

Real Life Philosophy of Ministry Statements

The Real Life Vision Statement:

We will reach the world for Jesus one person at a time.

Matthew 28:19-20: 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

The Real Life Mission Statement:

We will create biblical disciples in leader directed relational environments.

Acts 2:41-42 (NLT) 41Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day— about 3,000 in all. 42All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

The Real Life Discipleship Definition

Matthew 4:19 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

A disciple is...

- ✓ One Committed to following Jesus (Luke 9:23)
- ✓ One Committed to being changed by Jesus (Rom. 12:2, Galatians 5:22ff)
- ✓ One Committed to the mission of Jesus (Matthew 28:19, Luke 19:10)

Keys to Effective Disciple Making Process

Key #1 - An Intentional Leader

- ✓ One who understands the game (Christianity)
- ✓ One who can evaluate or recognize where a person is at in the process of growth
- ✓ One who can create an environment that produces growth

Key #2 - A Relational Environment — a Small Group

- ✓ Jesus, the greatest disciple maker in history, only had 12 disciples.
- ✓ Jesus came to reveal a model of discipleship that we could follow
- ✓ The first disciples used the same model for discipling that Jesus did

Components of a Relational Environment

- ✓ Shepherding (especially in the early stages) Ezekiel 34
- ✓ Love (the "love one another statements in Scripture)
- ✓ Real teaching with Q&A, modeling, and stories (Mt. 13:6,16:13; John 13:14)
- ✓ Authenticity (James 5:16)
- ✓ Accountability (Hebrews 3:12)
- ✓ Guided practice (Luke 9:1-12; Acts 6)

Key #3 - A Reproducible Process

Share, Connect, Minister, Disciple

Belief Statements

Shorter Statements Posted on the Web Site

Non-Negotiables:

God:

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three persons: the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

Scripture References: Genesis 1:1, 26-27; 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Is. 45:18; Deut. 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; I Peter 1:2

God the Father:

We believe that God the Father holds all the attributes of God while exercising a unique role in the triune God. The Godhead is in agreement with the role of each: God as Father, Son as sacrifice, and Spirit as power. He is the father of Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and yet still one with both as God. The Father adopts believers into relationship with him as their Father. With Christ, believers have the privilege of being heirs to God's glory. He actively prunes/disciplines believers to strengthen them for His glory.

Scripture References: Luke 1:35; Matthew 3:17; Romans 8:15-17; John 15:1&2; Hebrews 12:7-11

Jesus:

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He was born of a virgin. He is fully God and fully human. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on the cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return again someday to claim His own and take them to Heaven.

Scripture References: Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:22-23; John 1:1-5; 8:58; 14:10-30; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 1:3-4; I Corinthians 15:3-4; I Timothy 6:14-15; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 4:14-15

Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. As Christians we seek to live under His control daily.

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

What is the best way to explain the Trinity? To not try to explain it! The Bible teaches it, it is beyond our understanding as finite humans--God is bigger than we can imagine

Man:

People are made in the image of God to be like Him in character. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "sin". This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life. To put this simply, we all have a sin nature. However, we are not separated from God because of the sin nature but because we give into it and sin.

Scripture References: Genesis 1:27; Psalms 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 3:23

We do not believe a baby, or small child, is lost before they reach the ability to know the truth about God, sin, and Jesus, (the age of accountability), and therefore do not baptize infants

What We Believe about Salvation

Salvation is God's free gift to us but we must accept it. We are saved by grace (God's part) through faith (our part). Real faith produces repentance (a turning from our self-ruled life to a Jesus-ruled life), a willingness to confess Christ as our Lord and Savior, and a willingness to be baptized as the scriptures command.

Scripture References: John 1:12, 14:6; Acts 2:37-38; Romans 5:1, 6:23; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5

The Church:

The church is the body and bride of Christ also the household of faith. It is a living temple where God dwells in His people. We believe that everyone that has been saved by Christ is a member of the church. We believe that the church exists throughout the world, and is witnessed and experienced in local autonomous gatherings of believers .

Scripture References: Eph. 4:16; Rom.12:4&5; Ephesians 5:24-32; Gal. 6:10; 1 Peter 2:4-5; 1 Cor. 3:16; Acts 14:23; Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Col. 3:14-15.

What We Believe about the Bible

The Bible is God's Word to us. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture or error. The Bible is infallible, inerrant, and absolute truth. Where it speaks, we listen and obey.

