union between males. (1 Cor. 6:9; Rom. 1:27)
- Lesbianism — sexual union between females. (Rom. 1:26-27)
- Bestiality — sexual union between human beings and animals. (Lev. 18:23)
- Incest — sexual union between members of the same biological family. (Lev. 18:6-17)

c. We believe same-sex unions are forbidden by God in any context

“Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.” (Rom. 1:26-27)

Why?

1. Society could not sustain itself with same-sex unions dominating society.
2. The natural needs of children are best served by the healthy role modeling of a father and mother in a healthy, loving relationship covenant as designed by God; this has been proven to give children security, significance, and confidence for civilizations and centuries past.
3. Marriage of this nature is typified by God to demonstrate his relationship with his church, typified as bride and bridegroom.

“This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church.” (Eph. 5:32)

We reserve the right for our staff or approved wedding officiant to only perform marriages where the union would conform to the scriptural definition of marriage.

We reserve the right for our facility to be used only in facilitating marriages that conform to our beliefs and practices about marriage as defined by Scripture.

Discipleship

When we think of the term “disciple,” many different concepts can go through people’s minds. So let’s begin by laying a foundation for what we mean by a disciple.

The Greek definition for the word disciple:

(G3103) — Strong’s

“A learner, pupil, disciple.”

It is also the base word from which the word “discipline” is derived. Which makes sense, because to be a learner or a pupil — self-discipline will need to be involved.

When we think of the term, we usually think of the twelve disciples that followed Jesus. But the term is actually much larger than that. In Scripture we see people being referred to with many different titles, including believers and disciples. It is possible to be a believer and not a disciple. But to be a disciple, you have to be a believer.

The distinction can actually be made this way: a disciple is a believer who has decided to become a serious learner or pupil.

All through the book of Acts the “more serious” believers were referred to as disciples. Here are just a few passages where that is stated: Acts 6:1-2, 7; 9:38; 11:26; 14:20-22, 28; 15:10; 18:23, 27; 19:1, 9, 30. If you want more references, just look up the word disciple or disciples in a concordance and start in the book of Acts and move forward through the New Testament.

The reason I say the “more serious” believers were considered disciples is because of what Jesus said was necessary to become a disciple in his opinion.

Here are some guidelines concerning the attitude of and cost of being a disciple:

(Luke 14:26-35, AMP)

[26] “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his [own] father and mother [in the sense of indifference to or relative disregard for them in comparison with his attitude toward God] and [likewise] his wife and children and brothers and sisters — [yes] and even his own life also — he cannot be my disciple.”

[27] “Whoever does not persevere and carry his own cross and come after (follow) me cannot be my disciple.”

[28] “For which of you, wishing to build a farm building, does not first sit down and calculate the cost [to see] whether he has sufficient means to finish it?”

[29] *"Otherwise, when he has laid the foundation and is unable to complete [the building], all who see it will begin to mock and jeer at him,"*

[30] *"saying, 'This man began to build and was not able (worth enough) to finish.'"*

[31] *"Or what king, going out to engage in conflict with another king, will not first sit down and consider and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand [men] to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?"*

[32] *"And if he cannot [do so], when the other king is still a great way off, he sends an envoy and asks the terms of peace."*

[33] *"So then, any of you who does not forsake (renounce, surrender claim to, give up, say good-bye to) all that he has cannot be my disciple."*

[34] *"Salt is good [an excellent thing], but if salt has lost its strength and has become saltless (insipid, flat), how shall its saltiness be restored?"*

[35] *"It is fit neither for the land nor for the manure heap; men throw it away. He who has ears to hear, let him listen and consider and comprehend by hearing!"*

As you can see, Jesus takes this very seriously.

In Mark 4:33-34 Jesus gives a little insight as to what gives us the distinction of being a disciple.

(Mark 4:33-34, AMP)

[33] *"With many such parables [Jesus] spoke the Word to them, as they were able to hear and to comprehend and understand."*

[34] *"He did not tell them anything without a parable; but privately to his disciples (those who were peculiarly his own) he explained everything [fully]."*

What does "peculiarly his own" mean? I think it's referring to what Jesus had said in Luke 14 — above. People who are serious learners and pupils. They've put following Jesus in first place above everything else.

It's the church's job to make people into disciples:

(Matt. 28:18-20, NIV)

[18] *"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [19] Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'"*

Those verses not only tell us what to do, but they give us a general idea of what it will look like when the person is becoming a disciple. (Water baptism, and obedience to the Lord's commands.)

The big question is: how is that done? How should a minister, leader, or church posture itself toward people in order to make them disciples?

We've heard many horror stories about how pastors and churches approach that. Maybe you've never had a bad experience, and then again, maybe you have. So to make sure we're all on the same page, let me explain how we approach it here at Word of Life.

It's built on an important principle of how Christians are to view each other. Everything in the Kingdom of God is built on the Gift Principle. What I mean by that is: everything in God's Kingdom comes to us as a gift. We don't deserve it. We're not good enough for it. We can't earn it. It's all on the basis of Grace. Grace is "an undeserved, unmerited favor." Just like Paul said in the book of the Ephesians: it's by Grace we have been saved, through faith — it is a gift of God — not by works. Everything of salvation comes to us as a gift.

Our life is also a gift to God. He doesn't force anyone to get saved. He offers the free gift of salvation, and then we either receive or reject it. The Kingdom of God is a volunteer organization. We are never forced to do anything. It all comes out of a willing heart and is given to God as a gift of love.

That's the principle that shows us how we should view and treat each other. We are gifts to each other. We are not obligated to, or owe anyone, anything. And no one is obligated to us, or owes us, anything. What we receive from each other should be viewed as a gift that we did not have before they were in our lives.

So now let's take that principle and apply it to making disciples. At Word of Life we view people as gifts to each other. It's never our job as pastors to force anyone to do anything against their will. That's why we make such a strong effort at trying to communicate all of our intentions, what we do, and how we do it — to everyone. That way everyone knows what they are volunteering for. To truly hold someone accountable in a volunteer organization, there needs to be a clear understanding of what the expectations are. Then we can offer ourselves as a gift to the mission. That is the true definition of submission. Offering ourselves as a gift to come under (sub) another's mission. (Sub-Mission.)

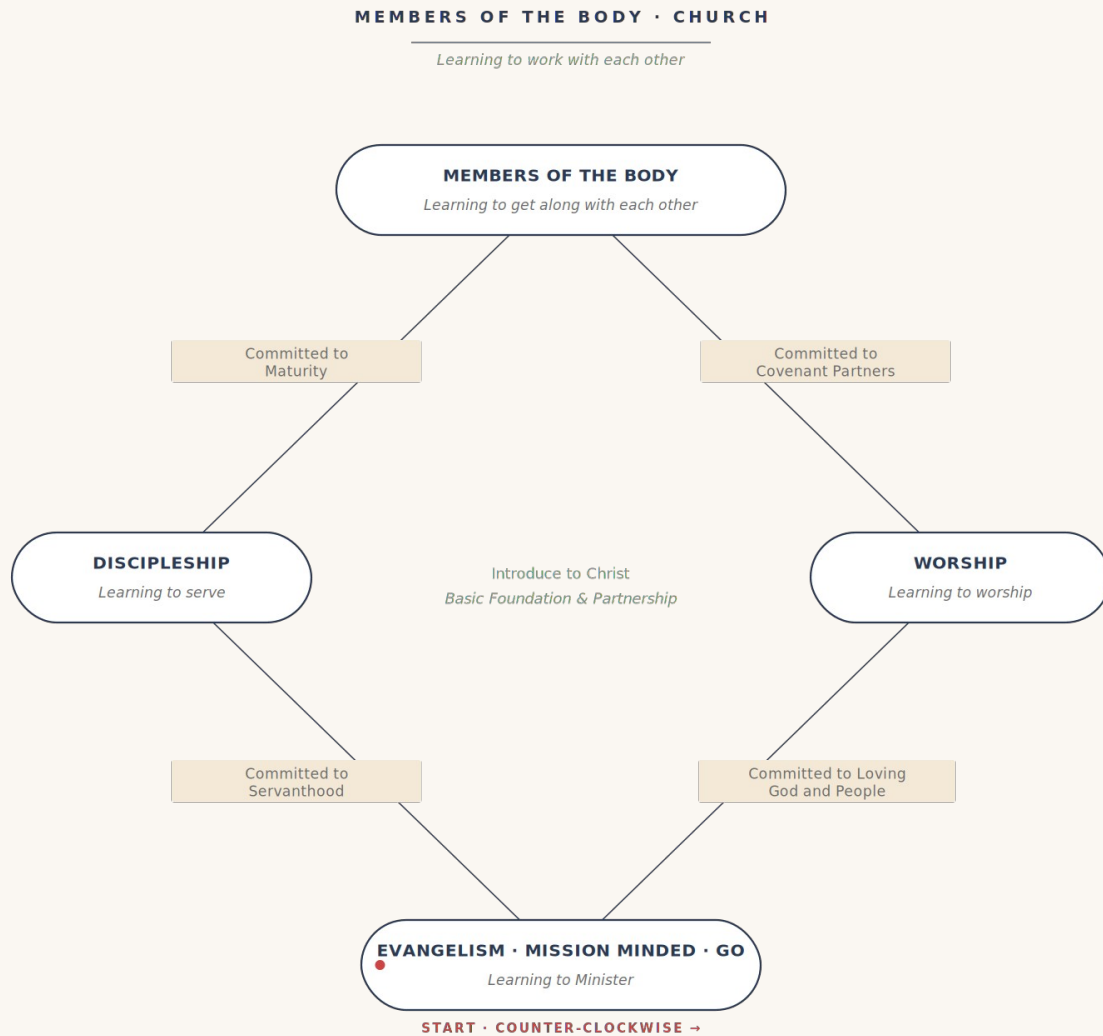
With that thought in mind, let's talk about discipleship. What are we trying to accomplish when we say we're making disciples?

