



# FRONTLINE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

*Membership Playbook*  
*with Teacher Notes*



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INTRODUCTION:  

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**ADMIN GUIDELINES**

# ADMIN GUIDELINES

## GOALS

Our membership class is designed to introduce people to the mission and distinctives of our church and help them discern whether membership at Frontline is right for them. We want people to walk away knowing why membership matters and what it looks like to be a covenant member here at Frontline Church.

Through this class, we hope people will connect with others, grasp the culture of the church, and see the value of membership. We want them to understand and begin to engage our shared values, beliefs, and practices. Ultimately, we hope God uses this class to be a means of maturity and transformation for those who attend, that their love for God and the church would grow.

To that end, ***prayer is essential***. As the membership class approaches, let's encourage the congregational team to be praying for those who will attend. This class should not be another hoop to jump through or a to-do to check off a list, but instead an impactful experience that deepens their relationship with God and the church.

## OUTLINE

The membership class focuses on our mission and distinctives, as well as the essentials we want our members to know and embody. We don't want to merely explain the truth of these ideas, but we want to give a vision for how they impact our church and the lives of our members. The theology and biblical support for our mission and distinctives will be the focus of the homework, which participants will complete on their own.

The membership class has four sessions. Each session includes teaching, exercises, and discussion times. It is designed to work in various formats. For instance, the class could be offered in four weekly sessions, or it could be offered in a one-day, 4-hour setting.

If offering the class in a one-day setting, the schedule for the class should look something like this:

- 9:00-9:50a: Session 1 on Mission
- 9:50-10:35a: Session 2 on Word & Spirit
- 10:35-10:40a: Break
- 10:40-11:30a: Session 3 on Gospel & Kingdom
- 11:30a-12:15p: Session 4 on Gender
- 12:15-1:00p: Lunch - Next Steps / Q & A

These timelines are listed in the Teacher Notes for each session. It is especially important to be aware of the schedule when serving lunch. If you are running behind and starting Session 4 after

11:45, we suggest being flexible enough to offer lunch early, and teaching the final session on gender *while* they eat lunch. If all else fails, opt for cutting into Q&A time rather than cutting parts of the teaching session. They can always ask questions following the class. Regardless, the class *must* be wrapped up by 1pm.

## SETTING

Though we call this a “membership class,” we want it to feel relational and pastoral. The class should be held in a setting that would not make it feel too academic. We encourage people to sit at tables where they can easily group up with others around them for exercises and discussion. We hope they will begin to connect with the people they are sitting around. Tables will also provide a hard surface for them to write on their worksheets.

We should also strive to make the class as hospitable as possible. Pens, name-tags, and worksheets should be set out ahead of time. Snacks, water, and coffee should be provided. Childcare should be offered to make it as accessible as possible for parents.

If offering the class in a one-day setting, lunch should be provided (including for children in childcare). We hope this extra time provides an opportunity for Q&A and for relational connection over a meal. In preparation for the class, think through how to set up the food in such a way that won’t be a distraction during the teaching session. Be sure everything they need is included, such as plates, napkins, cutlery, etc.

In addition, it could be beneficial to have one person serve as a “tour guide” or “cruise director” for the class. This person can help set up the class, transition from session to session, introduce teachers, and serve as a point person for all things related to the class.

Finally, our membership class should be enjoyable. No one likes going through a dull class where they just learn a lot of information. Instead, this class should be engaging, and people should have a blast being a part of it. For many people, the membership class will be the first time they get to know our development culture, for good or bad. If our membership class is perceived as boring, then our other events will be assumed to be boring as well. Let’s aim to set a different culture instead.

## TEACHER PREPARATIONS

At the beginning of each session’s teacher notes, there is a Teacher Review section. This section gives a general overview, things they need to prepare, an outline of big ideas, and a session timeline. This is a valuable resource they need to engage ahead of time. In addition, the Participant Worksheet for each session is included with the Teacher Review. This worksheet will be helpful in knowing what’s in front of the participants and what blanks they are filling out. It is generally best practice to pause and give time for participants to fill in the blank as they come to it in the session.

Throughout the session notes, there is a Teacher Sidebar, which highlights any important details that teachers need to know. They could also utilize this space to write any notes or reminders of their own for while they teach.

At the end of each session, there is an exercise intended to help them integrate what they have learned. The instructions are in both the teacher notes and on the worksheets. It will be the teacher's responsibility to lead through the exercise steps and keep track of time. The timelines are built into the instructions, and teachers need to stick to the timeline as best as they can.

As teachers prepare for their session, encourage them to read through the teachers notes several times before they teach. As they grow familiar with the notes, they will begin to teach them more naturally and compellingly. You might even encourage them to practice teaching the session out loud with a timer, especially if they haven't taught it before. In addition, they can peruse the session video from the online membership course for a best practice of how to teach the session. While time consuming, these preparations will help your teachers feel confident and contribute to the overall quality of the class.

Finally, we want to encourage all teachers to be as pastoral as possible during the membership class. It would be best practice to welcome people in, join a table for discussion, and share personal stories during their teaching. If offering the class in a one-day setting, we would recommend teachers to stay through the whole class, if possible. Being present will give them the opportunity to further engage and connect with the participants.

## **ADMIN CHECKLIST AND COMMUNICATIONS**

On the following pages you will find an admin checklist and a communications document. The admin checklist explains, step-by-step, the process for planning and administering a Membership Class, including a timeline of events. The communications document includes language for announcements and Happenings, as well as templates for registration and follow-up emails.



# MEMBERSHIP ADMIN CHECKLIST

## SCHEDULE AND BUDGET FOR MEMBERSHIP

*Up to a year before class*

- ☐ Work with congregational team to schedule date for Membership Class. Ideally, you should plan out all membership dates for the entire calendar year.
- ☐ Once scheduled, ensure that the class dates and times are updated on the Membership landing page ([frontlinechurch.com/membership](http://frontlinechurch.com/membership)) and on your congregation's Membership Registration form.
- ☐ Send dates to the creative team so they can make an updated announcement slide with those specific dates. **This must be requested at least by the start of the quarter in which the class is held.**
- ☐ Work with Congregational Executive Pastor (or other designated congregational staff) to determine budget for providing childcare, lunch for the class, and purchasing giveaway items.

## ANNOUNCE UPCOMING CLASS

*Around 4-6 weeks before class*

- ☐ At the start of the quarter, ensure the Membership Class is listed on your congregation's Event Card.
- ☐ Promote in Happenings at least **four weeks** before Membership Class. Example language for Happenings can be found in our communications document.
- ☐ Announce on Sundays at least **three weeks** before the class. Announcement examples can be found in our communication document.
- ☐ Ideally, you could set a soft registration deadline for **two weeks** before the class. This cushion provides time for participants to work through the homework before the class. But in no way should this deadline prevent people from signing up late.

## ASSIGN TEACHERS

*4 weeks before class*

- ☐ Teachers should be assigned to each of the four sessions of the class. In addition, an "emcee" or "tour guide" could set up the class, introduce teachers, and lead through the Next Steps / Q&A.
- ☐ Ensure that each teacher is emailed the notes for their session at least **two weeks** before the class. Membership Class Teacher Notes can be found on the curriculum landing page. ([frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](http://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum))

- ☐ Teachers can review the membership session videos to get an idea of how to teach the material. Those videos can be accessed at the curriculum landing page. ([frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](http://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum))

## REGISTRATION FOLLOW-UP

### *Up to 4 weeks before class*

- ☐ If someone registers ***more than a month*** before the class, congregational admins should send a follow-up email to confirm their registration and let them know you will get them more information as it gets closer to the class date. A template for this email can be found in our communications document.
- ☐ If someone registers ***within a month*** of the class (or registered early and it is now within a month of the class), congregational admins should send a follow-up email to confirm their registration and give them access to the homework. This email should include the registration link to the Membership Class on Canvas, as well as instructions on how to pick up a physical copy of *A Church For the City*. A template for this email can be found in our communications document. A link to register someone for the Canvas class can be found at the curriculum landing page. ([frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](http://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum))
- ☐ Physical copies of *A Church for the City* will be provided to all membership class participants. Ensure that your congregation has an appropriate supply. If you need any more physical copies, please contact Blake Randolph or Aaron Addison directly.

## NOTE: ONLINE MEMBERSHIP CLASS REGISTRATION

- ☐ If a person is unable to attend an upcoming in-person class, they can complete the membership class online. These cases must be approved by the congregation.
- ☐ Once approved, congregational admins should send a follow-up email to confirm their registration and give them access to the course. This email should include the registration link to the Online Membership Course on Canvas, as well as instructions on how to pick up a physical copy of *A Church For the City*. A template for this email can be found in our communications document. A link to register someone for the Canvas class can be found at the curriculum landing page. ([frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](http://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum))
- ☐ Once the course is completed, they will be directed to fill out the New Member Questionnaire. At that point, continue with “New Member Meeting” step below.

## PREPARING FOR THE CLASS

### *Throughout the 2 weeks leading up to the class*

- ☐ Work with the congregational Kids Director to schedule and hire childcare, in accordance with Frontline’s Child Protection Policy.

- ☐ Purchase two or three giveaway items. The giveaways could be books, gift cards, or movie tickets. Try to keep it local, if possible, to support our city.
- ☐ Place any necessary food orders in advance, in accordance with the budget for the class.
- ☐ Work with the creative team to get an updated printout or slide with the photos, names, and titles of the congregational team.
- ☐ Work with congregational team and elders to schedule New Member Meeting dates in advance, including which elders will be available on which dates. Agree on a New Member Meeting sign-up method and how to communicate that to participants.
- ☐ Print a copy of the Teacher Notes to make available to the teachers on the day of the class. Teacher Notes can be found on the curriculum landing page. ([frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](http://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum))
- ☐ Print the participant worksheets prior to the class. Participant worksheets can be found on the curriculum landing page. ([frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](http://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum))
- ☐ Print sign-in sheets in order to keep track of attendance.
- ☐ Work with congregational team to ensure the church is being a good, hospitable host (greeting, engagement, coffee, snacks, tables, atmosphere, lunch, etc.).
- ☐ Send follow-up email within ***1 week*** of the class to remind participants of the class and convey any instructions. An example email can be found in our communications document.

## **CLASS FOLLOW-UP**

***Within 1 week after class***

- ☐ Send a follow-up email to thank participants for their time and remind them to complete their homework on Canvas before the New Member Meeting. An example follow-up email can be found in our communications document.

## **NEW MEMBER MEETING**

***Within 4 weeks after class***

- ☐ Share “New Member Meeting Best Practices” with all elders who will be conducting New Member Meetings. Consider printing hard copies for each New Member Meeting as well. That document can be found at our curriculum landing page. ([frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](http://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum))
- ☐ Once someone has completed their questionnaire, the congregational admin will be notified via email. Send a copy of the membership questionnaire to the appropriate team who will be doing their New Member Meeting.
- ☐ Print off membership covenants and provide pens for the meeting. The membership covenant can be found at our curriculum landing page. ([frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](http://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum))

## **NEW MEMBER MEETING FOLLOW-UP**

*Within 1 week after New Member Meeting*

- ☐ Scan signed copies of the membership covenant into CCB and share a digital copy with each new member in a follow-up email. In addition, congratulate them on becoming a member and share any upcoming events pertaining to membership. An example follow-up email can be found in our communications document.

# MEMBERSHIP CLASS COMMUNICATIONS

## HAPPENINGS

*At least 4 weeks before class*

### Example 1

Are you looking to take the next step in becoming a member at Frontline? Join us for our next Membership Class on [DATE & TIME] at Frontline [CONGREGATION]. This class explores the mission and beliefs that lie at the very heart of our church. You will learn why membership matters and what it looks like to be a covenant member here at Frontline Church. You can sign up for our Membership Class at [frontlinechurch.com/membership](http://frontlinechurch.com/membership). Childcare and lunch will be provided, but space is limited.

### Example 2

Membership in the local church is an important part of following Jesus. We were never meant to live the Christian life alone. In a culture that is ever-changing, fast-paced, and prone to self-centeredness, we are often resistant to any commitment that might tie us down. Living in relationship with other Christians as a covenant member is both counter-cultural and essential. If you aren't yet a member of Frontline Church, we'd love for you to join us for our next membership class. In this class, you'll learn more about who we are—our values, beliefs, and practices. Join us on [DATE & TIME] at Frontline [CONGREGATION]. Register at [frontlinechurch.com/membership](http://frontlinechurch.com/membership).

## SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS

*At least 3 weeks before class*

### Example 1

At Frontline, membership matters. Becoming a covenant member is like joining a family. In membership, we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with a shared mission for the glory of God. On [DATE & TIME], we will be having our next Membership Class. This class explores the mission and beliefs that lie at the very heart of our church. You will learn why membership matters and what it looks like to be a covenant member here at Frontline Church. If you want to learn more about what it means to be a member here at Frontline, please join us! You can sign up at [frontlinechurch.com/membership](http://frontlinechurch.com/membership). Lunch and childcare will be provided, but space is limited.

## Example 2

We were never meant to live the Christian life alone. We need others around us—brothers and sisters who share our faith and values. This is one reason why church membership is so important. Our next membership class is coming up on [DATE & TIME]. In this class, we look at who we are and what God has called us to be in the city. If you are considering becoming a member of Frontline Church, this class is the next step. You can find more information or sign up at [frontlinechurch.com/membership](http://frontlinechurch.com/membership). Childcare and lunch will be provided.

## **REGISTRATION FOLLOW-UP EMAIL**

### *When Someone Registers...*

#### More Than a Month Before Class

Hello [NAME],

Thank you for signing up for our upcoming Membership Class at Frontline [CONGREGATION]! This class will be held on [DATE & TIME]. We are excited for you to take this next step. As we get closer to the class date, I will send our more information about the class, as well as additional resources about our church. In the meantime, feel free to reach out to me at [EMAIL] with any questions you may have.

#### Within a Month of the Class

Hello [NAME],

Thank you for signing up for our upcoming Membership Class at Frontline [CONGREGATION]! This class will be held on [DATE & TIME]. We will be meeting at [LOCATION AND ANY DIRECTION ON HOW TO FIND IT].

In preparation for the Membership Class, we ask everyone to work through an online homework course, which includes some readings and videos specific to our church. You will need to click this link and register for an account to access this material through Canvas. If you run into any issues, please let us know.

As part of your homework, we include a booklet we wrote called, A Church for the City: The Mission and Distinctives of Frontline Church. This booklet lays out both the mission and the theological distinctives of our church. It answers common questions about what we believe, and helps to ensure we are all moving in the same direction during the Membership Class. We provide a PDF and audiobook through Canvas, but we would also love to give you a physical copy. You can pick up a physical copy by [INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO PICK UP PHYSICAL COPY].

While it is helpful to have all of the homework completed before the class, it is not required for you to attend. But we do ask everyone to complete this homework before becoming a member. We are excited that you are taking this opportunity to learn more about our church. If you have any questions prior to the class, you can reach out to me directly at [EMAIL].

## **CLASS FOLLOW-UP EMAIL**

*Within 1 week after class*

Hello [NAME],

We enjoyed seeing you at our Membership Class. We hope that the class was a blessing to you as you continue to prayerfully consider whether God is calling you to covenant membership at Frontline Church.

I want to take a moment to remind you of the next steps for membership. First, you need to complete the online homework course on Canvas. If you are having trouble finding the page, you can follow this link. At the end of that course, you'll be directed to fill out our New Member Questionnaire. This form will give our elders a chance to know you a bit better, and give you a chance to ask any final questions you may have. Finally, you will need to attend a New Member Meeting. Everything else must be completed prior to that meeting. [GIVE ANY INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO SIGN UP FOR A NEW MEMBERS MEETING]

If you have any further questions, please reach out to me at [EMAIL].

## **NEW MEMBER MEETING FOLLOW-UP EMAIL**

*Within 1 week after New Member Meeting*

Hello [NAME],

Thank you for becoming a covenant member at Frontline Church. We are praying that God would bless you and work through you in our church. I am including a copy of your signed Membership Covenant in this email.

Twice a year, we have Members Meetings where all our members gather together to celebrate what God is doing in our church. The next Members Meeting is [DATE, TIME, & LOCATION].

If you have any questions or needs, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or any of our pastors.

God Bless!





SESSION 1:

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MISSION

# TEACHER REVIEW - SESSION 1

## PREPARING FOR SESSION 1

In this session, you will be introducing Frontline’s mission to the participants. We want this session to feel like a good “first impression” for our church. It serves as a high-level, “30,000 feet” view of who we are and what we care about most. Whereas the other sessions will cover our theological distinctives and their impact on our church, this session addresses our church’s values, which forms our theological distinctives and philosophy of ministry.

If you are teaching this session, you will need to be prepared to:

- Welcome participants hospitably and give a general framework for the class
- Give away two or three prizes with icebreaker-style questions
- Play the Membership Intro Video
- Give a brief 1-2 minute snapshot of your congregation’s history and key moments
- Share the city partners for your specific congregation
- Lead an exercise on identifying and praying for your “three”

## BIG IDEAS

- Class introduction and set-up
- Membership Intro Video
- The history of Frontline and your specific congregation
- Four shared values that shape our church:
  1. **Church For the City**
  2. **Inhabiting Tensions**
  3. **Integrated Theology**
  4. **Communion with God and Others**
- Frontline’s Mission: **Multiplying Gospel Communities that Love God, Love People, and Push Back Darkness**
- Four places shaped by our mission:
  1. **Sunday Gatherings**
  2. **Community Groups**
  3. **City Partners**
  4. **Church Planting and Strengthening**

## **SESSION TIMELINE: 50 MIN TOTAL**

Welcome and Giveaways (5 min)

Membership Intro Video (5 min)

Who We Are: Values (10 min)

Mission (15 min)

Exercise: Praying For Your “Three” (15 min)

## Session 1: Mission

### FRONTLINE MEMBERSHIP CLASS

**The values of Frontline Church are:**

1.

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2.

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3.

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4.

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These values shape who we are and why we exist. We hold these values close and pray that we increasingly embody them together in gospel community.

**Frontline Church's mission statement is:**

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Every aspect of our church is driven by this mission. It brings us together with one goal in mind. It reminds us why God has placed us here, and sets our eyes on that for which we collectively strive.

**The four places that we can most clearly see Frontline's mission at work are:**

1.

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2.

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3.

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4.

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**The distinctives of Frontline Church are:**

1.

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2.

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3.

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4.

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5.

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✓ *Flip page for exercise.*



## Exercise: Praying for Your Three

We invite all of our members to commit to their “three.” These are three people within your sphere of influence who do not follow Jesus or are not connected to a local church. We ask everyone to pray daily for their “three” and engage them in intentional gospel relationships. Your “three” could be your family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc. To help you identify and begin praying for your “three,” work through the following exercise together at your table.

### Part 1: Identify Your “Three”

Take **3 minutes** to prayerfully select and write down the names of three people in your life who do not follow Jesus or are not connected to a local church.

Whom would you most love to see become a disciple of Jesus? Who is your heart best shaped to reach for Jesus? If you are having trouble identifying three people, just write down as many as you can.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Part 2: Engage Your Three

Once you’ve each identified your “three,” pick just one of those three people and consider best how to engage them. Take **5 minutes** at your table to each answer in turn, out loud, the following questions posed by missiologist Alan Hirsch:

- ▶ Am I in close proximity with this person to whom I feel called?
- ▶ Am I spending regular time with this person? If not, why not?
- ▶ Am I too busy to develop a meaningful relationship with this person? If so, how could I create margin for mission?

### Part 3: Pray Together

Take **3 minutes** to pray out loud for the people your table shared about.

Pray specifically for your relationship with them to grow, that God would give you creativity in how to spend regular time with them, and for God to provide opportunities for you to love them, serve them, and share the gospel with them.

*Let’s commit to continuing to pray for our “three” regularly. If you have started to attend a community group, be sure to share your “three” with your community group and invite them to join you in praying as well.*



## SESSION 1: MISSION (50 MIN, 9:00-9:50a)

### WELCOME AND GIVEAWAYS (5 MIN)

- Briefly introduce yourself with your name and position

*Teacher Note:* Welcome people to the membership class and thank them for coming.

To start off the membership class, ***give away two or three prizes.*** Make it festive and be creative in how you do it. The giveaways could be books, gift cards, or movie tickets. Try to keep it local, if possible, to support our city. Ask follow-up questions that would allow us all to get to know people better.

Sample questions:

- Who has had the most interesting, unique job?
- Who was most recently pulled over by the police?
- Who most recently started coming to Frontline?
- Who has been coming to Frontline the longest?
- Who has moved to Oklahoma most recently?

After the giveaways, briefly frame up what the class will look like. Include the general timeline, worksheets they have, etc...

- This video can be found at [frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](http://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum) by clicking on the link for “Membership Intro Video”

### MEMBERSHIP INTRO VIDEO (5 MIN)

*Teacher Note:* Play the Membership Intro Video where Josh Kouri explains the importance of membership.

### WHO WE ARE: VALUES (10 MIN)

Frontline Church is one church, with multiple congregations. God has allowed Frontline to plant churches across the Oklahoma City metro and central Oklahoma, yet our shared story reminds us that God’s faithfulness has been the common thread across the years. Frontline gathered for the very first time on Easter Sunday 2005, with twenty people meeting in Josh and Nancy Kouri’s living room. In those early years, Frontline’s growth was exciting, challenging, chaotic, messy, and miraculous. The church eventually moved into the heart of OKC in Automobile Alley. The church was gritty, and the gospel of Jesus Christ was changing people.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

► Include the circumstances of planting, as well as any key points in your congregation's story.

► Stress this point. The italicized portion is listed in their worksheet.

► Fill in the Blank

God saved dozens of people at Frontline, and there was a sense of revival as people from all walks of life were baptized in our Sunday gatherings.

The church continued to grow and reach new communities around the metro, leading us to plant several Frontline congregations. In 2010, we started our first congregation, Frontline Shawnee. The very next year, in 2011, Frontline South opened its doors. That same year, our Frontline Downtown congregation moved into the First Christian Church cathedral on Robinson Ave. In 2014, we planted Frontline Edmond. Then, in 2020, Frontline Yukon was born.

*Teacher Note:* Take **1 or 2 minutes** to share about your specific congregation's history.

*From the very beginning of our church, there have been several values that came to shape who we are and why we exist. We hold these values close, and pray they come out of our hearts as we live in community together. You can write these down in the blanks on your worksheets.*

### 1. Church for the City

In our culture, we tend to see four different ways the church can posture itself toward the city.

First, there are churches against the city. A church that postures itself against the city has adopted a combative mentality. We build walls to keep the city out, only ever emerging to mount attacks.

Second, there are churches of the city. This kind of church adopts the identity of the city, thereby losing the unique and holy calling to be salt and light in the world. We have little to no discernment for how the city's values stand opposed to the teaching of Jesus.

The third posture are churches in the city. Here the overriding attitude toward the city is one of indifference. A church in the city shifts their focus inward, neglecting the mission of God to go and bless the world.

Lastly, there are churches for the city. As a church for the city, we maintain our unique identity as the people of God in the world, but we do so without retreating from the world. We actively go into the world and bless the city with the very presence of God.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

Since our inception, we have sought to be a church for the city, which is why we are named Frontline Church. Our name serves as a constant reminder that we are called to be on the front lines, engaging our city with the gospel and working for its good.

► Fill in the Blank

### 2. Inhabiting Tensions

We believe healthy churches inhabit tensions. In our polarized world, we often feel the pressure to pick sides, to define what “camp” we fall into. For instance, we might think we can either be a Spirit church or a Word church. We can either embrace God’s sovereignty or Man’s responsibility. Some might think that we have to choose between theological depth, or accessibility. We should either hold to ancient traditions or pursue modern innovations.

And the list goes on. But sometimes Scripture holds up a tension between two seemingly contradictory ideas. When that’s the case, we want to resist simply picking sides. This isn’t about passivity or moderation for its own sake. Instead, when the Scriptures present beauty and goodness in the tension, we want to live there. We don’t want to take an easy out when the Scriptures demand we walk the narrow path.

► Fill in the Blank

### 3. Integrated Theology

Theology is important to us at Frontline. It helps us to see God as he really is. You might see us read nerdy books or use big words, because we desire to learn more about God. But if we stop there, we miss out on so much more. Our beliefs can’t just live in our heads. They have to move down into our hearts. This is what we call integration. Integration aims to love God with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength.

*And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him.*

*“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. (Mt 22:35–38)”*

At Frontline, we believe that integrated theology shapes our loves and desires. It enables us to embody what we profess to believe. Theology moves from our head to our heart to our hands.



## TEACHER SIDEBAR

We will find ourselves anchored in the midst of cultural storms as theology becomes firmly rooted in our very identity and lives.

► Fill in the Blank

### 4. Communion With God and People

We were made for communion. Deep within each one of us, there is a desire to belong to something bigger than ourselves. This desire is built into our DNA, into the way God made us. The God who created us has eternally existed in community as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This Triune God created us in his image, with a longing for relationship with him.

