

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

REAL LIFE MINISTRIES has grown because God has added to our numbers. (Acts 2:47) We have tried to glorify Christ in everything we do. Our church has sought to be unified in the “major” things and have allowed for differing opinions in the “minor” things. Jesus said that the world would know that we are His because we love one another and because we are one. John 13:35; John 17:21-22

This church has people with many different backgrounds, but we are a team. We are more interested in glorifying God than arguing over non-salvation issues. “How can we agree rather than disagree?” is a very important question we seek to answer. “How can we apply the truth of scripture in a way that shows love for our Father and love for one another so that Jesus is glorified in all we do?”

Therefore these are our non-negotiable Statements of Faith.

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

GOD

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are coequal and are one God. Genesis 1:1,26-27, 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19;

2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2

JESUS

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is coequal 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. Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:22-23; John 1:1-5, 14:10-30; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 1:3-4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 1 Timothy 6:14-15; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 4:14-15

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is coequal 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. John 14:16-17, John 16:7-13;

Acts 1:8; Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 1:13, 5:18

SALVATION

Salvation is God's free gift to us, but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ and God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ as Lord of his life. This is evidenced by repentance, confession, baptism by immersion, and a life committed to His service. John 1:12, 14:6; Romans 5:1, 6:23; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

God has designed the local church like a physical body, with Jesus Christ as the head. God gifts each of His children in unique and special ways to serve and build up the body. Therefore, spiritual gifts are not for personal benefit or glory, but to bring glory to God, as well as encouraging and building up the church.

1 Corinthians 14:4

No one individual can have all the gifts. 1 Corinthians 12:17-30. We are interdependent on each other; together we are the body of Christ which is a clear demonstration of true diversity. There is no division as we all have equal concern and need for each other. One is an eye, another is a hand, another is a foot; and some are presentable while other parts are un-presentable.

We all must be the part God has designed us to be, if not, the body suffers and becomes ill. "If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully." Romans 12:6-8

Unfortunately, some division can come with reference to the use of tongues. God gives rules in His word for the use of tongues. If someone speaks in a tongue it will be one at a time. 1 Corinthians 14:27. There must be an interpreter. 1 Corinthians 14:28. There must be one who discerns whether it comes from God. 1 John 4:1. It is noteworthy that 1 Corinthians was written to house churches. To preserve unity in the body of Real Life Ministries, we ask that the gift of speaking in tongues not be exercised in public meetings (services/small groups).

PEOPLE

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. Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; 59:1-2; Romans 3:23

ETERNITY

People will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or exist eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is eternal death in Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life in Heaven. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence. John 3:16, 14:17; Romans 6:23; 8:17-18; 1 Corinthians 2:7-9; Revelation 20:15

ETERNAL SECURITY

This has been a long standing argument between scholars from two different theological camps. The Arminians believe salvation can be gained and lost. The Calvinists believe once a person is saved he or she can never be lost again. There are great scholars who stand on both sides of this debate and there is scriptural support for both perspectives. Both believe that a person can be identified as a Christian if there is a change in behavior—fruit. The Holy Spirit produces a changed character over time. In our church we will encourage those who have given their lives to Christ to grow. If they fall down in their faith we will help them to get back up and continue on with Christ. We believe that a Christian can have great confidence in their salvation. The Arminian believes that only a person who has denied their faith in Christ is lost. The Calvinist believes that a person who has denied faith in Christ was never saved to begin with. Again, either way, faith in Christ saves us. Ultimately we have people from both backgrounds in our church and we have decided that this is not a salvation issue.

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

Jude 6

THE LEADERSHIP MODEL OF THE CHURCH

Real Life Ministries is a non-denominational Christian church. While recognizing the value of associating and cooperating with other groups of Christians, we believe the local church should be elder-governed. Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 5:17

THE PRIESTHOOD OF EVERY BELIEVER

"Christ loves us, and by His death He has freed us from our sins and made us a kingdom of priests to serve God" - Revelation 1:6. "You are ... the King's priests, God's own people, chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God." 1 Peter 2:9. 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 Bible reading/study, prayer, and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Every Christian is to be a disciple developing relational environments in which they share their faith with those around them by word and by action.

COMMUNION

Communion at Real Life is defined as Scripture defines it. "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.'" 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

Communion is a memorial, a new covenant, and a proclamation. It is a sacred event for those who have a vital, biblical relationship with Jesus. "For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep." 1 Corinthians 11:26-30. We take communion every week in our services.

STEWARDSHIP

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. Everything over 10% is an "offering of gratitude" for the great things God does for us everyday. A tithe of everything a person produces belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord. Leviticus 27:30; Malachi 3:7-12. The offering is a privilege to give and is in addition to the tithe. Jesus taught about tithing: "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices mint, dill, and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law justice, mercy, and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former." Matthew 23:23. 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.