Discipleship and Maturity go hand in hand. Immature people have very little self-discipline. They are still living in the "others need to discipline me" stage of life. (Like a child.) Since growing up and becoming mature is stated as one of the basic building blocks to the church (Eph. 4:11-16), this base in the ball diamond becomes very important.

Keep in mind, discipleship is an impossibility without responsibility and accountability. To genuinely learn self-discipline and mature, we will need to be held accountable for what we've been made responsible for.

This is always accomplished on a volunteer basis. We are never given the authority in Scripture to force someone to do something against their will. Everything needs to come from a willing heart. It needs to be a gift. We are not allowed to force or demand someone grow spiritually. Our job is to make the information available, and those who want to be a pupil, learner, or disciple will take in the information and use it. Some will. Some won't. It's not our job to force anyone to do anything. Our job is to spread the table and whoever wants to come and eat — will.

Below is the chart we looked at in the last lesson. Let's look at it again.



Notice the line between second and third base: it says “Learning to Serve.” Learning to Serve is talking about learning how to voluntarily give of ourselves. As we do that, it says above third base that we will learn to be accountable to each other. How does that happen? To serve, or voluntarily do something, means you’ve committed to be responsible for something. Once we have made ourselves responsible, people have expectations that we will actually do what we said we’d do. The end result is we need to be accountable for what we volunteered to do.

Which takes us to the three words inside the box for third base: “Committed to Maturity.” The process of volunteering to be responsible for something, and then being held accountable for what we said we would do, will challenge us in the area of self-discipline and emotional and spiritual growth so we can accomplish the task. Any areas where we are immature, or are following our flesh / old nature, we’ll very likely flare and want to run from the responsibility. This gives us the opportunity to see where our weaknesses lie, and deal with them by crucifying our old nature and maturing.

It’s not the leader disciplining the follower, it’s the follower disciplining themselves to become what is being shown to them.

It takes maturity to do this. So below are a few points that will help us mature and become disciples. This is not an all-inclusive list, but it will help.

1. Continual growth in God

Habitual devotions are imperative to growth — Bible reading, Bible study, and prayer. (Matt. 4:4)

2. Consistent attendance and involvement with the partners / body (Eph. 4:16)

3. Learning how to get along with and support each other

(Matt. 17:1-13 — other 9 disciples; Matt. 20:20-28)

- a. Speak the truth in love. (Eph. 4:15, 25)
- b. Learning to take care of each other. (1 Cor. 12:12-26)
- c. Learning to communicate correctly when we’ve been hurt. (Matt. 18:15-22 — sinned against; Matt. 5:23-24 — offended brother; Acts 24:19-20 — something against another)
- d. Avoiding gossip, slander, back-biting. (Eph. 4:29; 2 Cor. 12:20; Rom. 1:29-30; Num. 13:32; 14:37; 2 Cor. 6:8)

Learning to confess up and minister down.

- e. Recognizing and overcoming power and control issues. (The book of Jude; Titus 1; 1 Tim. 4:1-5; 2 Tim. 3:1-9; Gal. 1; 1 & 2 Corinthians; 1 Pet. 4)

Church government and leadership is given to promote and protect the body and the gospel.

4. Learning to be real, honest, and transparent with others, while keeping the body / family “SAFE”

Levels of Communication:

Strangers · Cliché
Acquaintances · Facts
Friendship · Opinions
Intimate · Feelings
Covenant · Core / heart exchange

5. Becoming and staying “Mission” minded

The more we mature in God the more the mentality changes to: the gospel is still “for us,” but it is no longer all “about us.”

6. Learning to establish, respect, and flow in our spheres of influence

The Multitudes — Strangers · Ministry influence
The “Seventy” — Acquaintance · Ministry influence
The Twelve Apostles — Friendship · Ministry influence
Peter · James · John — Intimate · Ministry influence

Jesus — “Us”

7. Distinguishing the difference between talented and gifted vs. committed and servanthood

(1 Cor. 1:18-31) Learning to become dependable and someone who is consistent and reliable. Becoming faithful, committed, consistent.

8. Learning to start from the bottom and move up

Matt. 20:26-28 — “The greatest is the servant.”

Phil. 2:5-11, 20-21 — Servanthood is as much (or more) the attitude than the action.

9. Establishing a life of financial giving

(Tithes, offerings, alms)

- a. The First Commandment: Love God with all your heart. (Mark 12:30)
- b. Love is shown in obedience. (1 John)
- c. We’re told to give financially. (Matt. 23:23; 2 Cor. 8; 1 Cor. 16:1)

d. The test of the sincerity of our love is our financial giving. (2 Cor. 8:7-8)

*** *Doing beyond what benefits us is a mark of maturity. (It's for us, but it's not all about us.)*

*** *Very little challenges our flesh / old nature like financial giving.*

10. Learning to live in some simple, basic principles of finding truth

(John 8:31-32, AMP)

[31] "So Jesus said to those Jews who had believed in him, 'If you abide in my word [hold fast to my teachings and live in accordance with them], you are truly my disciples. [32] And you will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free.'"

Word of Life — Ministering Overview

(“Mission — Go”)

“Privilege of the Gospel”

“Accountability to the Gospel”

“Responsibility for the Gospel”

“Does it seem but a small thing to you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord and to stand before the congregation to minister to them, and that he brought you near to him?” (Num. 16:9-10, AMP)

Every Christian is to make ministry and being involved in the church their goal. There’s no place in Scripture that places the responsibility of ministry on a select few people. At Word of Life, our goal is to help everyone get to this base of the ball diamond and successfully advance on into ministering in the church.

To enter into ministry requires two things if we are to be effective, productive, and non-destructive in ministry:

(1) Knowledge

(2) Maturity

Ministry placement and involvement is done according to each individual’s growth. Example: helpers don’t need the knowledge and maturity of a leader.

On this base (home base) we will be reinforcing the principles of being a disciple / mature Christian. This is also the base where the knowledge of “how to minister” is laid out. There is a distinct difference between knowing how to live your Christian life, and knowing how to minister to and lead others in their Christian lives. (Both are necessary.)

Once the team leaders and the Board of Elders feel that an individual has shown the credibility (knowledge and maturity) to minister, they will be allowed to join a team for ministry. Until that time, people can be involved in areas of ministry on a volunteer basis.

Let’s look at the first principle we need to learn on this base.

1. What is Ministry?

(Gr. — *diakoneo, diakonia, diakonos* — #1247, 1248, 1249)

- “To be an attendant, wait upon menially, or as a host, friend, or teacher.”
 - “Attendance as a servant; aid; service.”
 - “To run on errands; an attendant, a waiter; specifically a Christian teacher or pastor.”
- a. Ministry is simply serving another person. It’s being a servant.
 - b. Technically, everyone in ministry is considered a deacon in Scripture.

As you can see by the definition, a deacon is considered to be the entry level into ministry. Any form of servanthood is deaconing. This is discussed more thoroughly in the Constitution and Bylaws.

There are three realms of ministry at Word of Life. The first is to be a volunteer. The second is to get on a team and be a team member. And the third is to be a team leader or a department head. All three are absolutely considered ministry.

With that definition in mind, all three areas of ministry at Word of Life — volunteers, team members, team leaders / department heads — are under the general heading, or classification, of a deacon. So even from the volunteer position, the qualifications for a deacon should be kept in mind and applied to everyone from volunteers up through department heads. Here is the list of qualifications I’m referring to.

1 Timothy 3:8-13 (NIV) — Qualifications for Deacons

[8] “In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. [9] They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. [10] They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. [11] In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. [12] A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well. [13] Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.”