At Frontline, we believe that communion with the living God leads to communion with one another. We can move toward each other because we've been brought together into one body in Jesus. We can welcome each other as family because we already belong. This kind of community drives us beyond the temporary, rapid, and easy. It asks us to abide in deep, lasting relationships.

## MISSION (15 MIN)

Our mission was birthed out of a desire to be a church shaped by these values. For us, the heart and soul of our church lies in our mission. This is why we exist. It drives all that we do. This is what we hold up as of first importance. The Mission of Frontline Church is...

► Fill in the Blank

### **Multiplying Gospel Communities that Love God, Love People, and Push Back Darkness**

Let me repeat that so you can write it down.

### **Multiplying Gospel Communities that Love God, Love People, and Push Back Darkness**

► Stress this point. The italicized portion is listed in their worksheet.

*Every aspect of our church is driven by this mission. It brings us together with one goal and mind. It reminds us why God has placed us here, and sets our eyes on what we collectively strive for.* It begins with multiplying gospel communities. We want to see gospel communities spread all over our city—communities that are together because of Jesus, under Jesus, with Jesus, and for Jesus.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

We are together because of his grace, under his authority, with his presence, and for his glory. Gospel communities should be marked by love for God and love for one another. This love drives us to move into the world and push back darkness by proclaiming the gospel and demonstrating the kingdom. Everything we do comes back to this mission.

There are four places we see this most clearly at Frontline. Again, you will write these down on your worksheets.

► Fill in the Blank

### 1. Sunday Gatherings

As we gather on Sundays, we engage as worshippers who grow in our love for God. During Sunday gatherings, the church comes together to worship Jesus, encourage one another, and intercede for the world. Week in and week out, we gather together to train our hearts to worship God above whatever else stole our attention, our hearts, and our worship that week. Each Sunday, we enter the new week by being reminded that we have been made new by the love of Jesus. We grow in our love for God as we hear the good news in singing, preaching, and sacrament.

Sunday gatherings enable us to love and encourage each other. We have become a family in Jesus. This new family identity is at the heart of the New Testament's commands to love one another, bear burdens with one another, encourage one another, confront each other, and so much more. When we confess sin or pray for each other during our gatherings, we practice loving each other. As we gather on Sundays, we engage as family.

In addition, Sunday gatherings are the leading edge of our mission to push back darkness. The Sunday gathering pushes back darkness as we invite our neighbors to come and hear the gospel. We push against our sinful urges to be consumers and to isolate ourselves. In praying for our city and world, we ask for God's kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven. As we gather on Sundays, we engage as missionaries.

► Fill in the Blank

### 2. Community Groups

What about the six days in between Sundays? One of the primary ways we engage our mission during the week is through community groups.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

Community Groups are local, diverse gospel communities that gather regularly for discipleship, care, and mission through discipleship groups, family meals, and missional gatherings.

Frontline is not just a church with community groups. Frontline is a church of community groups. Frontline community groups gather in three regular rhythms—discipleship groups, family meals, and missional gatherings. Each rhythm has its own function and goal.

Discipleship groups are gender-specific groups of three or four who gather regularly to know and encourage one another in their walk with Jesus. In healthy, gospel-centered discipleship groups, we grow in our love for God and each other.

Family meals are casual gatherings around a common table for the sake of community and gospel hospitality. As we linger over the meal, we listen, talk, and pray. These nights encourage love for each other, and give us opportunity for mission.

In missional gatherings, we gather for the sake of people far from God to proclaim the gospel and demonstrate the kingdom. They give us the opportunity to build relationships with those who don't follow Jesus and tell them how Jesus rescued us. They also give us the opportunity to care for the spiritual and physical needs of those in darkness around us.

► Fill in the Blank

### 3. City Partners

At Frontline, one of the ways we push back darkness in our city is by serving with our city partners. City partners are organizations thoughtfully chosen by each congregation as a place for missional impact. These partners are already doing the work to love people and push back darkness in our city. We want to wisely come alongside the places where we see God already working. As we serve the poor, marginalized, and needy in our communities, we build relationships within our city.

*Teacher Note:* Take **1 or 2 minutes** to identify your congregation's city partners and what kind of work they are doing in the city.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

► Fill in the Blank

### 4. Church Planting and Strengthening

We believe church planting and strengthening is one of the primary callings that God has given Frontline Church. Our world needs more healthy, gospel-centered churches engaging their cities and neighborhoods on mission. To that end, we give sacrificially to financially support church plants across the United States and the world. We build relationships with pastors and leaders in church plants. We provide training and resources for those who feel called to plant churches. We pray for and care for the health of pastors and leaders who are doing the hard work of planting churches. We are unashamedly a church-planting church.

In addition, we plant additional Frontline congregations across the OKC metropolitan area as God leads us. While maintaining a distinct, local uniqueness, all our congregations stand united as one church. We share one name, identity, vision, and mission. We work together and support one another. We are one church. But a Frontline congregation is not simply a “campus” of Frontline. Each Frontline congregation has their own elders, deacons, and leadership teams. There are unique initiatives we engage in our unique contexts. We are one church in multiple congregations.

As you experience the life of our church, in these four places and others, our hope is that you can start to see the way that our mission shapes everything we do as a church.

In addition to our mission and values we have five distinctives that we hold dear. The distinctives of Frontline Church are five core beliefs that we seek to embody. Write this down. Our distinctives are...

► Fill in the Blank

Gospel-Centered  
Bible-Honoring  
Kingdom-Focused  
Spirit-Filled  
Gender-Redeeming

Each distinctive describes a way of being. These beliefs are not unique to our church alone. However, we believe that God has called Frontline Church to faithfully embody these distinctives in this time and in this place. Through the remainder of our membership class, we will unpack each of these five distinctives, what they mean for the life of our church, and how we can seek to embody them together.

## EXERCISE: PRAYING FOR YOUR “THREE” (15 MIN)

- Keep track of time for people, either by setting a timer or keeping an eye on the clock.

### TEACHER SET UP (2 MIN)

How can you partner with us in multiplying gospel communities that love God, love people, and push back darkness? One way is to grow in engaging the unbelievers and unchurched in your life. For many people, the thought of engaging unbelievers with the gospel can feel overwhelming. But it is important to remember a few things. First, we are limited beings, bound by time and space. We can't be everywhere for everyone. Second, God often uses ordinary relationships with ordinary Christians to draw an unbeliever's heart to him. If you can be a friend, you can be on mission. Third, Christians can take small steps to more faithfully engage in mission.

To this end, we invite all of our members to commit to their “three.” These are three people within your sphere of influence who do not follow Jesus or are not connected to a local church. We ask everyone to pray daily for their “three” and engage them in intentional gospel relationships. Your “three” could be your family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc. To help you identify and begin praying for your “three,” work through the following exercise together at your table.

- Encourage people to think outside of their immediate family first.

### 1. Identify Your “Three” (3 Min)

Take 3 minutes to prayerfully select and write down the names of **three people in your life who do not follow Jesus or are not connected to a local church**. Whom would you most love to see become a disciple of Jesus? Who is your heart best shaped to reach for Jesus? If you are having trouble identifying three people, just write down as many as you can.

- There are blanks in their worksheet to write down their “Three.”

### 2. Engage Your Three (5 Min)

**Once you've each identified your “three,” pick just one of those three people to consider best how to engage them.** Take 5 minutes at your table to each answer in turn, out loud, the following questions posed by missiologist Alan Hirsch:

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

► Feel free to join a table and engage the discussion.

► Do not cut this step. This is one of the most important parts of this exercise.

- Am I in close proximity with this person to whom I feel called?
- Am I spending regular time with this person? If not, why not?
- Am I too busy to develop a meaningful relationship with this person? If so, how could I create margin for mission?

### 3. *Pray Together (3 Min)*

**Take 3 minutes to pray out loud for the people your table shared about.** Pray specifically for your relationship with them to grow, that God would give you creativity in how to spend regular time with them, and for God to provide opportunities for you to love them, serve them, and share the gospel with them.

## POST-EXERCISE / SESSION WRAP UP

Let's commit to continuing to pray for our "three" regularly. If you have started to attend a community group, be sure to share your "three" with your community group and invite them to join you in praying as well.





SESSION 2:

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# WORD & SPIRIT

# TEACHER REVIEW - SESSION 2

## PREPARING FOR SESSION 2

In this session, you will be helping participants to understand how we hold our Bible-Honoring and Spirit-Filled distinctives in godly tension in the life of our church. While these distinctives may seem to be at odds to some, we want participants in our class to see how both Word and Spirit are vital to healthy church life and impactful church ministry. We want to communicate clearly the ways that participants can start leaning into these distinctives right away in their lives.

If you are teaching this session, you will need to be prepared to:

- Lead an exercise on Word and Spirit churches and the participant's relationship with them
- Give practical advice around reading Scripture
- Explain the spiritual gift of prophecy with competency and confidence
- Briefly share a personal story about an encouraging prophetic word
- Lead an exercise on reading the Bible while listening to the Spirit

## BIG IDEAS

- The Tension of Word and Spirit Churches
- Submitting to the Scriptures
- Practical guidelines for reading the Bible:
  1. **Prioritize Communion**
  2. **Submit to the Word**
  3. **Learn the Context**
  4. **Look for Christ**
  5. **Make it a Habit**
  6. **Read with Others**
- Spiritual Gifts in the Church
- Engaging Prophecy through Listening Prayer:
  1. **Posture Yourself**
  2. **Invite the Spirit**
  3. **Don't Force it**
  4. **Test with Scripture**
  5. **Share**
- Sunday Liturgy

## **SESSION TIMELINE: 45 MIN TOTAL**

Word & Spirit Church with Exercise (7 min)

Being Bible-Honoring (7 min)

Being Spirit-Filled (10 min)

Liturgy (5 min)

Exercise: Reading the Bible (15 min)

# Session 2: Word & Spirit

FRONTLINE MEMBERSHIP CLASS

Questions

- (1) Which of these two columns are you more comfortable with or tend to emphasize more?
- (2) Which of these two columns are you more concerned about being neglected in the local church?

WORD	SPIRIT
Process .....	Event
Knowledge .....	Experience
Sermon .....	Worship
Intellect .....	Affections
Reformation .....	Revival
Obedience to God .....	Intimacy with God
Principles .....	Power
Justification .....	Sanctification
Faith in God .....	Love for God
Biblically-Informed Wisdom .....	Spiritually-Imparted Discernment

New Testament Gifts

Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:1-11

- Service
- Teaching
- Encouragement
- Generosity
- Leadership
- Acts of mercy
- Words of wisdom
- Words of knowledge
- Faith
- Gifts of Healings
- Miracles
- Prophecy
- Discerning between spirits
- Tongues
- Interpretation of tongues
- Helping
- Administering

We can grow in the way we read Scripture by:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_

Guidelines for practicing listening prayer:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_

✓ Flip page for exercise.



## Exercise: Reading the Bible

The following exercise aims to help you practice embracing both Word and Spirit in your daily life. In the Bible, we find unity of Word and Spirit. The Bible is the very Word of God. Likewise, the Bible was inspired by the Spirit of God. We are going to open our Bibles together and walk through an exercise to help us learn to study the words of the Bible and listen to the Spirit as we read the Bible.

### Part 1: Read the Passage

Have a volunteer read Ephesians 3:14-19 aloud for the entire class.

*For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph 3:14–19)*

### Part 2: Listening Prayer

Each person should spend 3 minutes in prayer, quietly listening, and asking the Spirit to speak. As you listen, write down any pictures or impressions God seems to bring to mind. Reflect on the following questions.

- ▶ What word or phrase stands out to you in the passage?
- ▶ As you reflect on the passage, what are you thinking or feeling about God?
- ▶ What might the Spirit be saying to you? What might God want you to know, do, or become?

### Part 3: Study

Take 3 minutes to read back through the passage yourself and look for the three things listed here.

As you read on your own, try to write down at least one thing from each category.



**A star:** anything that shines out in the passage and draws attention—it can be something important, or something that strikes you



**A question mark:** anything that is hard to understand—something that you would like to be able to ask the author about



**An arrow:** anything that applies personally to your everyday life

One-to-One Bible Reading: A Simple Guide for Every Christian, David Helm

### Part 4: Sharing

Take 5 minutes to each share in turn at your table what the Spirit highlighted for you through this exercise.

You can share a star, a question mark, or an arrow—or any other general sense from the Spirit you are willing to share.