Scripture References: Psalms 12:6, 119:105, 160; Proverbs 30:5; 2 Timothy 1:13, 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21

These are Unity Essentials

What We Believe about Spiritual Gifts

Few areas of theology within the church have caused more division than the subject of spiritual gifts. Most Christians believe that God gives gifts to people for the benefit of the church. (Romans 12) However some of the gifts given written about in scripture are controversial. (1 Corinthians 12-14) Some in our church believe all of the spiritual gifts spoken of in 1 Corinthians are for today. Others believe some of the gifts are for today. Then there are those who believe none of the gifts are for today. You can see the potential problems.

- ✓ Because it is not a salvation issue we do not want this to be a source of conflict in our church.
- ✓ We have no organized place in our church where speaking in tongues will be allowed in public--not services, prayer events, or small groups.
- ✓ We will not allow people who hold one view on this subject to recruit people to their view.
- ✓ If you believe speaking in tongues is of the devil-- this church is not for you.
- ✓ If you believe you have to speak in tongues as a sign that you have received the subsequent gift of the spirit this church is not for you.

What We Believe about Eternal Security:

We teach that a person is saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-10)

- ✓ Faith is evidenced by action (James 2:14, Romans 1:5)
- ✓ Both sides of the issue believe you know a tree by its fruit (John 6:44)
- ✓ A person is not lost because they sin but because they reject Jesus.
- ✓ If you believe people have to have your view and are lost if they don't this church is not for you.
- ✓ If you believe it is your job to convince others you are right and are going to be divisive on the issue this church is not for you.

What We Believe about the End Times

We believe there will be a literal return of Christ and a judgment day. We also believe there will be a literal rapture (a catching up of the saints). How and when this will happen has been a source of great debate. We believe the details are in God's hands and this is not a salvation issue.

Scripture References: Matthew 12:36; John 5:22, 16:8; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 2 Peter 3:7; Jude 6

- ✓ You can be wrong and still be a Christian.
- ✓ If you believe one view is right and those who have other orthodox views are lost because they do not have yours-- this church is not for you.

What We Believe about Eternity

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

Scriptural references: John 3:16; John 14:17; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:17-18; 1 Corinthians 2:7-9; Revelation 20:15

What We Believe about Communion

Communion is the commemoration and proclamation of Jesus' death until He comes, and should always be preceded by solemn self examination. We believe that while the elements of Communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ who is present in a unique way, fellowshiping with His people.

Scriptural references: Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28; 1 Cor. 10:16; 1 Peter 2:24; Ephesians 1:7

Read through this passage: **1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (NIV)**

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 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, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

This passage reveals...

- ✓ Communion is a memorial.
- ✓ Communion is a new covenant.
- ✓ Communion is a proclamation.
- ✓ We will have communion every week in our services.
- ✓ The scripture tells us to examine ourselves before we take it so that we are taking it in a worthy manner.
- ✓ We don't believe we have to do it or that other churches have to do it, we have decided that it is something we will do at Real Life.

What We Believe about Every Christian

The Bible teaches that every Christian is called to “full-time” Christian service, regardless of his or her vocation. We practice the truth that every believer is a minister by encouraging every member to find a place of service and ministry. Every believer has direct access to God through prayer and Bible reading. We believe people are called to witness and to minister.

Revelation 1:6a (NASB95) “...and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father...” **1 Peter 2:9** “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

What We Believe about Tithing and Stewardship

We include a time of giving (the collection of tithes and offerings) as an appropriate act of corporate worship for two reasons. First, the spirit and the activity of giving were definitely a part of the early church’s life, in which it was apparently connected with the church’s regular meeting time, as suggested by 1 Cor. 16:1-3. Second, the act of giving is properly considered to be a worship event. In our giving we are honoring God as Creator and owner of all things, acknowledging Him as the source of all our blessings, and confessing our dependence on Him. We practice tithing to support the church, the body of Christ, as God’s Word commands. We recognize that giving 10% of our income is the biblical standard of giving to the local church--anything above that is considered an offering of gratitude.

We believe that the local church which you attend is the storehouse and you should give there. We also recognize that we must be good stewards of our time, and our talents as the Lord has blessed us with these things as well.

Scriptural references: Lev. 27:30; Mal. 3:7-12; Acts 4:32-5:11; 2 Cor. 8:1-9:15