[b] The word “deacons” refers here to Christians designated to serve with the overseers / elders of the church in a variety of ways; similarly in verse 12; and in Rom. 16:1 and Phil. 1:1.

[c] Possibly deacons’ wives, or women who are deacons.

2. Every Christian and the 5-Fold Ministry Offices

a. Eph. 4:7–16.

b. Every believer will fall under the general headings of the 5-fold ministry gifts. Whether we are a volunteer, a team member, or a department head, we will be drawn to at least one (or more) of the 5-fold general headings for ministry. It's quite simple to discover what general category of gifting the Lord has given to you. Just ask yourself this question:

What needs to be done in the body of Christ, or the church?

c. An Apostle will say something like: everyone needs to be gathered together and organized to move a certain direction and accomplish the task we are focused on. Apostles tend to be gatherers, networkers, and starters of different types of ministry.

A Prophet will say something like: we need to hear a word from the Lord and obey. Prophets tend to be very black-and-white in their approach to ministry. It's "Thus saith the Lord," and that's all there is to it. From their perspective, the greatest need in the church is to hear from the Lord and obey.

An Evangelist will come from the perspective that everything revolves around getting the world saved. They too tend to be networkers, have strong abilities to communicate with the unbeliever, and feel that the greatest need in the church is to get people saved.

From a Teacher's perspective, everything revolves around teaching. The thing the body of Christ needs the most is more instruction and teaching. In their mindset, the thing that will help the church the most is giving the people more knowledge and teaching them.

A Pastor views the church from a shepherding perspective. They are more focused on nurturing, leading, guiding, protecting, and keeping the people safe. From a pastor's perspective, the biggest need in the church revolves around taking care of the people.

d. Look around at the body of Christ, or the church, from the perspective of: what needs to be done around here? Your personal perspective will bring you under one to three of the main 5-fold offices of ministry. You will view ministry from the perspective of that office.

3. Finding YOUR Destiny or Reason for being on this earth

Ps. 37:4 — God designed and formed you to fulfill YOUR REASON for being on this earth while you were in your mother's womb. (Ps. 139:13-16)

The deepest part of your "desires" helps reveal the reason / destiny you were created for. If you will follow those desires, you will automatically do what you were created to do.

An easy way to distinguish between fleshly desires and God-given desires: the flesh is selfish, and will always gravitate to serving itself. Even when we try to keep the motives right, the flesh will try to cause you to do what will somehow better you, your situation, your life, or be for your benefit somehow. I / ME always enters the equation when the flesh / old nature is involved.

We must die to that.

The God-given desires will simply fulfill the definition to #1 above. (What is Ministry?) It's motivated by: "It doesn't matter if I get anything out of this or not. This is for the other person. That's what God would want. I simply want to please God."

Another question you can ask yourself is: if money or time were not an obstacle, what would I want to do for the Lord? This may not give you your specific answer, but it will put you into the ballpark of where you are to be ministering.

4. How Do I Know if I'm Called?

The word "called" typically refers to when a person has a personal encounter with God which leaves them with the awareness that God has something specific for them to do in this life. Scripturally speaking, every believer is called by God. The choices of our life and what we're here on earth to do have already been made by God, and the whole focus is to be following what God wants. So to answer the question, every believer is called. Some of us are called to serve God by a full-time ministry. Others of us work secular jobs and serve God in various other capacities.

Our "calls" can be described as ranging from a mild to an extreme intensity. By "extreme" we would likely be referring to a person with a "full-time call." What that means is the person must find a way to separate themselves from the daily requirements of earning a living and focus on and believe God to supply their financial needs through their ministry.

As the intensity decreases, people will find that they can continue to work a secular job, but still they are "compelled" to be active in ministry. These people are vital to any church, because they carry the God-given motivation to support and see the various areas of ministry actually get accomplished.

No matter if we have a full-time call, or we work a job and minister on the side to fulfill our call — EVERYONE IS CALLED AND EVERYONE WILL OPERATE UNDER ONE OF THE 5-FOLD OFFICES.

As a side thought, there are numerous people who are called to produce as much income as they can in a secular setting, so that they can support the ministry. In my opinion, this is also a “full-time call.” It is usually marked by the people living very average lives financially, because they give a huge part (or most) of their income to ministry.

5. Leadership: “We Lead By Example”

When you are in a position of ministry, someone is being ministered to by you. That means they are watching, learning, and receiving from you. Remember this way: **YOU ARE ALWAYS BEING WATCHED.** From how we live our life for God (our worship), to how we interact with people (maturity), to what we do for others and God (servanthood / ministry). **YOU ARE ALWAYS BEING WATCHED.** People will eventually start to imitate you and do what you do (that is what Scripture says is supposed to happen) or they will despise and condemn you.

To minister effectively (since we are being watched), we must learn to separate our personal life from our ministry. What I mean by that is we must learn how to deal with our personal problems, bad home life, negative emotions, etc., in the right setting and try to never bring them out in front of people. Remember: **YOU ARE ALWAYS BEING WATCHED.**

When you are dealing with or relating to people, you are **ALWAYS, ALWAYS** doing one of two things: leading, or following. The more authority and responsibility you are given in ministry, the fewer people there are in your life that you will follow. Others will be looking to follow you. What you show them, they will either despise or imitate. If they despise what they see in your life, you will not be able to minister to them. If they don’t respect you, they won’t follow you. The more people want to imitate what you are, the more influence you will have in how you minister. They will want to be close to you so they can learn more of how you do it.

Your ministry is usually not created or destroyed during the time that you consider yourself ministering. It is created or destroyed during the larger segment of your life — the time you don’t think you’re ministering. Remember: **YOU ARE ALWAYS BEING WATCHED.**

What is the right setting for us to deal with our negative emotions, bad home life, personal problems, bad habits, discouragement, etc.? Apply one simple rule: **CONFESS UP — MINISTER DOWN.** (Are you leading or following this person?) If you are leading them in any way, that is the wrong setting to bring out your own issues. If you are following them, find a private moment and place where you can confide in them — so that someone who you are leading doesn’t happen to hear the conversation and again you find yourself in the wrong setting. And **NEVER, NEVER** bring your problems to your place of ministry. Leave your problems at home — they’ll be there when you get

back. Deal with them then. If you can't do that, you may not be mature enough for ministry at this time.

6. Servant / Armor-Bearer Mindset

It's all attitude that results in action. (Phil. 2:5-11)

To sum up the attitude:

IT'S NOT ABOUT ME — IT'S ABOUT THE OTHER PERSON.

(This point is dealt with in an entirely separate teaching.)

7. Principles for Elders, Team Leaders, and Teams (1 Peter 5)

The principles of what the Elders, team leaders, and ultimately the teams are supposed to do are given in 1 Peter 5. THESE PRINCIPLES ARE TO FLOW DOWN THROUGH THE WHOLE ORGANIZATION.

1 Peter 5 — Peter's instructions to the Elders and team leaders. (AMP version)

v. 1-4 — To the Elders (Gr. — Presbuteros / Presbuterion)

v. 2 — “Feed the flock of God” (KJV)

- “Be shepherds of God's flock” (NIV)
- “Tend (nurture, guard, guide, and fold) the flock of God” (AMP)

Tend — “To take care of; minister to; watch over; look after; to be in charge of or at work at; manage or operate; to be on the alert to keep from fouling (a rope, diver's airline, etc.); to pay attention; attend; to wait upon; serve. To give ear, listen to, pay attention.”

Not only do we have to be personally involved, we need to listen to the sheep, pay attention, approach each situation like you have something to offer that will keep and help them.

Nurture — “Anything that nourishes; food; nutriment. The act or process of raising or promoting the development of; training, rearing, upbringing, fostering, etc. All the environmental factors, collectively, to which the individual is subjected from conception onward, as distinguished from his nature or heredity. To feed or nourish. To raise or promote the development of; train, educate, rear, foster, etc.”

The church needs to be a teaching center, but it also needs to be more than that. It carries the concept of “raising” a child. It goes on to include the removal from old nature and heredity, and developing a positive manner. Then, to include “all the environmental factors collectively, to which the individual is subjected from conception onward.” We are talking about a personal involvement / interaction to help them see what's happening in their life on a daily basis. (The key is to not intrude — to do this, but to do it by invitation. And then to also determine the spiritual and soul growth and maturity of the individual

so that you help them to learn self-discipline and how to hear God's voice for themselves. Not making yourself to be their source.)

Guard — “To keep safe from harm; watch over and protect; defend; shield; to watch over; to keep from escape or trouble, or hold in check; control; restrain.”

Again, we must know the individual members of the flock to accomplish this. The more we are allowed into their lives, the more we can do this. (We need to learn what each individual sheep smells like, and in some ways — smell like the sheep.)

Guide — “To point out the way for; direct on a course; conduct; lead. To direct the course or motion of by physical action. To give instruction to; train. To direct the policies, actions, etc. of; manage, regulate. To act as a signpost for conduct or course of life.”