## SESSION 2: WORD & SPIRIT (45 MIN, 9:50-10:35a)

- Introduce yourself briefly if this is your first session to teach.

### WORD & SPIRIT CHURCH WITH EXERCISE (7 MIN)

One of our values is our desire to be a church that inhabits tensions. We believe healthy churches inhabit tensions. When faced with biblical tension, we might be tempted to pick a ditch because it feels more comfortable and neatly wrapped. Yet, we believe that embracing all that the Scripture has for us will require us to embrace tensions. When God invites us to hold a healthy tension, we don't want to resolve it cheaply. We want to inhabit that tension.

In the church today, a passion for the Bible and a passion for the Holy Spirit can seem at odds with one another. Churches typically fall into one of these two camps. You have your "Word" churches, which usually prize doctrine and deep theology. They have a serious reverence towards God. Usually, they see "Spirit" churches as crazy and overly emotional. But on the other side, you have your "Spirit" churches, which prize passion, manifestations of the Spirit, and the freedom found in Christ. Usually, they see "Word" churches as quenching the Spirit and deadening the soul.

But when we look at the early church in the Bible, we see the Word and Spirit come together as one. At Frontline, we want to be a Word and Spirit church. The following exercise will challenge you to consider which side of this tension you tend to fall into to. As we recognize where we fall, we pray that God will grow us in how we inhabit this godly tension.

- Keep track of time for people, either by setting a timer or keeping an eye on the clock.

*Exercise Set-Up:* On your Worksheets, there are two columns which list what is typically emphasized in Word and Spirit churches. On your own, take 2 minutes to read through those two columns and answer the accompanying questions above them.

- These questions and the Word & Spirit lists are in their worksheet. However, it would be best practice to read the questions aloud.

**Questions:** (1) Which of these two columns are you more comfortable with or tend to emphasize more? (2) Which of these two columns are you more concerned about being neglected in the local church?

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

- These columns are for reference only. You don't need to read them aloud.

- The Reflection is not on the worksheet. Be sure to emphasize the instructions and question.

### WORD

Process  
Knowledge  
Sermon  
Intellect  
Reformation  
Obedience to God  
Principles  
Justification  
Faith in God  
Biblically-Informed Wisdom

### SPIRIT

Event  
Experience  
Worship  
Affections  
Revival  
Intimacy with God  
Power  
Sanctification  
Love for God  
Spiritually-Imparted Discernment

*Post-Exercise Reflection:* Did you choose the same column for both questions? If so, you can assume the opposite column is the one *you* are most in danger of neglecting.

Now, take 2 minutes to look at the column you did not choose, or the column you know you need to work on most. Circle one area in that column that you can commit to take a step to grow in.

We all have a temptation to one side of this tension or the other. So now, we want to step back and see what it would look like to more fully embrace both Word and Spirit.

## BEING BIBLE-HONORING (7 MIN)

How do we inhabit the tension of being a Bible-honoring and Spirit-filled church?

In order to grow as a Bible-honoring church, we have to gain a real sense of why Scripture matters. God tells his people that life is found in his word.

*... man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. (Deut 8:3)*

Christians turn to God's word again and again, because we find God there. In the Word of God, we see and receive the love of God. When we receive the Bible with eagerness, it begins to shape our vision of the good life. Not only our actions, but our imaginations become transformed by God's word. When we have a Bible-imagination, the things we love, hate, desire, and long for come from Scripture.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

Honoring the Bible means that the Bible has weight in our lives. The Bible gets first say when it comes to what we believe, how we worship, how we live our lives, what we see as good or praiseworthy, and how we evaluate what is beautiful or desirable. Honoring the Bible means that we learn to “speak Scripture” as our mother tongue. Scripture may not be the only language that we want fluency in. But before we speak in the language of politics, philosophy, science, or culture, we submit any and all other words to the Word of God. We don’t worship the Bible; we worship God. Yet, the God we worship has given us the Bible as his authoritative Word. So, we translate the Bible into every part of our lives.

However, many of us have never been taught how to spend time alone with God. Talking about Bible fluency only overwhelms. Reading the Bible becomes a real struggle that often makes us feel shame and embarrassment. We may easily get bored, distracted, or confused. The busyness of our day-to-day life prevents us from getting time alone. We don’t know where to begin or what to do. If that’s you, you are not alone.

## READING THE WORD

Because we may not have been taught to spend time alone with God, the Bible can be intimidating for us. It is a big book that is not always easy to read or understand. So what does it look like to grow as a Bible-honoring Christian in the way we read Scripture? We can grow in the way we read Scripture by starting with these six practices. You can write these down in the blanks.

► Fill in the Blank

### 1. Prioritize Communion

When we read the Bible, we are not just learning information about God. Instead, it is one of the primary ways we connect with God. We should come to the Bible with prayer and humility, knowing that the Spirit of God wants to shape us through it. Being unhurried and attentive here will make all the difference. Take time to hear how God might be specifically speaking to you at this moment.

► Fill in the Blank

### 2. Submit to the Word

As the Word of God, the Bible is the highest authority for our church. Before we turn to the voices of the world, we seek God’s



## TEACHER SIDEBAR

wisdom through his word. To be Bible-honoring people, we must bring ourselves underneath Scripture. It has the final say over our lives. We humbly and eagerly receive its teachings, corrections, and rebukes. As James 1:22 tells us, we must not be hearers of the word only, but doers of the word.

► Fill in the Blank

### 3. Learn the Context

Each book of the Bible was written in a particular context for a particular reason. When we are unaware of the context, we can take passages and make them mean something the author never intended. We have to look at a whole passage and ask who wrote it and why they wrote it. We must also recognize the genre of each work. Some Scriptures are poetry, while other parts are historical records, both of which should be interpreted differently.

► Fill in the Blank

### 4. Look for Christ

All of Scripture is about Jesus. To understand it fully, we need to listen to what it is saying about him. Jesus himself was quite explicit on this point. “You search the scriptures... it is they that bear witness about me” (Jn 5:39). The message of Scripture is only accurately and fully heard if we hear the message about Jesus in it. A fundamental question when reading any part of the Bible is, “What does this passage tell me about Jesus?”

► Fill in the Blank

### 5. Make It a Habit

God calls us to be people of the Book, who constantly have God’s word on our minds and hearts.

*This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. (Josh 1:8)*

The more and more we read the Bible, the more and more it makes sense to us. Some of you just need to start somewhere, maybe a chapter at a time. Don’t be discouraged if your grasp of certain words, phrases, and passages seems unclear after one reading. That’s actually how it is meant to be! We come to the Bible again and again, because there is always more to quench our thirst.

**6. Read With Others**

The Bible is the word of God for the people of God. It is meant to be read with others in community. We practice this distinctive together when we submit to the preaching of the word on Sundays. We also engage this in Community Groups when we study God's word in our discipleship groups. We don't want to just be Bible-honoring people, but we want to be a Bible-honoring church that strives to come under God's word together.

**BEING SPIRIT-FILLED (10 MIN)**

As we submit to God's word, we also want to be a Spirit-filled church. We believe that gospel ministry should be marked by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. As we rely on the Spirit, we expect to see him work in miraculous ways. We desire to see more people saved, healed, and changed by the work of the Spirit. We want our church to grow in the fruit of the Spirit. We want to surrender to the Spirit in every area of life. So how can we grow as a Spirit-filled church?

One way to grow in being Spirit-filled is by leaning into our spiritual gifts. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to each Christian for the good and upbuilding of the church. These gifts are demonstrations of the Spirit's presence among his people. Spiritual gifts are not personality traits, but they are the various ways that the Spirit works in and through the church. Some may be permanent, while others are circumstantial. Some may seem more supernatural, while others may seem less supernatural. However, all of them are given and empowered by the Spirit as he wills.

*Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Cor 12:4–7)*

We believe that all of the gifts mentioned in the New Testament are still active today, including tongues, healing, and prophecy. Scripture commands us to pursue all of the gifts because they demonstrate his love and kindness towards us.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

- Participant Worksheets include a list of gifts listed in the worksheet. Emphasize that point.

So how do we know what spiritual gifts we have? There are a variety of gifts mentioned in the New Testament. You can take a look at your worksheet for this session and see a list of those, however the New Testament lists were not meant to be exhaustive. They describe the multitude of ways that the Holy Spirit works among his people. You can't just take a test and figure it out.

At the end of the day, spiritual gifts are the ways we love others. The Bible encourages us to pursue them as ways to love one another, and as we do this, our spiritual gifts will naturally manifest themselves.

## PROPHETIC WORDS

- If you have a personal story of how you have been encouraged by a prophetic word from another Christian, consider briefly sharing that story here.

In Scripture, we see emphasis placed on the spiritual gift of prophecy. This gift in particular tends towards encouragement and edification within the church. In the New Testament, the purpose of the gift of prophecy is the building up of the church and the believer. (1 Cor 14:3-4). As such, we are all called to pursue and earnestly desire to prophesy.

*Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. (1 Cor 14:1)*

In the New Testament, prophecy is when a person communicates something that God has spontaneously brought to mind. It could be a word, a verse of scripture, an impression, a dream, or a picture. However, it does not carry the weight of Scriptural authority. When someone speaks a prophetic word today, it may contain errors. Therefore, prophecy should always come underneath the authority of Scripture and be submitted to the discernment of the church. At Frontline, we want to be a church that leans into the prophetic. The Spirit still speaks today, and we can hear his voice, if we listen. He speaks to us in and through the Scriptures, but he also speaks to us through other people for our upbuilding.

One way we can pursue this gift is by leaning into what we call "listening prayer." Listening prayer is being open-handed with God and attentively waiting for whatever he wants to say to us. Many times, the Spirit is speaking, but we aren't listening. Listening prayer simply postures our hearts to hear God speak. When we take time to stop and listen, he might give us a prophetic word.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

If listening prayer is new to you, don't worry—It's probably new for others in the room too. Here are a few guidelines for practicing listening prayer. Again, you can fill in the blank here.

► Fill in the Blank

### 1. Posture Yourself

Physical postures and practices can help to focus your attention on the moment. Perhaps this means kneeling with your face to the ground. Perhaps this looks like standing with open hands. There are a variety of physical postures that may be helpful.

► Fill in the Blank

### 2. Invite the Spirit

Briefly pray and invite the Holy Spirit to speak. Ask him questions like, "Is there a word of encouragement or comfort that you would like me to bring to anyone?" Or "Is there anything that you have been speaking to me about that I have ignored?"

► Fill in the Blank

### 3. Don't Force It

We won't receive a picture or impression every time we engage listening prayer. And that's okay. If you don't sense anything, don't be discouraged. Also, resist the temptation to force a picture in your head. We don't create prophetic words. We receive them from God.

► Fill in the Blank

### 4. Test With Scripture

If you do get a prophetic word, always test it with Scripture. The Spirit of God will never contradict what he has spoken in the word of God. This requires us to continually grow in our knowledge of the Bible. It is generally good practice to also seek the counsel and wisdom of our elders, especially when we are in doubt. They can help us know whether, with whom, and when to share something.

► Fill in the Blank

### 5. Share

If you receive a prophetic word for someone, share with them. As you share, avoid grand pronouncements or definitive language, like "thus sayeth the Lord." Instead, consider saying, "I have a sense..." or "I feel like God is saying..." You might get it wrong, so share with that sense of humility. At the same time, prophecy requires risk and faith. You might look silly. You might get it completely

wrong. But you have to be willing to fail so that God might powerfully use the gift of prophecy to build up the church.

As we faithfully seek to practice the gifts of the Spirit, and especially that we may prophecy, we believe that God will bless, grow, comfort, and build up our church into the image of Jesus Christ.

## LITURGY (5 MIN)

Weekly we encounter the beautiful union of Word and Spirit is in our liturgy. Liturgy is the intentional order and practices of our Sunday gatherings. Liturgy points us toward God's word, and it creates a space for the Spirit to move within us.

Some of us may associate liturgy with Roman Catholicism. Reciting prayers and receiving a benediction may seem rigid and inauthentic. But rather than mechanical repetition of pre-written words, we believe the Spirit uses liturgy to shape and form our hearts toward Jesus. When we recite creeds, stand for the reading of God's Word, and confess our sins together, we are training ourselves to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Even when we don't "feel" the words we are saying, liturgy speaks truth to our heart and recalibrates our affections.

Here are some common elements of our Sunday liturgy.

***Call to Worship.*** Beginning each of our services, the Call to Worship is an invitation to the feast of grace, to receive help from the presence of God. Through the reading of Scripture, the Spirit of God is calling us to worship him.