(Synonym: Guide implies the showing of the way by one who is thoroughly familiar with the course, and connotes his continuous presence or direction along the way.)

This is where we must lead by example. The people must have enough insight into our lives that they can measure what they need to do by knowing what we would do. Paul says it this way: “Therefore I urge you to imitate me.” (1 Cor. 4:16; cf. Eph. 5:1; 1 Thess. 1:6, 2:14; Heb. 6:12, 13:7; 3 John 1:11)

Fold — “To draw together and intertwine; to draw close to the body; to clasp in the arms, embrace; to wrap up, envelope; to pen up, confine.”

The church was never designed to be a loosely-knit group of people. It is to be a tight-knit group. We are to hang on to each other, and stay close together. To accomplish this, always remember:

THE PEOPLE ARE NOT HERE FOR THE VISION, BUT THE VISION IS HERE FOR THE PEOPLE.

- To care for the flock is our responsibility.
- “Not by coercion or constraint, but willingly.” (We should not need to be forced, or continually scrutinized, to make sure we do it the right way.)
- We are not to be “dishonorably motivated by the advantages and profits belonging to the office (position).”

We must always strive to:

DO WHAT GOD WANTS, FOR THE REASON HE WANTS IT DONE.

Ministry can quickly turn to selfish motivations — that are driven by some advantage or profit it brings to us. MINISTRY IS NOT ABOUT US — BY DEFINITION: IT’S ABOUT OTHERS.

Our inward motivation and outward expression of “tending the flock” should be: Eagerness and Cheerfulness.

v. 3 — Not “Lording” the position, or being “Domineering” (arrogant, dictatorial, and overbearing) in the position.

“But being examples (patterns and models of Christian living).” (We lead by example — not by order, command, directive.)

v. 5-10 — To the team leaders

v. 5 — “Younger” (Gr. neos) — (Strong’s #3501) — “New, i.e. of persons — youthful, or of things fresh; figuratively regenerate. ‘Neos’ signifies new in respect of time, that which is recent; it is used of the young, and so translated, especially the comparative degree ‘younger.’ Accordingly what is ‘neos’ may be a reproduction of the old in quality or character.”

“Younger and of lesser rank, be subject to the Elders and ministers and spiritual guides of the church — giving them due respect and yielding to their counsel.” (Follow the flow that is set by the Elders.)

“Clothe, apron yourselves with the ‘humility’ of a ‘servant’.” (Armor-bearer principles.) If that doesn’t happen, God will set himself against you, and will oppose, frustrate, and defeat you. And guess what? If God is not on your side of the court, neither is the Eldership going to be with you.

Since God “gives grace, favor, blessing to the humble”...

v. 6 — *“Humble yourselves, demote, lower yourselves in your own estimation under the mighty hand of God, that in due time he may exalt you.”*

v. 7 — Don’t be worried how it will all turn out. God will take care of it.

v. 8-9 — Keep yourself correct spiritually, so the devil doesn’t get an opening into your life.

v. 10 — Even though this may be very painful to the flesh and old nature, “after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace... who has called you to his own eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will himself complete and make you what you are to be, establish and ground you securely, and strengthen and settle you.”

8. Stay Mission Minded

Our focus needs to be: what are we supposed to be doing? Then let’s do it.

A good motive check: if the problems in your life were not happening, would you minister any differently?

Any time our personal life begins to dictate how, when, why, and how much we minister, chances are real good we’re missing God someplace.

9. YOU ARE MORE IMPORTANT TO GOD AND US — THAN YOUR MINISTRY

10. Ministry vs. Programs

We do not run programs. We promote ministry. There is a huge difference.

Here is what I mean by that:

- Ministry has to do with the leading of the Holy Spirit, the anointing, a word and direction from the Lord, the supernatural, etc. God anoints people, not programs. The world is changed by vision and anointing, not programs. Ministry starts with a call of God on someone. People minister to people.
- Programs have to do with nice ideas, people’s personal lack or inadequacies, tradition, the way we’re accustomed and comfortable with doing it, etc. Programs entertain. They cannot minister because ministry is done by the anointing. Unless it’s born in the heart of God and given to someone to carry out, it won’t be anointed. (If that does happen, then it is no longer a program.)

c. Programs don't change people's lives — ministry does. We don't want a "nice" or "good" thing. We want the "right" thing.

d. Programs may make people feel like they're part of a large group, endeavor, etc. But they typically don't minister one-on-one. Programs usually blend people into groups. In that setting, the individual and what they need is usually overlooked.

e. Word of Life is not and never will be a big program church. Programs can give organization, flow, and help support a call or vision. But a program that does not stand on a call or anointing will die. We can keep trying to do the program, but it will not produce life. Ministries may take the shape of a program in mechanics. However, there will always be one basic difference: ministry is driven by the Holy Spirit to fulfill a call and vision. Programs are typically driven by old-nature reasons. If they're not born of the Spirit, they're born of the flesh.

f. The anointing and the supernatural show up for ministry. Ministry is something God put into someone's heart. It starts in God's heart and transfers to a person's heart. Once it's birthed in them, there is a zeal, desire, purpose, vision, and a strong perseverance to stick with it until it's accomplished. It came out of their spirit. They can't escape it. They eat it, sleep it, and breathe it. It consumes their thinking and stirs their emotions. They feel personally responsible to God for seeing it through. It will drive them to action.

Programs produce most of what we have in the American church. "Let's try this. Let's try that." No one has heard from God. It's trial and error. And then when it doesn't go smoothly or easily, people tend to give up and say, "Well, maybe it wasn't God." There's little maybe about it. It probably wasn't God. That's why it died. The only other possibility is that we are horrible stewards of the things of God. But I don't believe the average Christian tries to be a horrible steward. I tend to first of all look from the perspective that says it wasn't God. It was a program. Since we're usually not taught to distinguish between ministry and programs, we can fall into the program trap easily. Our focus at Word of Life is to try to stay away from programs.

g. In ministry, people's giftings will surface and become visible. They are the only tools that the Holy Spirit can use to accomplish the Lord's will. If the Holy Spirit doesn't show up to empower the endeavor, it will surely fail. He works through and anoints the gifts he put inside of us.

Programs are typically built around personality, likeability, personal charisma, personal need, nice ideas, etc. The Holy Spirit doesn't have to show up and the program will go on. It's built on the wrong foundation.

One easy rule-of-thumb way to recognize whether it's a program or a ministry is by asking yourself this question:

What are the spiritual gifts that this person flows in?

If you can't identify the gifts that are promoting what's happening, it's not a ministry. It's likely a program.

11. Inside or Outside the Four Walls

No matter which 5-fold gifting we fall under, we can minister inside or outside the four walls of the church.

a. If you are the person who ministers the most inside the church by being part of teams that serve the body — that is awesome. That doesn't exclude you from ministering outside, but most of your efforts will be with the church body. That's okay. The church needs people who work in all the various facets of the organization. When people come to the church (for whatever reason), they need to be able to be ministered to. **YOU ARE A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO THE SUCCESS OF THE CHURCH IN THAT WAY.**

b. If you are the person who ministers the most outside the church — that is awesome. If you are part of a team whose whole purpose is to minister outside the building, or if you minister apart from an organized team — remember: point the people you are ministering to toward Jesus **AND** a church. Do not separate those two.

If you point them toward Jesus but not a church, you are doing them a great disservice and injustice. It is very clear in the New Testament that Jesus is very active in the church (especially in the last days).

If you point them toward a church and not Jesus, you are missing the whole point. Jesus is the source of our salvation. Not the church.