***Confession and Assurance.*** We confess our sins and our need for grace with one voice, followed by a proclamation of the forgiveness we have received through the sacrifice of Jesus. It teaches us how to repent, confess, and remember the gospel throughout our lives.

***Intercession.*** We pray for God's justice and goodness to be poured out on Christians, non-Christians, leaders, cities, and nations. Intercession teaches the believer how to participate in the mission of God through prayer.

***Benediction.*** Benediction comes from a Latin word meaning "blessing." It is a pastoral impartation of grace upon the people. Most often a passage of Scripture is read as a charge over the

► These liturgical elements are not in their worksheets.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

people of God before they are sent from the gathered body. The benediction blesses the people of God as they are sent on mission.

What does a church look like that inhabits this tension of Word and Spirit? Andrew Wilson describes it like this,

Imagine a service that includes healing testimonies and prayers of confession... Creeds that move the soul and rhythms that move the body. Imagine young men seeing visions, old men dreaming dreams, sons and daughters prophesying, and all of them coming to the same Table and then going on their way rejoicing. (Andrew Wilson, *Spirit and Sacrament*)

We pray that God makes us just such a church.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

► Keep track of time for people, either by setting a timer or keeping an eye on the clock.

► This passage is listed on their worksheet.

► Be prepared ahead of time to cue up some instrumental music for the moment.

## EXERCISE: READING THE BIBLE (15 MIN)

### TEACHER SET UP (2 MIN)

The following exercise aims to help you practice embracing both Word and Spirit in your daily life. In the Bible, we find unity of Word and Spirit. The Bible is the very Word of God. Likewise, the Bible was inspired by the Spirit of God. We are going to open our Bibles together and walk through an exercise to help us learn to study the words of the Bible and listen to the Spirit as we read the Bible.

Have a volunteer read Ephesians 3:14-19 aloud for the entire class.

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

### 1. *Listening Prayer* (3 Min)

**Each person should spend 3 *minutes* in prayer, quietly listening and asking the Spirit to speak.** As you listen, write down any pictures or impressions that it seems God brings to mind. Reflect on the following questions.

- What word or phrase stands out to you in the passage?
- As you reflect on the passage, what are you thinking or feeling about God?
- What might the Spirit be saying to you? What might God want you to know, do, or become?

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

- Keep track of time for people, either by setting a timer or keeping an eye on the clock.

## 2. Study (3 Min)

**Take 3 minutes to read back through the passage yourself and look for the three things listed here.** As you read on your own, try to write down at least one thing from each category.



**A star:** anything that shines out in the passage and draws attention—it can be something important, or something that strikes you



**A question mark:** anything that is hard to understand—something that you would like to be able to ask the author about



**An arrow:** anything that applies personally to your everyday life

One-to-One Bible Reading: A Simple Guide for Every Christian, David Helm

- Feel free to join a table and engage the discussion.
- If you notice tables are wrapping up early, feel free to bring them back sooner.

## 3. Sharing (5 Min)

**Take 5 minutes to each share in turn at your table what the Spirit highlighted for you through this exercise.** You can share a star, a question mark, or an arrow—or any other general sense from the Spirit you are willing to share.

## POST-EXERCISE / SESSION WRAP UP

You can continue to use this method as you try to make reading Scripture a habit. This method is especially fruitful to do with others, so you can share and learn from one another.

## BREAK (5 MIN, 10:35-10:40a)



SESSION 3:

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# GOSPEL & KINGDOM

# TEACHER'S REVIEW - SESSION 3

## PREPARING FOR SESSION 3

In this session, you'll be walking through how the story of the gospel is the story of God's kingdom come through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Our Gospel-Centered and Kingdom-Focused distinctives go hand-in-hand. We want to impress that the unity of the gospel and kingdom isn't just about an idea to believe in. Holding the gospel and kingdom in unity is a vital part of our very lives as Christians. You'll be teaching participants about three important ways we hold these two distinctives at Frontline Church.

If you are teaching this session, you will need to be prepared to:

- Introduce the congregational team and their roles with a printout and slide
- Lead a brief discussion to drive home the impact of Jesus' life on earth
- Define the Kingdom of God and the Gospel in clear and concise terms
- Confidently discuss how the sacraments are practiced at Frontline
- Lead an exercise on extending gospel hospitality to the outsider

## BIG IDEAS

- Defining the Kingdom of God
- The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus
- The unity of Gospel and Kingdom in our church life
  1. **Gospel Faith & Kingdom Works**
  2. **Gospel Hospitality & Kingdom Generosity**
  3. **Gospel Proclamation & Kingdom Demonstration**
- The Purpose of the Sacraments
- Explaining Baptism and Communion

## SESSION TIMELINE: 50 MIN TOTAL

Team Introduction (5 min)

The Kingdom of God with Discussion (7 min)

The Gospel & The Kingdom (15 min)

The Sacraments (5 min)

Exercise: Gospel Hospitality (15 min)

## Session 3: Gospel & Kingdom

### FRONTLINE MEMBERSHIP CLASS

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**The kingdom of God is wherever God is \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_ .**

Jesus came to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

He came to bring all things in submission to God  
through his own rule and reign.

**The kingdom was breaking into the world through the  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus.**

The gospel story is the kingdom story.

The message of the gospel and the message of the kingdom go hand-in-hand.

---

**How do we hold the unity of the gospel  
and the kingdom at Frontline?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

**The three purposes of the sacraments  
are:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

✓ *Flip page for exercise.*



## Exercise: Gospel Hospitality

Gospel hospitality is one of the most practical ways in which we embody the gospel and serve as a sign and foretaste of the coming kingdom (1 Peter 4:7–9). In both Sunday gatherings and community groups, we are called to move toward people, greet them warmly, and have thoughtful conversations.

*But who do we prioritize?*

**Ed Welch suggests that we should prioritize greeting in our gatherings in the following order ➡**

1. The visitor (who Scripture calls the “foreigner” or “alien”) comes first.
2. The visitor who returns comes next.
3. The less popular, the introverts, the marginalized, or those sitting alone come next.
4. Then come the children.
5. Good friends are interspersed through these greetings, but they are left for later if time is short.

### Part 1: Learning to Prioritize

Work through the following questions with your table in 5 minutes.

1. What are some reasons why the order listed above might be best when moving toward others and greeting them on Sundays and in community groups?
2. Why might you personally be reluctant to move toward visitors?
3. Who in your life is one step ahead of you in knowing people? What does that person do that you could learn from?

### Part 2: Learning to Engage

Work through the following exercise with your table in 3 minutes. **Don’t look at the chart on the right until you’re done brainstorming!**

- ✓ Brainstorm together some examples of a helpful greeting and initial questions you could ask a complete stranger when greeting them on a Sunday or in a group.
- ✓ Afterward, compare your answers with the suggestions on the chart.

### Part 3: Prayer

Close your time by praying aloud together at the table that God would encourage and equip you to pursue gospel hospitality.

#### Having Thoughtful Conversations

The following questions start with facts of public record. Gradually, over time, we can move deeper.

- Hi, my name’s \_\_\_\_\_. What’s your name? How long have you been attending Frontline? How did you find your way to Frontline?
- Where did you grow up? Is your family still there? Do you see them often?
- Do you have any kids? Tell me something special about each of them.
- What’s something challenging about your current job? What’s something you enjoy?
- What do you like to do for fun? Do you have any hobbies?
- How is school? What are you studying? Has there been anything you’ve especially enjoyed this semester? What are you looking forward to most over the break?
- What are you celebrating? What are you facing that’s hard? How are you doing? How are you (really) doing?
- What’s been weighing on your mind lately? How can I pray for you?



## SESSION 3: GOSPEL & KINGDOM (50 MIN, 10:40-11:30a)

- Introduce yourself briefly.

### TEAM INTRODUCTION (5 MIN)

*Teacher Note:* To kick off this session, take a few minutes to introduce the team at your congregation. **At a minimum, you should have a printout or slide with photos, names, and titles.** Be sure to point out those people who are present at the class.

In addition, if time allows, you could highlight one specific team member. Bring them up for a mini interview and invite them to briefly answer questions like these:

- Tell us a bit about your family (spouse, kids)
- What do you like to do outside of ministry?
- What led you to begin working in vocational ministry?

Make sure the team member knows ahead of time that they will be spotlighted and what specific questions will be asked.

### THE KINGDOM OF GOD WITH DISCUSSION (7 MIN)

- Try not to take more than 2 minutes on this discussion.

- Examples include: 9/11, D-Day, Y2K

*Discussion Question:* Can you think of any one-time events that have had a massive impact on shaping culture or the world? How did this momentary event transform the world so quickly?

Even though Jesus spent only three years in the public limelight, the world was transformed through his ministry. While we can point to historical events in our lifetimes that define a generation, the world has been defined by the person of Jesus for the past 2000 years. How did this happen? What did Jesus teach that compelled people to leave everything behind to follow him? Jesus proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom.

*Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*  
(Mark 1:14–15)

- Stress this point. The italicized sentence is listed in the participant worksheets, and the underlined words are fill in the blank.

Write this down. *The kingdom of God is wherever God is recognized and received as king.* But because of sin, creation has been bent from God's good design.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

- Stress this point. The italicized sentence is listed in the participant worksheet.

Psalm 2 tells us that “the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain; the kings of the earth set themselves ... against the LORD and his Anointed” (Ps 2:1-2). Humanity’s goal in our sin is to “tear off [God’s] bonds” and deny his good order. What does it look like when we cast off the bonds of God’s kingship? God’s authority and will are rejected, filling creation with chaos and futility. That is where God intervened. *Jesus came to establish the kingdom of God on earth. He came to bring all things in submission to God through his own rule and reign.*

Throughout his ministry, Jesus constantly taught about the kingdom of God—what it is like and how to enter into it. He taught about how God’s kingship would transform our lives and our communities. In fact, the book of Acts tells us that he spent his final days on earth talking about the kingdom of God.

But the kingdom of God is not what we expected. Jesus was born into poverty and obscurity. He taught that the kingdom belonged to the meek, the lowly, and the poor. In God’s kingdom, the first would be the last; the greatest would be the servant of all. Jesus had no army, but would rather bless his enemies than slaughter them. If Jesus was bringing a kingdom, it sure didn’t look like it.

## THE GOSPEL AND THE KINGDOM (15 MIN)

- Stress this point. The italicized sentence is listed in the participant worksheets, and the underlined words are fill in the blank.

The kingdom of God would not come through might or power or violence. *Instead, the kingdom was breaking into the world through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.*

In his life, Jesus took on a body and became fully man while remaining fully God. He lived on earth as a man without sin. Wherever Jesus went, the enemy lost his grip on creation. Jesus healed the sick, forgave sins, cast out demons, and raised the dead. Each miracle of Jesus was a bold statement: “the kingdom of God has arrived—darkness beware.” The good news that we call the gospel is that God had come in Jesus to defeat his enemies, rescue his people, and create a new kingdom where his rule and reign would always be recognized.

In his death, Jesus took the penalty for our sins. On the cross, he suffered as our substitute, reconciling us back to God. However, Jesus wasn’t the victim but the victor. By his death, he overthrew all other authorities and established his rule on the earth.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

He was raised up as king on the cross. This is why the Gospel writers highlight the royal images of the crucifixion. Jesus was given a splendid purple robe. He held a reed as his royal scepter. A crown of thorns was placed on his head. The Gospels nail the irony: he was crowned as king of all through humiliation and mockery.

In his resurrection, Jesus literally rose from the dead and is alive today. New creation life is now invading the world. Through his rising, Jesus declared to the world that death had been defeated. He ascended into heaven and sat at the right hand of God's throne. From heaven, he rules and reigns as king, continuing to establish God's kingdom, until that day when it covers the whole earth. We long for the day when King Jesus physically returns to the earth to restore all things in a new heavens and new earth.

► Stress this point. The italicized sentence is listed in the participant worksheet.

Here is the point: *the message of the gospel and the message of the kingdom go hand-in-hand. The gospel story is the kingdom story.* The unity of the gospel and kingdom is not just an idea to believe. The gospel story of the kingdom of God means everything for our life. Let's look at three ways that the gospel and the kingdom go hand-in-hand. You can write these down in the blanks as we go.

► Fill in the blank.

### 1. Gospel Faith & Kingdom Works

**Gospel Faith.** We believe that the good news of Jesus impacts every area of our lives. It addresses our sins, wounds, and weaknesses. It meets us in our guilt, shame, and loneliness. The gospel is not just the message by which we come to faith in Jesus. It is the very essence of the Christian life. We live by faith in Jesus. Faith is recognizing the truth of who Jesus is and trusting completely in him.

But how do we come to place our faith in Jesus and others do not? Is it because we are smarter than others, or more righteous than others, or less broken than others? No, we come to faith in Jesus because of his grace in election. Before we had done anything good or bad, before we existed, before creation itself, God unconditionally loved us and chose us to be his sons and daughters.

There is nothing we can do to earn God's grace. Rather, the gospel drives us to look away from ourselves and place all of our hope in Jesus and his work alone.

We want to spend our whole lives learning to more fully lean into the grace of Jesus by faith.

**Kingdom Works.** At the same time, if Jesus is truly our king, he has the authority to tell us how to live. We can't say that we trust in Jesus as king, yet continue to live as our own king. To be a follower of Jesus, you have to actually follow Jesus. This doesn't mean perfection. Nor does this mean that we somehow earn God's favor by being good. But, faith always leads to works.

*What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?... For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead. (Jas 2:14, 26)*

Under the authority of Jesus, we have been called into a new way of living. The kingdom impacts our lifestyle, speech, marriages, singleness, sexuality, parenting, and relationships. Our counter-cultural ethic is a witness to the power and goodness of the kingdom of God.

► Fill in the blank.

## 2. Gospel Hospitality & Kingdom Generosity

**Gospel Hospitality.** We believe that, because of the gospel, we have been welcomed into God's family, into God's house. Jesus loved us when we least deserved it. He died and rose again to bring us near. By the Spirit he adopts us as sons and daughters. He calls us to display that same love and hospitality toward one another (Eph 2:13–19).

We prioritize gospel hospitality in our Sunday gatherings and in our community groups. We look for the visitor, the newcomer, and the outsider to greet, engage, and introduce them to community. This kind of hospitality has the opportunity to change lives.

Every time we gather there may be people among us who have never experienced the love of God. Because of the welcome that we have received in the gospel, our welcome to others may be the first taste of the gospel they truly get.

**Kingdom Generosity.** God gave first and best in offering us life through his Son. King Jesus was so generous that he “emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant” for our sake. (Phil 2:7) Even more, God actually gave us the righteousness of Christ in exchange for our sin.



## TEACHER SIDEBAR

Jesus took on everything we deserve, and we get everything Jesus deserves. We want all of our lives, even our finances, to be a generous response back to God's generosity—to see his Kingdom come and flourish among us.

*Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Cor 9:7)*

We approach giving in three primary ways: tithes, alms, and offerings. Tithes, meaning a tenth in Hebrew, are regular financial gifts which support the everyday, ongoing needs of the church. Alms are intentional gifts that go above and beyond tithes which bring relief to the poor and most vulnerable in society. Offerings are occasional gifts to meet specific needs, where the church rallies around a specific gospel cause locally or globally.

You will have a chance to engage each of these types of giving in the life of our church.

We ask each member of Frontline to commit to regular financial giving to further the mission God has given us in our city and the world. In the end, our desire is for every believer to experience the joy and blessing that comes with giving.

► Fill in the blank.

### 3. Gospel Proclamation & Kingdom Demonstration

**Gospel Proclamation.** Gospel proclamation pushes back darkness by pointing people to the only good news that can save them. We are called to build relationships with those far from God and look for opportunities to tell them about the one who has rescued us. Pushing back darkness means opening our mouths to talk about what God has done for us in Jesus.

*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Pet 2:9)*

**Kingdom Demonstration.** Through kingdom demonstration, we put our hands to the plough, not wearying of doing good as Jesus brings the kingdom of God. The church is not a “lifeboat” for Christians to get off the sinking ship of the world. The church is a place where the kingdom is present in the world. We care about the spiritual and physical needs of those in darkness around us.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

We seek to serve our city with the light of Christ. We move toward our neighbors who are poor or are considered outsiders. The light of the gospel works in both word and action. We are called to take action to bring God's good order, life, and goodness to a chaotic world. In this way, the gospel community adorns the gospel word.

*Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. (1 Pet 2:12)*

### SACRAMENTS (5 MIN)

One of the places where we see the union between gospel and kingdom is in the sacraments. The sacraments are sacred acts of worship that Jesus commanded for all Christians. In baptism and communion, the physical and spiritual come together to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

Sacraments serve three purposes. Write these down:

► Fill in the blank.

**Sacraments are Signs of Grace.** Sacraments are visible signs of invisible grace. They are highly symbolic rituals that represent the benefits we have experienced through the gospel. In the rituals of the sacraments, we physically reenact the climactic moments of the gospel. We tangibly and physically experience invisible spiritual realities.

► Fill in the blank.

**Sacraments are Means of Grace.** When we engage the sacraments through faith, God has promised to help us, sustain us, assure us, and work in us through them. In the sacraments, we come expecting God to meet us with his grace.

► Fill in the blank.

**Sacraments are Markers of Grace.** Sacraments mark us out as citizens of the kingdom of God. We receive a new identity through faith in the gospel of Jesus. Through baptism and communion, God sets us apart and declares us his own. The sacraments reorient how we see ourselves, others, and the world.

### *Baptism*

Baptism is the initial step of the Christian life, the first act of faith and repentance. It is the primary way a person identifies themselves as a follower of Jesus in the world. In the Bible, whenever a person comes to faith in Jesus, they are immediately baptized in water.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

Baptism serves as a physical sign of their intention to embrace the good news of Jesus. In baptism, a professing believer makes a public commitment to follow Jesus and is fully immersed in water. The act of immersion embodies our new spiritual reality: we have died to our old way of life, and have been raised to a new life in Jesus (Rom 6:3–4).

When we are baptized, God speaks over us that we are his children. It is the way God visibly displays what he has done inside us. Throughout our lives, our baptism is a constant reminder of the promises that God has made toward us.

### *Communion*

To strengthen our faith and nourish our souls, Jesus gave us the sacrament of communion, also called the Eucharist or the Lord's Supper.

Unlike baptism, communion is to be regularly practiced again and again throughout the Christian life. We celebrate communion each Sunday at Frontline. For those who have taken the initial step of faith and repentance in baptism, the Lord's Supper is a means to remember and receive the love and grace of Jesus anew (1 Cor 11:23–26).

The bread is a tangible symbol of the broken body of Jesus for us. The wine is a tangible symbol of the shed blood of Jesus. Each week, as followers of Jesus eat the bread and drink the wine, we actually commune with Jesus and feast on his presence. But further, as we practice this habit together, we also have fellowship and union with one another (1 Cor 10:16–17).

Communion is a faith meal for baptized followers of Jesus. If someone has come to faith in Jesus but hasn't been baptized since, we would call them to submit to the initiatory sign of baptism first. Whereas baptism symbolizes our entrance into the Christian faith, communion symbolizes our ongoing need for Jesus. Jesus is both the author and the perfecter of our faith. The sacraments are one of the ways that Jesus continues to meet us, sustain us, and keep us until he returns to finally perfect the work he began in us.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

# EXERCISE: GOSPEL HOSPITALITY (15 MIN)

► Keep track of time for people, either by setting a timer or keeping an eye on the clock.

► These bullet points are listed on their worksheet.

► Feel free to join a table and engage the discussion.

## TEACHER SET UP (2 MIN)

Gospel hospitality is one of the most practical ways in which we embody the gospel and serve as a sign and foretaste of the coming kingdom (1 Pet 4:7–9). In both Sunday gatherings and community groups, we are called to move toward people, greet them warmly, and have thoughtful conversations. *But who do we prioritize?*

Ed Welch suggests that we should prioritize greeting in our gatherings in the following order:

1. The visitor (what Scripture calls the “foreigner” or “alien”) comes first.
2. The visitor who returns comes next.
3. The less popular, the introverts, the marginalized, or those sitting alone come next.
4. Then come the children.
5. Good friends are interspersed through these greetings, but they are left for later if time is short.

## 1. Learning To Prioritize (5 Min)

**Work through the following questions with your table in 5 minutes.**

1. What are some reasons why the order listed above might be best when moving toward others and greeting them on Sundays and in community groups?
2. Why might you personally be reluctant to move toward visitors?
3. Who in your life is one step ahead of you in knowing people? What does that person do that you could learn from?

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

► In their worksheet, there is a chart with some suggested answers. Encourage them to NOT look at the chart until they are done brainstorming.

► Don't skip this step! Ideally, groups can pray at their table. But if the class is running behind, feel free to pray for the class.

### 2. *Learning To Engage* (3 Min)

**Work through the following exercise with your table in 3 minutes.**

- Brainstorm together some examples of a helpful greeting and initial questions you could ask a complete stranger when greeting them on a Sunday or in a group.
- Afterwards, compare your answers with the suggestions on the chart (*See worksheet*).

### 3. *Prayer* (3 Min)

**Close your time by praying aloud together at the table that God would encourage and equip each of you to pursue gospel hospitality.**

## POST-EXERCISE / SESSION WRAP UP

As we engage Sunday mornings and community groups, let's try to move towards others, especially those who we do not know or have never seen before. Let us have a kingdom mindset as we gather together.



SESSION 4:

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**GENDER**

# TEACHER'S REVIEW - SESSION 4

## PREPARING FOR SESSION 4

In this session, we will give the participants a robust, positive Christian vision for gender that stems from God's work in Creation. Our Gender-Redeeming distinctive is not the result of cultural reactivity or a desire to be relevant, it is a connected to the very core of what it means to be a human. We want to honor how God has made both Man and Woman in his image; two genders united in shared glory. We also want to understand how God created Man and Woman differently as a gift to themselves, to each other, and to creation. The differences are divinely ordered, purposeful, and glorious. Aside from a theology of gender, you will be explaining how our Gender-Redeeming distinctive impacts our life as a church.

If you are teaching this session, you will need to be prepared to:

- Give a compelling and unapologetic case for the biblical vision of gender
- Stress the goodness of masculinity and femininity
- Lean into how gender roles in marriage points to Christ and the Church
- Explain the offices of elder and deacon, including why eldership is limited to men only while the diaconate is open to men and women
- Lead an exercise on how both authority and submission practically come to bear on our life

## BIG IDEAS

- A Robust, Biblical Vision of Gender
  1. **The Purpose of Gender**
  2. **The Unity of Gender**
  3. **The Differences of Gender**
  4. **The Gift of Gender**
- The Unique Design and Calling of Men and Women
- Gender Roles Within Marriage as a Picture of Christ and the Church
- Men and Women in the Church as the Family of God
- Leadership in the Family of God
  1. **Elders**
  2. **Deacons**



## **SESSION TIMELINE: 45 MIN TOTAL**

A Biblical Vision of Gender (7 min)

What Does It Mean to Be A Man and A Woman (7 min)

Gender and Marriage (5 min)

Gender and the Church (10 min)

Exercise: Submission and Authority (15 min)

## Session 4: Gender

### FRONTLINE MEMBERSHIP CLASS

#### A biblical vision of gender:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Can you see any ways in which your understanding of gender is shaped more by the world or your past than by what God blesses in men and women?

**The man had a unique responsibility within the world to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.**

Masculinity is oriented toward self-sacrificial initiative that cultivates and guards a space where growth and flourishing are possible.

#### The first woman was created to bring

\_\_\_\_\_ and  
\_\_\_\_\_ to a weary world.

A “helper” supplies strength and life where it is lacking. In the Old Testament, this word is used dozens of times—only twice for women, with the vast majority of other uses referring to God.

**Marriage points outside of itself as a picture of \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_.**

#### Offices of leadership in the local church:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

✓ *Flip page for exercise.*



## Exercise: Submission and Authority

David Powlison reminds us that in various areas of life, we are all called to either submission or authority: "All of us are called to major on submission within some relationships and to major on initiating love within others." In light of this dual reality, work through the following exercise with your table.

### Part 1: Identify Where You Lead and Follow

The following chart lists various Scriptures where God speaks about human authority in different areas of our lives.

Take 3 minutes to read through the chart silently. Circle those Scriptures that specifically apply to you, in an area where you are either called to lead or follow. In some areas, you may be called to both lead and follow (e.g., you *have* parents, and you *are* a parent).

### Part 2: Discuss Together

Take 5 minutes to discuss the following questions with your table.

1. In what ways has God called you to *lead* others? How can you increasingly lead in a way that honors God's heart for those under your care?
2. In what ways had God called you to *follow* others? How can you grow in reflecting Christ to those placed over you?

### Part 3: Pray Together

Take 3 minutes to pray for one another to lead and follow in ways that honor Jesus.