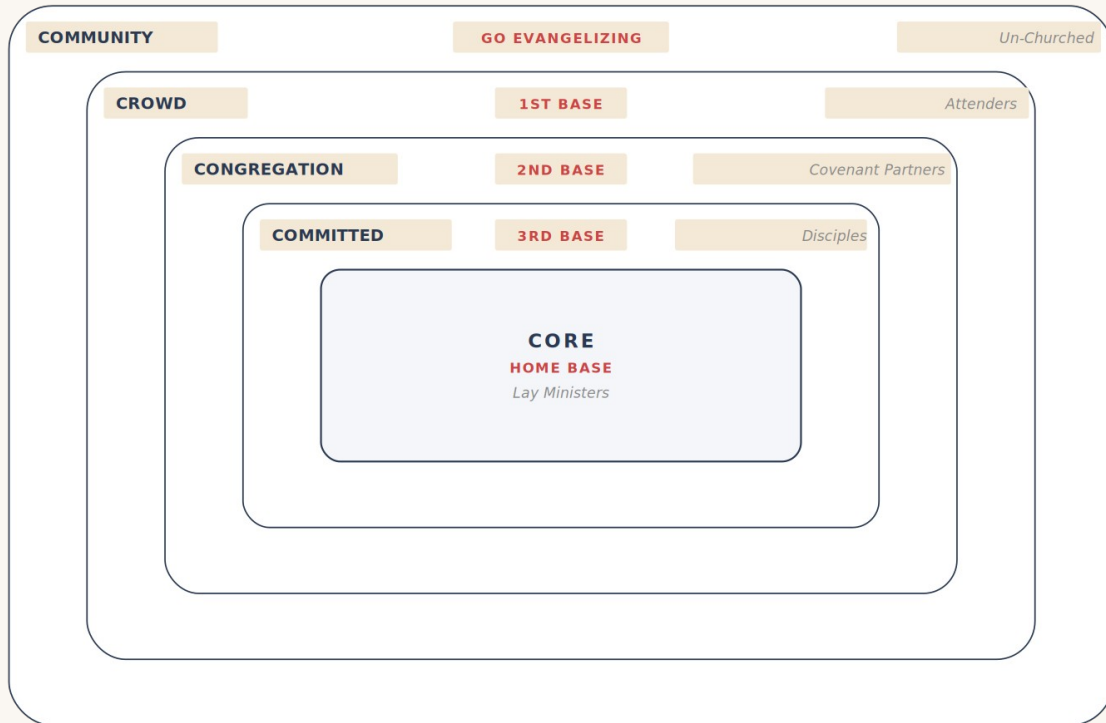
The correct scriptural perspective is: we need Jesus to be our Savior and Lord, and we need to be active in the church.

c. Also remember: just because you minister outside the four walls does not mean you should work independently of the church. That type of ministry is not promoted in the New Testament.

Wherever we minister, we are always supposed to be connected to, accountable to, and carrying out our responsibility in connection with a church.

- It helps protect the person ministering.
- It helps protect the person being ministered to.
- It helps protect the gospel from misrepresentation.
- It helps protect the representation of Jesus, so it remains pure.

TARGET GROUPS



Church Government

How is Word of Life Organized?

a. Flow of Anointing

Smith Wigglesworth → Kenneth Hagin → Jim Kaseman → Word of Life

b. We are an AFCM church (Association of Faith Churches and Ministers).

afcminternational.org · (918) 392-0511

c. Word of Life Spiritual and Governmental Flow:

SPIRITUAL	GOVERNMENTAL
Bishop · Overseer	Elder Board <i>(Decision-Making Board)</i>
Deacon(s) · Deaconess	Deacon Board <i>(Department Heads · Leaders / Advisory Board)</i>
Team Members	Ministry Teams
Covenant Partners <i>(Established Relationships · Commitment)</i>	Covenant Partners <i>(Volunteers · Support Ministers)</i>
Crowd	Community

d. Constitution and Bylaws

- We are an IRS-recognized 501(c)(3) organization.

Promoting by Establishing Clarity & Protecting

Titus 1:5-2:1 (NIV)

Titus' Task on Crete

Promoting by clarifying the task:

[5] *"The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you."*

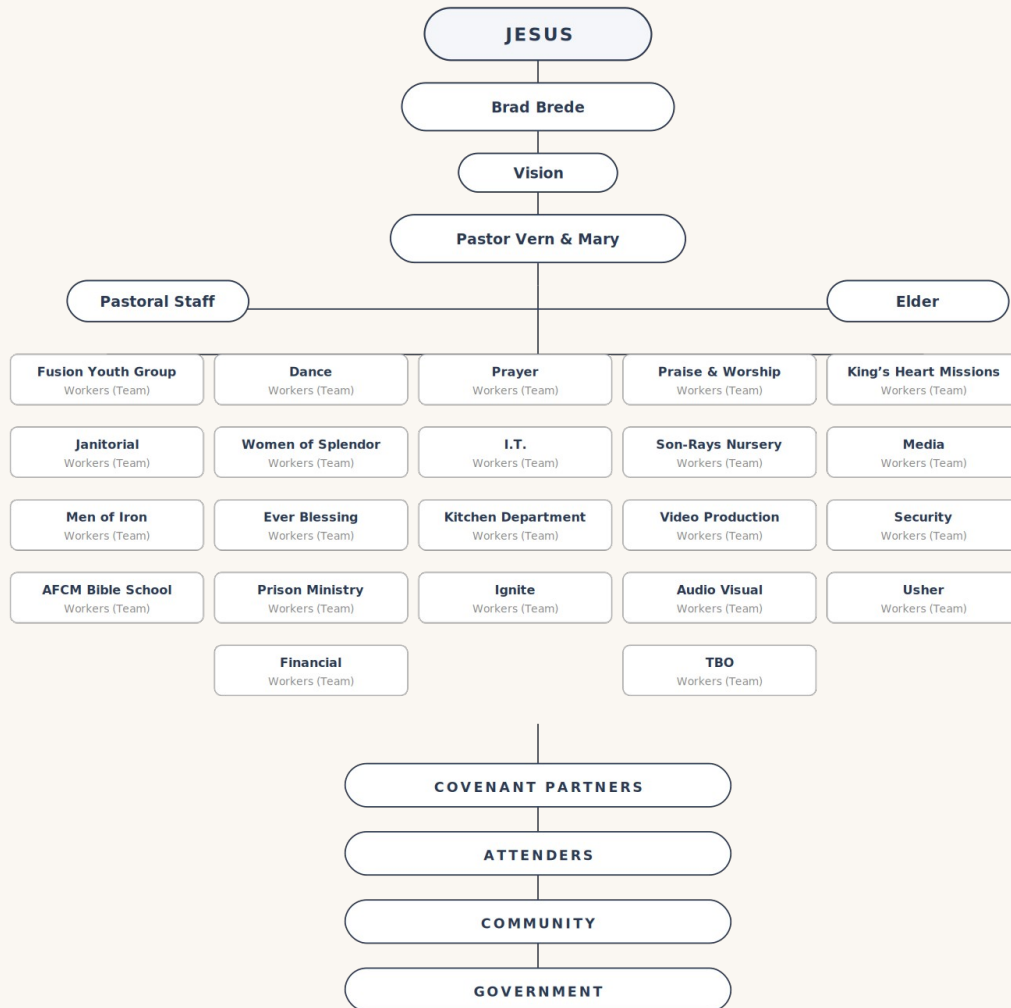
Promoting by establishing clarity:

[6] *"An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. [7] Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless — not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. [8] Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. [9] He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it."*

Promoting by protecting:

[10] *"For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group. [11] They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach — and that for the sake of dishonest gain. [12] Even one of their own prophets has said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons.' [13] This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith [14] and will pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of those who reject the truth. [15] To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. [16] They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for doing anything good. [2:1] You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine."*

WORD OF LIFE · ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Amendment to By-Laws and Constitution

(Amendment #1) — Deacons · Elders · Bishops

1. Deacons / Deaconess

The word “deacon” is used five times in the Scripture (KJV). The title “deaconess” is not used at all in Scripture (KJV).

A. Gr. — Diakonos / Diakoneo

1. To serve; be servants.
2. Translated into English (KJV) as:
 - Deacon
 - Minister
 - Ministry
 - Servant

B. Two general scriptures used for Deacons:

1. Acts 6:1-7
 - “Ministry of the Word”
 - Gr. — Diakonia tou Logou — “Deaconship of the Word”
2. 1 Tim. 3:8-13

C. Other scriptures the words Diakonos / Diakoneo are used:

1. Matt. 20:26; 23:11 — To be the greatest, you must be the servant.
2. Matt. 22:13 — Servants to kings.
3. John 2:5, 9 — Servants at feasts.
4. Rom. 13:4 — Officers of civil governments are servants.
5. Matt. 23:11; Rom. 16:1; Matt. 8:15 — Men and women servants of churches.
6. Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:10-13; Acts 6:1-7; 1 Tim. 4:6 — Deacons of churches.
7. Matt. 20:26; Mark 10:43 — Ministers of churches.
8. 1 Cor. 3:5; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 3:7; Col. 1:23, 25; 1 Thess. 3:2 — Preachers of the gospel.
9. John 12:26; 2 Cor. 6:4-10; Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:7; Col. 4:7 — Ministers of Christ.
10. Matt. 4:11; Mark 1:13; Heb. 1:14 — Angels.

*** *Practically anyone who serves in any way is a deacon / deaconess.*

**** It is considered to be the bottom level of authority in church government.*

2. Elder

A. The word “elder / elders” is used 69 times in the New Testament (KJV).

B. Gr. — Presbuteros / Presbuterion

1. Elder

- In the sense of age — Oldest.
- In the sense of authority — Overseer.

C. In the Old Testament it referred to the heads and rulers of:

- Tribes
- Cities
- Nations

The Gospels and Acts referred to the Sanhedrin.