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE		CALLED TO LEAD	CALLED TO FOLLOW
FAMILY		Do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (Eph 6:4)	Honor your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise), that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land. (Eph 6:2-3)
MARRIAGE		Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. (Eph 5:25)	Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. (Eph 5:22)
CHURCH		[Elders], shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. (1 Peter 5:2-3)	Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. (Heb 13:17)
WORK		Masters, treat your [servants] justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven. (Col 4:1)	Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. (Col 3:23-24)
GOVERNMENT		For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad... He is God's servant for your good... He is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. (Rom 13:3-4)	Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good." (1 Pet 2:13-14)



## SESSION 4: GENDER (45 MIN, 11:30a-12:15p)

### A BIBLICAL VISION OF GENDER (7 MIN)

For 20 years, Frontline Church has been committed to being a Gender-Redeeming church. Gender-Redeeming isn't a priority for us because we want to jump on a bandwagon of cultural "hot takes." We believe our gender is an essential part of who we are as men and women. Gender is a gift from God to us, hard-wired into our humanity. It speaks loudly about who we are and what God made us for.

There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendors. (C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*)

As we explore the Bible's teaching on gender, we are standing on holy ground. As image-bearers, each one of us has been given immense value and worth. We believe that embracing and embodying God's good vision for gender leads to flourishing in the home, church, and world.

When Jesus taught about gender, he regularly pointed us back to the very beginning of the Bible, to Genesis 1 and 2. He affirmed a concept of gender that finds its very roots in creation. When we look at the creation of man and woman in the beginning, a few big ideas begin to emerge. There are four main ideas we want to highlight from the biblical vision of gender. Write these in the blanks as we go.

► Fill in the blank

#### 1. The Purpose of Gender

In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, he made humans as the pinnacle of his creation. Humanity was designed to be different from all other created things. They were to be the image of God.

This means that, in the beginning, our purpose was to reflect who God is in all his beauty and glory. One of the ways that God intends for humans to reflect his glory is through our gender.

*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” (Gen 1:27–28)*

God did not create a generic, genderless human being. From the beginning God chose to make male and female in his image. Both male and female are important to God’s vision of humanity.

► Fill in the blank

## 2. The Unity of Gender

God’s intention for humanity is for male and female to be united together, sharing their glory as image bearers of God. Godly unity is where the Bible chooses to start our story. When we forget the unity of man and woman, darkness and evil follow—evils like subjugation or manipulation. In reaction, we may embrace a polarized view of the sexes that only serves to reinforce the enmity between men and women. However, Scripture wants us to see men and women united together in dignity, humanity, equality, and shared mission.

► Fill in the blank

## 3. The Differences of Gender

Man and woman are united in their glory as humans, but they both carry unique engendered glory as well. When we look at Genesis 1, Scripture highlights all the glorious unity of man and woman. When we look at Genesis 2, Scripture highlights the beautiful diversity of man and woman.

In Genesis 2, when Adam first catches a glimpse of Eve, he cries out in joy and delight, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh...” In the woman, the man doesn’t see an enemy. Nor does he see a copy of himself. Rather, he sees a beautiful image bearer of God—one who is like him but with beautiful differences. He sees someone he can wholeheartedly embrace without shame. In the beginning, human relationships were enriched by uniting what was different.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

► Fill in the blank

► This reflection question is in the participant worksheet. Pose it as a rhetorical question they can reflect on at a later time.

► Stress this point. The italicized sentence is listed in the participant worksheets, and the underlined words are fill in the blank.

► Stress this point. The italicized sentence is listed in the participant worksheets.

### 4. The Gift of Gender

It is good to be a man. It is good to be a woman. Our gender, male and female, is first and foremost a blessed reality. The good gift of God over male and female is a shared glory. Men and women are united in their humanity, and yet distinct in their gender. They fit together in their differences and fit together in their shared glory. In God's grand creation, men and women are equal in value and dignity but not interchangeable or the same. The differences are divinely ordered and glorious. God works through the different callings and designs of men and women to bring order, beauty, and truth into the world. He redeems and works out our shared calling through our beautiful differences. This is his gift to creation!

*Reflection Question:* Can you see any ways in which your understanding of gender is shaped more by the world or your past than by what God blesses in men and women?

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A MAN? (7 MIN)

The first man was created from the ground and was given this task: to cultivate and protect the beautiful garden God had created.

*The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. (Gen 2:15)*

Write this down. *The man had a unique responsibility within the world to work and keep.* The man is charged to defend and cultivate the garden, working to see its good, godly order flourish on the earth. The man is given a holy calling to serve as a watchman over creation. He is designed to guard the garden, his wife, his future children, and the world they are building.

In other words, the man is given a fatherly calling over creation. This doesn't make men better than women, but it does give them a unique responsibility to initiate, lead, protect, and serve as those who will give an account to God. *Masculinity is oriented toward self-sacrificial initiative that cultivates and guards a space where growth and flourishing are possible.*

Jesus, as a man, fully embodied God's vision for masculinity. He was neither effeminate nor macho. He was tough yet tender. As a carpenter, he was strong and worked with his hands. As a teacher, he was compassionate and gentle. He boldly confronted religious leaders. Yet he took the place of a servant to wash his disciples' feet.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

Jesus' masculinity was rooted in who God made men to be. As our vision for masculinity comes in line with God's vision, we begin to see that Jesus himself is the perfect example of godly masculinity. Masculinity isn't something of which men need to repent. It is something men are charged to embrace, as they bring their masculinity under the authority of Jesus. As men stand firm in biblical masculinity like Jesus, it will bring blessing to those around them. This is why the Bible charges men to recapture the beautiful picture of godly masculinity.

*Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. (1 Cor 16:13-14)*

Men, God has called you to take up your masculinity and lay down your lives for the good of those around you.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A WOMAN?

► Stress this point. The italicized sentence is listed in the participant worksheets, and the underlined words are fill in the blank.

Again, write this down. *The first woman was created as a helper for the man, to bring life and rest to a weary world.*

*Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." ... The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. (Gen 2:18, 3:20)*

► Stress this point. The italicized sentence is listed in the participant worksheets.

The woman was made to be a helper "fit" or suitable for the man. In Scripture, a "helper" is not a personal assistant. A "helper" *supplies strength and life where it is lacking. In the Old Testament, this word, ezer, is used dozens of times: only two times for women, with the vast majority of other uses referring to God himself.* Rather than being degrading, this word demonstrates the unique calling of women. Women are biological, relational, and cultural life-givers. They bring a sense of peace and rest that makes us call out like Adam, "At last!" Adam is called to protect, but without Eve, there isn't much worth protecting.

Women were made to image God's life-giving and life-sustaining work in the world, and he wrote this reality into their very bodies. Women create, multiply, nurture, and transform. They bring forth life—yes, sometimes physically from their bodies—but, more broadly, with the whole of their lives. A woman's ability to be "life-giving" is not limited to her childbearing years.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

By giving their lives away for the blessing and benefit of those around them, spiritual mothers point us to the heart of God, who first gave all of himself to offer us life.

Femininity is oriented towards life-giving receptivity that provides strength and rest to the weary world. Womanhood points us to the core of what it means to be human: we were made to give and receive love, to be entirely transformed by it, and to see that love bring forth new life. The Christian life is bound up in a love that multiplies and bears fruit. When rightly ordered under Christ's authority, womanhood becomes a gift to the body of Christ and to the world.

### GENDER AND MARRIAGE (5 MIN)

Men and women are called to live all of their lives embracing and embodying the gift of their gender. As we obey God, walk in faith, and grow in maturity, we do all of those things as either a man or a woman. When we relate to God or each other, we do so as gendered beings. This is most clearly seen in the covenant of marriage, where man and woman are brought together as one.

► Stress this point. The italicized sentence is listed in the participant worksheets, and the underlined words are fill in the blank.

Fill in the blank here. *Marriage points outside of itself as a picture of the union between Christ and the Church.* In light of the beautiful differences in our gender, there are distinct roles that a man and woman fulfill if they are called to marriage. God intends that a husband and wife love and serve one another as a picture of how Christ and the Church love and serve one another. Ephesians 5 explores the deeper meaning that is hard-wired into every marriage.

### Wife

Corresponding to the woman's ability to give life and rest, a married woman is called to bring peace and strength to her husband, as well as joyfully submit to her husband's leadership—just as the Church submits to Jesus. A wife is called to follow the Church's example of inviting, receiving, and following the leadership of Jesus. In this submission, she is likewise following Christ's example, who willingly and beautifully submitted to his Father, though equal to him in dignity, value, and worth. A wife is called to partner with her husband to see their family glorify God.



## TEACHER SIDEBAR

She has both a unique voice as well as gifts that should be honored and cultivated in the marriage, under her husband's leadership.

Since this submission flows from the image of God and illustrates Christ and the Church, it should never devalue, silence, or subjugate women. A wife is not called to follow her husband no matter what. A wife should never follow her husband into sin. Rather, she is intended to follow him as he follows Christ.

### *Husband*

Corresponding to the man's calling to work and keep, a married man is given the responsibility to love, protect, and lead his wife, just as Christ loves, protects, and leads the Church. A husband is called to follow Christ's example and lay down his own life for the good of his wife. The only way a husband can follow Christ's example is also by following the Church's example—submitting himself to Christ's leadership first. He should spend his life in service to his bride, putting her wellbeing and preferences above his own. He should create an environment where his wife can flourish in her calling as a woman.

A husband's leadership should never be oppressive or abusive in any way. He is never called to subjugate or dominate his wife, for that would dishonor Christ's example of servant leadership.

Marital tyranny misrepresents the God who created marriage as a sign of his own love. Rather, a husband should relate to his wife as an image-bearer of God with dignity, value, and worth, who gives life and rules the family alongside him.

## **BEING A GENDER-REDEEMING CHURCH (10 MIN)**

If Frontline Church fully embraced being a gender-redeeming church, we would look and feel different from the world. Instead of perpetuating the "battle of the sexes", we would be ambitious to "outdo one another in showing honor." Men would take up the responsibility to protect and lead, so that those around them might grow into their own godly callings. Women would boldly step into their calling to give rest and life where it is lacking, providing blessing and wisdom that refines and beautifies their family and church.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

► Stress this point. The italicized sentence is listed in the participant worksheets, and the underlined words are fill in the blank.

Men and women are called to value each other as they serve and live in community together. This is why the church is called the family of God. Women and men in the church relate to one another as family.

*Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity. (1 Tim 5:1)*

When we have a healthy view of gender, we can begin to interact with one another first and foremost as brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters. As we live in a gender-redeeming community, the glory of God will be displayed, and both men and women will flourish.

So if the church is the family of God, how is it intended to function? *As the household of God, two offices of leadership have been ordained in the Church, namely elders and deacons.* A mature man or woman does not have to hold an office in a church to be a spiritual father or mother. In fact, each Christian is called to faithfully steward and lead in the life God has assigned to them. We are all meant to give our lives away in the family of God as brothers and sisters, and one day as wise fathers and mothers. The call to spiritual leadership is not unique to elders and deacons. But elders and deacons are called to spiritual leadership as a unique vocation.

### 1. Elders

Elders are biblically-qualified men who shepherd, lead, and protect the local church. In the Bible, the terms “pastor,” “bishop,” and “elder” all refer to the same role. These terms point to the various roles and responsibilities of an elder. The term “elder” relates to the man’s maturity as a spiritual father in the Church. The term “bishop” or “overseer” relates to the man’s governmental leadership, for which he will give an account (Heb 13:17). The term “pastor” relates to the man’s spiritual obligation to shepherd the flock of God entrusted into his care (1 Pet 5:2).

► Consider pausing here and introducing any elders who have not been introduced yet.

Each local church should be led by a team of elders who together carry the burden of ministry. A healthy eldership team prioritizes spiritual brotherhood by working together to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph 4:3). They stand united in doctrine, values, philosophy, mission, and relationship.

In the Bible, every role in the church is open to women, with one exception: the office of elder. When the New Testament gives us specific qualifications for elders in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, it tells us, among other character qualifications, that elders should be men. This is because the office of elder is a leading and protecting role. Elders are called by God to lead the church and protect the church from error and false teachers. They are spiritual fathers in the local church. This kind of role mirrors God's design for masculinity in general. The "imaging" characteristics men display in fathering and husbanding are the same demanded of them in eldership. So in the New Testament, the office of elder is specifically limited to men.

Male eldership was not established by God because men are more capable or gifted than women, for that would deny the image of God in women. Rather, as we have seen, masculinity is uniquely designed for such a shepherding and protecting role. Some men are called to sacrificially step into the role of Elder for the benefit and protection of men, women, and children in the church.