In the early church it referred to:

- Ministers
- Deacons
- Business Elders / Deacons
- Preaching Elders / Deacons

D. An Elder is a servant (deacon) in a position of:

- Authority
- Rulership
- Overseeing / Overseer

E. Scriptures concerning the Elder:

1. Acts 14:23 — Elders are appointed.
2. Acts 20:17 — Elders are summoned.
3. 1 Tim. 5:17, 19 — Directors / overseers (both business and preaching).
4. Titus 1:5 — Elders appointed.
5. James 5:14 — Elders summoned for prayer.
6. 1 Pet. 5:1-4 — Elders serving as shepherds, overseers, servants.

F. This is the second level of authority

1. To be an Elder, you must first be a servant (deacon).
2. There is a:
 - Business Elder / Deacon (Acts 6:3; 1 Tim. 5:17)
 - Preaching Elder / Deacon (1 Tim. 5:17)

3. Bishop

A. The word “bishop / bishops” appears five times in the New Testament.

B. Gr. — Episkopos

1. Superintendent / Overseer / Bishop

C. A Bishop is known as a preaching Elder

D. Scriptures concerning Bishop / Bishops:

1. Acts 20:28 — The Holy Spirit makes Bishops.
2. 1 Tim. 3:1-7 — Qualifications of Bishops.
3. Titus 1:7 — God’s work is entrusted to a Bishop; and qualifications.
4. Phil. 1:1 — Definite difference between Bishops and Deacons.
5. 1 Pet. 2:25 — Christ is the chief Bishop.

E. The Bishop is the third level of authority in church government

1. The first and bottom level: the Deacon.
 - The Deacon is a servant in either a business or spiritual sense.
 - To be a servant (deacon) is the basic requirement before any other levels of authority can be attained.
2. The next step up in church governmental authority is: the Elder.
 - The Elder is a servant (deacon) who has been given the authority of an overseer or ruler in some area.
 - There are business Elders.
 - There are preaching Elders; more often known as Bishops.
3. The highest level of authority in church government: the Bishop.
 - A servant (deacon) who has been entrusted with a direct authority and responsibility for God’s work.
 - A Bishop works both as a business Elder and as a preaching Elder.
 - The Bishop is the one directly responsible to God for the affairs of a church.

Note: The Deacon / Deaconess role is definitely open to women in Scripture. The Elder position can also be carried out by a woman. The Bishop position is not forbidden to a woman in Scripture; however, the Scriptures seem to indicate that man is God’s first choice. If no man will answer the call, it is not unscriptural for a woman to be called to the position of a Bishop.

Word of Life Ministries — Applicant Information

Background Check

(Please print)

By providing the information on this form and signing it, I am authorizing Word of Life Ministries to do a background check on me. It is understood that all information will be held in confidence by Word of Life.

First Name: _____

Middle Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

SSN: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Current Address:

City / State / Zip:

_____ *Sign* _____

Word of Life

“Volunteer Agreement”

Revised: 11 / 25 / 14



Volunteer Agreement

In an effort to remain in agreement with our vision, we are asking that everyone who works at Word of Life become familiar with our basic tenets of faith. We feel these tenets form a large part of the foundation that God has given us here at Word of Life.

Below you will find a copy of the tenets of faith for Word of Life. Please read these and if you have questions concerning any of them, please bring them up to your leader or their administrator. Our desire is to cultivate an environment where anyone who feels God is asking them to minister at Word of Life can do so — yet maintaining unity and direction, so that those we are ministering to will be protected from any contradictions, controversy, or disunity.

Article 3 — Tenets of Faith and Doctrine

This Church (Word of Life Ministries) accepts the Scripture as the revealed will of God, the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, and for the purpose of maintaining general unity, adopts these Statements of Fundamental Truths and Doctrine.

Section 1. The Scriptures Inspired

The Bible is the inspired Word of God, a revelation from God to man, the infallible rule of faith and conduct, and is superior to conscience and reason, but not contrary to reason.

(2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Pet. 1:23-24; Heb. 4:12)

Section 2. The One True God-Head

The triune God-head is comprised of three separate and distinct personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit — who are eternally self-existent, self-revealed, and function as one entity. Jesus Christ, who is God manifested in the flesh, is the second member of the God-head; co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Section 3. Man, His Fall, and Redemption

Man was created good and upright. For God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” But man, by voluntary transgression, fell, and his only hope of redemption is in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

(Gen. 1:26-31; Gen. 3:1-7; Rom. 5:12-21)

Section 4. The Salvation of Man

a. Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. On the cross, Jesus Christ became sin and sickness providing both salvation and divine healing for all mankind (Ps. 103:3); being justified freely by his Grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. For by Grace we are saved through faith.

"The Word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart — that is, the Word of Faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. For with the heart man believes, resulting in salvation."

(Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8; Rom. 10:8-10)

b. The evidences of Salvation. The inward evidence to the believer of his salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Rom. 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness. "And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as he commanded us." (1 John 3:23)

c. Faith and Works. Salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ and not by human works; however, our works will determine the rewards in eternity.

(Acts 16:3; Rom. 10:9-10; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10)

Section 5. Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by a burial with Christ should be observed as commanded in the Scriptures by all who have really repented and in their hearts have truly believed on Christ as Savior and Lord. In so doing, they declare to the world that they have died with Jesus and that they have also been raised with him to walk in the newness of life.

(Matt. 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; Rom. 6:4)

Section 6. The Lord's Supper

"And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he also took the cup after supper saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' Let a man examine himself and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup."

(1 Cor. 11:24, 25, 28)

Section 7. The Promise of the Father

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the Promise of the Father — the Baptism in the Holy Ghost and Fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the endowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry.

(Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:1-31)

This wonderful experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth.

(Acts 2:38; Acts 10:44-46; Acts 11:14-16; Acts 15:7-9)

Section 8. The Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The full consummation of the Baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is evidenced by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, and by the subsequent manifestation of spiritual power in public testimony and service.

(Acts 1:8; Acts 2:4; Acts 10:44-46; Acts 19:2, 6)

Section 9. The Church

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her Great Commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven.

(Eph. 1:22; Eph. 2:19-22; Heb. 12:23)

Section 10. Sanctification

The Bible teaches that without holiness, no man can see the Lord. We believe in sanctification as a definite yet progressive work of grace, commencing at the time of regeneration and continuing until the consummation of salvation.

(Heb. 12:14; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 3:12-14; John 17:17; Rom. 15:16; 1 Pet. 1:2)

Section 11. Divine Healing

Divine healing is provided for in the redemption of Christ, and it is the privilege of every believer today. Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel.

(Mark 16:18; James 5:14-20; 1 Pet. 2:24; Matt. 8:17; Isa. 53:4-5)

Section 12. Total Prosperity

- a. Spiritual — John 3:3, 11; 1 Cor. 5:17-21; Rom. 10:9-10
- b. Mental — 2 Tim. 1:7; Rom. 12:2; Isa. 26:3
- c. Physical — Isa. 53:4-5; Matt. 8:17; 1 Pet. 2:24
- d. Financial — 3 John 1:2; Mal. 3:10-11; Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 9:6-10; Deut. 28:1-14
- e. Social — Prov. 3:4; Luke 2:52; Acts 2:47

Section 13. Blessed Hope

Jesus is coming again to gather all his Saints to heaven.

(1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; 2 Thess. 2:1)

Section 14. The Lake of Fire

Those who have not accepted the redemptive work of Jesus Christ will suffer eternal separation from the God-head. The devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, and anyone whose name was not found written in the Book of Life shall be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

(Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:10-15)

Section 15. The Millennial Reign of Jesus

The return of our Lord Jesus Christ with his Saints from heaven to rule and reign for one thousand years on earth, as the Scripture promised.

(Rom. 11:25-27; 2 Thess. 1:7; Rev. 19:11-16; 20:1-7)

After this there shall be a New Heaven and a New Earth. (Rev. 21)

Section 16. Human Sexuality

We believe that God instituted monogamous marriage between male and female as the foundation of the family, the basic structure of human society (Gen. 2:24). God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of the context of marriage between a man and a woman.

(Gen. 19:5; 26:8-11; 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

Hence, sexual activities such as (but not limited to) adultery, fornication, incest, homosexuality, pedophilia, and bestiality are inconsistent with the teachings of the Bible, the Church, and a Christian life.

(Lev. 18:22; Lev. 20:13)

We stand fast on the Scriptures in Rom. 1:25-27, 1 Cor. 6:9-11, and 1 Tim. 1:9-10 and believe that homosexuality is a sin. We determine to show compassion to all, with, however, no compromise.

Accordingly, neither this organization, its churches, nor its members shall conduct any marriages between persons of the same sex, and shall not condone, support, or facilitate any activities that conflict with this tenet of faith.

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a. Definition of Marriage

We believe the original definition of marriage came from God.

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” (Gen. 2:24)

We believe Jesus Christ upheld this definition of marriage.

“‘Haven’t you read,’ he replied, ‘that at the beginning the Creator “made them male and female,” and said, “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh”? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.’” (Matt. 19:4–6)

We believe the early Church upheld this standard of marriage between male and female.

“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.” (Eph. 5:31)

We believe the Bible in its entirety condemns any form of sexual activity outside of the biblical definition of marriage.

“Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.” (Heb. 13:4)

b. Defined sexual relationships strictly forbidden by God

- Adultery — sexual union between male and female while married to another. (Ex. 20:14; Prov. 6:32; Matt. 5:28)
- Fornication — sexual union between individuals prior to marriage. (1 Cor. 6:9)
- Homosexuality — sexual union between males. (1 Cor. 6:9; Rom. 1:27)
- Lesbianism — sexual union between females. (Rom. 1:26–27)
- Bestiality — sexual union between human beings and animals. (Lev. 18:23)
- Incest — sexual union between members of the same biological family. (Lev. 18:6–17)

c. We believe same-sex unions are forbidden by God in any context

“Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.” (Rom. 1:26–27)

Why?

1. Society could not sustain itself with same-sex unions dominating society.
2. The natural needs of children are best served by the healthy role modeling of a father and mother in a healthy, loving relationship covenant

as designed by God; this has been proven to give children security, significance, and confidence for civilizations and centuries past.

3. Marriage of this nature is typified by God to demonstrate his relationship with his church, typified as bride and bridegroom.

"This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church." (Eph. 5:32)

We reserve the right for our staff or approved wedding officiant to only perform marriages where the union would conform to the scriptural definition of marriage.

We reserve the right for our facility to be used only in facilitating marriages that conform to our beliefs and practices about marriage as defined by Scripture.

By signing below you are indicating that you are in agreement with the Tenets of Faith for Word of Life Ministries, and that you will conduct yourself at all times in accordance with those Tenets of Faith.

Any volunteer can have their status terminated at any time and for any reason, including but not limited to a breach of the Tenets of Faith. All decisions will be made at the sole discretion of the Board of Elders of Word of Life.

Our goal is to work together with all volunteers and anyone who ministers at Word of Life. Our heart is to foster an atmosphere of relationships that will do nothing but bring glory to God.

We are required to do background checks on those serving at Word of Life. Attached is a form for you to sign. This gives Word of Life Ministries your permission to do the background check.

By signing you are indicating you are in agreement with these requirements.

_____ *Signature* _____

_____ *Signature* _____

Word of Life Ministries — Applicant Information

Background Check

(Please print)

By providing the information on this form and signing it, I am authorizing Word of Life Ministries to do a background check on me. It is understood that all information will be held in confidence by Word of Life.

First Name: _____

Middle Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

SSN: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Current Address:

City / State / Zip:

_____ *Sign* _____

Team Member Form

We are excited to have you join the team.

Word of Life's vision is to be a "How To" church. We want to protect and enhance this vision. Team members are in the eye of the public. They will look for Christ in you. We want you to feel that you are ready to represent God's Kingdom and Word of Life's vision.

Name (printed): _____

Department: _____

Leader: _____

Protecting & Enhancing the Vision

We want to be sure you are...

Born again / saved (made a public confession of your faith)? ☐ Aiming for it ☐ Achieved

Baptized with water? ☐ Aiming for it ☐ Achieved

Baptized in the Holy Spirit? ☐ Aiming for it ☐ Achieved

In an active / living relationship with Jesus Christ? ☐ Aiming for it ☐ Achieved

Try to have personal devotions 3-4 times a week? ☐ Aiming for it ☐ Achieved

Living free from willful disobedience / sin toward God? ☐ Aiming for it ☐ Achieved

Willing to keep open communication with your leader or pastor pertaining to this ministry, and to be accountable and submit to them? ☐ Aiming for it ☐ Achieved

Do you understand Word of Life's vision? ☐ Yes ☐ No → Reason: _____

Do you agree with the vision / support it? ☐ Yes ☐ No → Reason: _____

Do you feel you could explain it to others? ☐ Yes ☐ No → Reason: _____

Do you understand Word of Life's Tenets of Faith? ☐ Yes ☐ No → Reason: _____

Are you in agreement with Word of Life's Tenets of Faith? ☐ Yes ☐ No → Reason: _____

Some departments require a background check. Is it okay if we do a background check on you? (Results will be seen only by Word of Life Eldership Board.) ☐ Yes ☐ No

I have been attending Word of Life regularly for at least 6 months. ☐ Aiming for it ☐ Achieved

I am a Covenant Partner at Word of Life. ☐ Aiming for it ☐ Achieved

Did you get training from your leader / do you feel ready to serve? ☐ I don't feel ready ☐ Achieved

I understand that serving on a ministry team means...

Attending Word of Life on a regular basis? ☐ I plan to do so ☐ Not able → Reason: _____

Attending one service a week in which you aren't serving? ☐ I sure can ☐ Not able → Reason: _____

Attending 2 corporate prayer meetings a month? ☐ I sure can ☐ Not able → Reason: _____

Watching services that you miss on YouTube? ☐ I sure can ☐ Not able → Reason: _____

We desire for you to attend services and prayer as much as possible. If you are out of service due to ministry needs, messages are available for you to listen to online. We encourage you to stay involved and keep up to date on sermons because we care about your spiritual growth and needs. You are very important to us.

Being at your ministry station 15 minutes before ministry begins? ☐ I plan to do so ☐ Not sure → Reason: _____

Being neat and hygienic in your appearance every service? ☐ I sure can ☐ Not able → Reason: _____

Being faithful to your tithing at Word of Life? ☐ I sure can ☐ Not able → Reason: _____

Trying to make it to all your team's meetings? (Unless: on vacation, at work, or dealing with an illness.) ☐ I plan to do so ☐ Not sure → Reason: _____

Giving 30 days' notice before you resign your position? ☐ I sure can ☐ Not able → Reason: _____

Informing your leader one week in advance if you plan to be absent? ☐ I sure can ☐ Not able → Reason: _____

Guarding the Vision

Bear in mind that to be a leader is to have people looking up to you and following your example. Remember, people are always watching; our goal at Word of Life is to set an example of excellence in attitude, speech, and conduct.

We want to do all that we can to help Word of Life remain a reputable place. Our personal life will reflect on Word of Life. Personal accountability is an important aspect of this. If you see something that needs to be confronted, be sure it is NEVER done in front of others (those whom it isn't their business and they don't understand the situation). Please go directly to the person to

talk in private, or talk to the person that is over you in authority. Talking to other people who have no authority in the situation is gossip. Speak to the person privately, inform a leader, or speak to one of the Pastors. If you have any doubts about anything, just go straight to Pastor Vern or Pastor Mary.

Are you willing to abstain from — and inform your leader when you see — the following things happening at church: gossip, strife, abusive behavior, addictions, unwholesome speech, ungodly conduct, etc.?

☐ I agree ☐ I disagree

_____ Signature _____

_____ Department Head Signature _____

If you answered “No,” “Not able,” “I don’t feel ready,” or “Aiming for it” to any of the questions above, your team leader will help you turn those answers into “Achieved” and “Yes.”

For Department Head only:

After applicant filled form out, we then went over this form together on the date of _____

Notes: _____

Department Head Qualifications

(Updated 6 / 30 / 2010)

A Department Head is someone who is going to be leading or heading-up an area of ministry. They are directly responsible to the Elders and Pastors for their area of ministry and team of lay ministers (“workers”).

Once an individual reaches the point where they want to be a Department Head, there is a very deep level of commitment to the Elders, Pastors, other team members, and the congregation. We are requiring this level of commitment because if God is really asking you to fill a Department Head position at Word of Life, you need to understand the responsibility you have to the people when you take on this position. The church body is open to a tremendous amount of confusion when those in charge get into division or separation. In an effort to stop it from happening at Word of Life, the guidelines for these areas of ministry (Department Heads) are very stringent.

You have grown in spiritual maturity to the point where you can work with and through situations (pleasant or unpleasant) without leaving Word of Life to go to another church, or simply stop going to church. Should a disagreement or problem arise, you are agreeing to working through the situation. You will meet with whomever necessary TO RESOLVE the issue, and help fix anything that would cause division or separation. (When an issue cannot be resolved between individuals, it will be taken to a meeting of all the Department Heads / Board of Elders so that resolution can be found.) It is understood and agreed upon: RESOLVE IS MANDATORY, IT IS NOT AN OPTION.

Our goal is: long-term ministry. We want to learn, grow, mature, and change so that the cause of Christ will be moved forward, not hampered.

It is a distinct possibility that God may move you out of your current position of ministry, or into an entirely different area of ministry within Word of Life. However, even if that happens, we expect that Word of Life remains your home church. (This avoids a tremendous amount of confusion and division from developing in the body.)

The criteria that will be looked at by the Elders and other Department Heads of Word of Life in determining if you are ready for a Department Head position are:

- (1) Scriptural Directives Concerning Deacons (Timothy & Titus)**
- (2) Biblical Knowledge**
- (3) Maturity**
- (4) Credibility**

Should the day come when you feel you are to leave Word of Life, yet remain in the geographical area, we expect the following process to be followed:

- (1) Communication with the Department Heads / Elders, before you reach your conclusions. They are part of the process involved in your decision making.
- (2) A witness in the Spirit and agreement by the Department Heads / Elders. (This is for your protection, not to control you.)
- (3) Official resignation.
- (4) The purpose is to keep from affecting the body in a negative way. We want to keep unity and the bond of peace. (See point #27.)

Christians who are in places of responsibility in the church are required to be examples in faith, conduct, and business affairs. In an effort to obtain a standard of ministry which exemplifies excellence, we are making the following guidelines a common goal for those ministering at Word of Life.

- 1.** You need to be born again / saved and have made a public confession of it.
- 2.** You need to be baptized in water.
- 3.** You need to be baptized in the Holy Spirit.
- 4.** You need to have an active and living relationship with Jesus Christ.
- 5.** You are expected to have a habitual devotional life (3-4 times a week).
- 6.** You need to be living free from “willful disobedience” toward God.
- 7.** Each Department Head needs to attend church at Word of Life on a regular basis. If your Word of Life church duties take you out of regular church services, it is required to attend one service per week in which you do not minister. (EXCEPTIONS: Vacations, illnesses, and employment.)
- 8.** If you are out of services on a consistent basis because of ministry, recordings of said services are available for you (free of charge) to stay abreast with the messages. (These are available digitally.) If the Elders and/or Department Heads feel that a certain segment of messages needs to be listened to, it will be required for you to do so.
- 9.** You must have attended the church for one year, as well as passing the Elder Board review. (Leadership must recognize there is an anointing for you to accomplish what you are applying for.)
- 10.** You must have become a Covenant Partner of Word of Life.
- 11.** You must have completed all the pertinent training courses.
- 12.** When filling a position, your goal should be a three-year (or longer) commitment.
- 13.** Be submissive to and follow the Pastor and your leaders.

- 14.** Remain faithful to your ministry. It is your responsibility to keep this area of ministry operating and flowing as smoothly as possible.
- 15.** Attend all Department Head meetings whenever they pertain to your area of ministry.
- 16.** Always give advance notice if you are going to be absent from your ministry. (Preferably one week minimum.)
- 17.** Be at your ministry position 15 minutes before starting time.
- 18.** Always be neat in your appearance. You are representing Jesus and Word of Life.
- 19.** Be willing to submit to and be accountable to those over you in authority when something in your life is obviously out of order or is needing help spiritually. Your life is now going to set an example to others following you. Your life will be open to more intense observation and scrutiny. We believe in being accountable to the Elders and other Department Heads of the body. Obvious areas of concern in your personal life / ministry will first be addressed individually. If this is not productive, these areas can be also addressed at a Department Head meeting. If they are not resolvable, these areas will be grounds for removal from any and all ministry positions.
- 20.** Our goal is to maintain a Christ-like witness in our lives. (Examples: avoid gossip, strife, abusive behavior, addictions, unwholesome speech, ungodly conduct, etc. Cultivate a godly attitude, unity, respectful behavior / speech, a loving attitude and manner, etc.)
- 21.** Department Heads are required to attend two corporate prayer meetings per month. (EXCEPTIONS: Vacations, illnesses, and employment.)
- 22.** Be faithful in your tithing to Word of Life. Your giving will be checked.
- 23.** Be in agreement and support of the basic tenets of faith of Word of Life.
- 24.** Be in agreement and support of the purpose and vision of Word of Life.
- 25.** Understand that your job is to make the people you submit to at Word of Life “remain reputable.” This does not in any way condone sin that may be in their lives; but it does include following the given procedure for offering a complaint or disagreement. It is NEVER to be done in front of others, or with the support of others. If you have a complaint or issue with someone or how something is being done, talk to them or someone over them in authority. Talking to anyone other than your spouse or a person who can actually do something about the problem is gossip.
- 26.** I understand in an effort to protect the church, the Elders of Word of Life will do a background check on me. I agree to this. I also understand that any negative findings in the background check will be held in confidence among the Elders and lay ministers.

- 27.** You are agreeing to place the best interests of the body, the ministry, and Word of Life above your individual views, opinions, beliefs, and reputation.
- 28.** You agree to give 90 days' notice when resigning a position.
- 29.** All meetings that pertain to your department are required attendance. (EXCEPTIONS: Vacations, illnesses, and employment.)

I have read the above qualifications and agree to them. I will do my best to adhere to them. I understand that failure to abide by these requirements will cause a process to begin which can lead to dismissal from my ministry position.

_____ *Signature of Applicant* _____

_____ *Elder's Signature* _____

Covenant Partner Commitment

“Privilege of the Gospel”

“Accountability to the Gospel”

“Responsibility for the Gospel”

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior, and been baptized in water, and having attended Word of Life for six months so I am somewhat acquainted with the church, and sensing that I want to make Word of Life my church home, and being in agreement with Word of Life’s statements, strategy, and structure — I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Word of Life church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

1. I will protect the unity of my church

- by acting in love towards other members.
- by refusing to gossip.
- by following the leaders.

“So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together.” (Rom. 14:19, Phillips)

“Have a sincere love for other believers, love one another earnestly with all your heart.” (1 Pet. 1:22, TEV)

“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you.” (Heb. 13:17)

2. I will share the responsibility of my church

- by praying for its growth.
- by inviting the unchurched to attend.
- by warmly welcoming those who visit.

“To the church — we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly.” (1 Thess. 1:1-2, LB)

“The Master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and urge the people there to come, so my house will be full.’” (Luke 14:23, NCV)

“So warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified.” (Rom. 15:7, LB)

3. I will serve the ministry of my church

- by discovering and using my gifts and talents.
- by being equipped to serve my pastors.
- by developing a servant's heart.

"Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you."
(1 Pet. 4:10, Phillips)

"(God) gave... some to be pastors, teachers, evangelists, apostles, and prophets, to prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up." (Eph. 4:11-12)

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interest of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus, who... (took on) the very nature of a servant." (Phil. 2:3-4, 7)

4. I will support the testimony of my church

- by attending faithfully.
- by living a godly life.
- by giving regularly.

"Let us not give up meeting together... but let us encourage one another." (Heb. 10:25)

"Whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ." (Phil. 1:27, Phillips)

"Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for offering." (1 Cor. 16:2, LB)

"A tenth of (all your) produce... is the Lord's, and is holy." (Lev. 27:30, NCV)

Commitment encompasses our time, our treasure, and our talent.

_____ Applicant _____ Date

_____ Pastor _____ Date

Covenant Partner Application

The purpose of this application is to fulfill the requirements set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws, Article 4, Section 2-a, which states:

“Any person interested in becoming a Partner of the congregation of the church shall submit a written and signed application, on a form approved by the Pastor. Each application shall be considered by the Board of Elders at its regular meeting or at any special meeting of the Board; and either approved, disapproved, or tabled. Applicants whose applications are so approved shall become active Partners of the congregation of the church.”

I have been through the study course that is required before becoming a Covenant Partner of Word of Life Ministries. I feel that I understand the Constitution and Bylaws and am in agreement with them. As stated in Article 4, Section 1-a:

(1) I am born again.

(2) I understand the purpose of the Constitution and Bylaws and the government of this church and willfully submit myself to it and agree with it.

I hereby apply for Covenant Partnership with Word of Life Ministries. It is my desire to become part of God’s working in this church. I am aware of the fact that this is an organization that operates through humans, and I will work with my leaders, pray for my leaders, and support my leaders as they endeavor to lead this congregation in serving God. I also expect my leaders to love me, consider and respect my opinions, and minister to me to the best of their ability — with the ultimate purpose as it is stated in the Constitution and Bylaws always being at the forefront of our service to God. The purpose is that we would live in unity and harmony with each other, and that Jesus Christ will be glorified and honored above all else.

**OUR PURPOSE IS THAT TOGETHER WE MIGHT DO OUR PART IN
ADVANCING THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE WORK THAT HE HAS US
TO DO IN THESE LAST DAYS BEFORE HIS RETURN!**

Signature

Communicate · Communicate · Communicate

[11] “It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, [12] to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up [13] until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. [14] Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. [15] Instead, SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE, WE WILL IN ALL THINGS GROW UP into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. [16] From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” (Eph. 4:11-16, NIV)

Our Maturity Level is Seen

by

How Well We Communicate

Let’s strive for maturity, and communicate.