### 2. *Deacons*

Whereas elders lead the local church by oversight, prayer, and teaching, deacons lead in the church through care, service, and mission. Deacons are defined most simply as servant-leaders. They serve in various practical ways throughout the church to free up the elders to focus on oversight, prayer, and teaching. While every deacon is a servant of the church, not every servant of the church is a deacon. Rather, deacons are specific, recognized, established leaders within the church. As with the office of elder, the qualifications for deacons are laid down in 1 Timothy. As representatives of the church, deacons are publicly recognized and installed into this office. In serving the church, they contribute to the overall fruitfulness and health of the body.

► Consider pausing here and introducing any deacons who have not been introduced yet.

Both men and women are encouraged to serve as deacons. We see support for women deacons in both the Bible and history. For instance, the qualifications for deacons laid out in 1 Timothy 3 include specific qualifications for women who serve as deacons. Unlike the office of elder, deacons do not have a teaching role, nor do they hold governing authority in the local church. Therefore, women and men serve alongside one another in this office.

## TEACHER SIDEBAR

# EXERCISE: SUBMISSION AND AUTHORITY (15 MIN)

- Keep track of time for people, either by setting a timer or keeping an eye on the clock.

- You can view the chart on the following page.

- Feel free to join a table and engage the discussion.

- Don't skip this step! Having participants pray for each other at their tables is preferred, but you can pray for the room if time runs short.

## TEACHER SET UP (2 MIN)

David Powlison reminds us that in various areas of life, we are all called to either submission or authority. "All of us are called to major on submission within some relationships and to major on initiating love within others." In light of this dual reality, work through the following exercise with your table.

### 1. *Identify Where You Lead and Follow (3 Min)*

The following chart lists various Scriptures where God speaks about human authority in different areas of our lives.

- **Take 3 minutes to read through the chart silently. Circle those Scriptures that specifically apply to you, in an area where you are either called to lead or follow.** In some areas, you may be called to both lead and follow (e.g., you have parents, and you are a parent).

### 2. *Discuss Together (5 Min)*

Take 5 minutes to discuss the following questions with your table.

1. In what ways has God called you to *lead* others? How can you increasingly lead in a way that honors God's heart for those under your care?
2. In what ways had God called you to *follow* others? How can you grow in reflecting Christ to those placed over you?

### 3. *Pray Together (3 Min)*

Take 3 minutes to pray for one another to lead and follow in ways that honor Jesus.

Sphere of Influence	Called to Lead	Called to Follow
<b>Family</b>	Do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (Eph 6:4)	Honor your father and mother (this is the first commandment with a promise), that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land. (Eph 6:2-3)
<b>Marriage</b>	Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. (Eph 5:25)	Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. (Eph 5:22)
<b>Church</b>	[Elders], shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. (1 Pet 5:2-3)	Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. (Heb 13:17)
<b>Work</b>	Masters, treat your [servants] justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven. (Col 4:1)	Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. (Col 3:23-24)
<b>Government</b>	For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad... He is God's servant for your good... He is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. (Rom 13:3-4)	Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. (1 Pet 2:13-14)

## POST-EXERCISE / SESSION WRAP UP

Let us be a church that embraces the goodness and gift of gender.  
May God enable us to walk out our callings with joy and faithfulness.



LUNCH:

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NEXT STEPS / Q & A

## NEXT STEPS / Q & A

### PREPARING FOR LUNCH

Over lunch, we hope to provide an opportunity for relational connection and Q&A over a meal. This lunch is a vital part of the day. The relational impact of a shared meal shouldn't be underestimated. Our staff and elders should jump in and eat with participants when available. Briefly, you will cover the immediate next steps in the membership process. Make clear what the process will be to sign up for a New Member Meeting. In addition, all teachers should be available for Q&A, in case there are specific questions about your session. But as much as possible, maintain a conversational and casual tone throughout the Q&A. Finally, this is an ideal opportunity to help them get connected. Consider having a ministry fair or group connect. Or add another fun and interactive element to relationally engage the participants. Be creative!

### TIMELINE

Serve Lunch (Up to 10 min)

Next Steps for Membership (5 min)

Q&A (Up to 15 min)

Connection Event (15 min)



## LUNCH: NEXT STEPS / Q & A (UP TO 45 MIN, 12:15-1:00p)

### SERVE LUNCH (UP TO 10 MINS)

Serve lunch as soon as you wrap up Session 4. Then, once everyone has gotten food, go ahead and talk through next steps while they eat.

► Links for all of these can be found at [frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](https://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum)

### NEXT STEPS FOR MEMBERSHIP (5 MIN)

- **Complete Membership Homework** *\*This homework can be completed on Canvas. It includes all required reading and videos.\**
- **Fill out the New Member Questionnaire** *\*This questionnaire can be completed in Canvas after all the homework has been completed.\**
- **Attend a New Member Meeting with an Elder** *\*You can have the preferred sign-up method available.\**
- **Sign the Membership Covenant** *\*This will be completed in the New Member Meeting.\**

### Q&A (UP TO 15 MIN)

Allow time for questions over lunch. If questions last for more than 15 minutes, feel free to direct participants towards a one-on-one conversation.

### CONNECTION EVENT (15 MINS)

As you wrap up the class, consider having a ministry fair or group connect. Or add another fun and interactive element to relationally engage the participants. Be creative!



APPENDIX A:

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# MEMBERSHIP HOMEWORK

# MEMBERSHIP HOMEWORK

The Membership Class includes several reading and video assignments as required homework. By asking class participants to work through this material on their own, we hope to prevent the class sessions from becoming too bogged down with information overload. We believe all of this material is essential to learn and understand about our church before becoming a member.

A class participant will typically work through this homework online through Canvas. They can utilize the link ([canvas.instructure.com/enroll/94LRAN](https://canvas.instructure.com/enroll/94LRAN)) to automatically get enrolled in the online course. This link can also be found at [frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](https://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum). Canvas will walk them through, step-by-step, what they need to complete.

In addition, all of the homework is available in digital form at [frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](https://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum). We've also provided copies in the following pages, along with a checklist for the participant. The Membership Homework includes the following material:

## A CHURCH FOR THE CITY

We require all our members to read *A Church for the City*, a booklet that explains the Mission and Distinctives of Frontline Church. They can do this in one of three ways.

- **Physical**: You will provide a physical copy of the book to each person going through the membership class. If you need to order more copies for your congregation, please reach out to the Leadership Development Team.
- **Audiobook**: The entire audiobook can be found on Spotify and Apple Podcasts. Links for the audiobooks can be found at [frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](https://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum).
- **Digital**: They can read a PDF of the booklet. The PDF can be found at [frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](https://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum).

## REQUIRED READING

We require all our members to read several documents, all of which can be found at [frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](https://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum).

- **Confession Statement**: The Frontline Members Confessional Statement represents what we believe to be essential elements of the Christian faith. Members of Frontline Church are required to affirm this confession in its entirety.
- **Doctrinal Statement**: The lengthy statement details exactly what our elders teach, preach, and believe. We do NOT require our members to believe or affirm everything in this statement. But we do ask them to read it and agree to not be divisive over it.

- **Membership Requirements and Expectations:** This document lays out the specific requirements and expectations for members at Frontline Church. By requirements, we mean those things they MUST meet before becoming a member. By expectations, we mean those things they COMMIT to do and grow into.
- **Statement on Marriage and Sexuality:** This statement covers what Frontline Church believes about marriage and sexuality.
- **Statement on Church Discipline:** This statement covers what Frontline Church practices and believes about church discipline.

## REQUIRED VIDEOS

Finally, we require all our members to watch four short 10-minute videos to cover core expectations for our members. These can all be found at [frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](http://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum).

- **Membership:** This video explains why membership matters and covers our requirements and expectations.
- **Community Groups:** This video explains the importance of community, how we do community groups, and postures we want our members to take toward community.
- **Tithing & Generosity:** This video explains what the Bible teaches about giving and why it matters.
- **Serving in the Church:** This video explains why we serve in the local church and postures we expect of our members in serving on ministry teams.

## NEW MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE

Once all homework is complete, new members should fill out the New Member Questionnaire. This shows their desire to become a member, gives us important information, and details their current engagement in the church. Each congregation has their own specific New Member Questionnaire, so ensure the new member fills out the form for your congregation.

*[The following pages in this appendix include all the membership homework required for covenant membership. This homework is printed here in its entirety for reference, but may also be downloaded and printed from [frontlinechurch.com/curriculum](http://frontlinechurch.com/curriculum).]*



# MEMBERSHIP CHECKLIST

- ☐ Read or Listen to *A Church for the City* Booklet
- ☐ Complete Membership Class Homework

## Read:

- ☐ Confessional Statement
- ☐ Doctrinal Statement
- ☐ Membership Requirements and Expectations
- ☐ Marriage and Sexuality
- ☐ Church Discipline

## Watch:

- ☐ Membership
- ☐ Community Groups
- ☐ Tithing & Generosity
- ☐ Serving in the Church

- ☐ Attend Membership Class
- ☐ Complete New Member Questionnaire
- ☐ Attend New Member Meeting



# FRONTLINE MEMBERS CONFESSIONAL STATEMENT

*The Frontline Members Confessional Statement represents what we believe to be essential elements of the Christian faith. Members of Frontline Church are required to affirm this confession in its entirety.*

## WE BELIEVE...

- There is only one God, who created all things, and he has revealed himself to mankind. (*Deut 6:4; Isa 45:5-6; 46:9-10; Jn 17:3; 1 Cor 8:4-6; Gal 3:20; 1 Tim 2:5*)
- The Scriptures, comprised of the 66 canonical books of the Christian Bible, are our ultimate authority. They are God-given and true. We can know and obey God through them. (*Deut 31:24-26; Ps 19:7-11; Jer 30:1-4; 1 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:20-21; 3:15-16*)
- One God eternally exists in three persons. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. There is one God. (*Ps 45:6-7; 110; Matt 3:13-17; 28:17-20; Jn 5:18-47; 14:8-17; 20:28; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor 12:4-6; 13:14; Phil 2:5-11; Col 1:15-23; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Pet 1:2; Jude 20-21*)
- We, along with all of humanity (Jesus Christ excluded), are sinners by nature and choice. (*Gen 6:5; Ps 51:5; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:23; 5:8, 12-21; 7:18; Eph 2:1-3*)
- The deserved penalty for sin is death, both physical and spiritual. (*Gen 2:15-17; 3:19; Rom 5:12; 6:23; Jas 1:14-15*)
- Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God who took on flesh and was born of a virgin, is both fully God and fully human. (*Matt 1:20; Lk 2:30-35; Jn 1:1-4; 3:16; 5:18-47; Phil 2:5-11; Col 1:15-20; Heb 1:1-3*)
- Jesus Christ died as our substitute to pay the penalty for our sin. (*Jn 1:29; 10:1-18; Rom 5:8; 1 Cor 15:1-4; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 1:3-5; 1 Pet 3:18*)
- Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will one day return. (*Matt 28; Mk 16:1-8; Lk 24; Jn 14:3; 20-21; Acts 1:10-11; 1 Cor 15:12-34; 1 Thess 4:16; Heb 9:28; 1 Jn 3:2; Rev 1:7*)
- Jesus Christ reigns and rules over his Church, which consists of all who have trusted in him for their salvation. (*Jn 8:31-47; Rom 8:29; 10:9-11; 1 Cor 12:12-27; Gal 3:7-9; Eph 1:18-23; 2:11-22; 4:4-16; Col 3:1-4; 1 Tim 1:17; 1 Pet 2:9-10*)
- In a future physical resurrection of the dead, those who trust in Jesus Christ will be raised to an eternal life. Those who have not trusted in Jesus Christ will be raised to eternal death. (*Matt 25:31-46; Jn 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; Rom 2:1-16; Rev 20:11-15*)
- Only by trusting in the person and work of Jesus Christ alone can we be reconciled to God, receive forgiveness for our sins, and experience true life and joy. (*Jn 3:16-21; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rom 3:21-26; Gal 2:15-21; Eph 1:3-14; 1 Tim 2:5-6*)



# DOCTRINAL STATEMENT OF FRONTLINE CHURCH

## PURPOSE

This doctrinal statement is a summary of the truths of God revealed in the Scriptures that we believe are crucial for the understanding and defense of the gospel, for instruction in godly living, for the order of a New Testament church, and for evangelism. This doctrinal statement is a foundational guide for all instruction, teaching, leadership, and preaching at Frontline Church. All Elders believe, teach, and affirm the entirety of this doctrinal statement, and they govern the church accordingly.

## REVELATION

We believe that God exists and has revealed himself to mankind. Though he is wholly transcendent and unfathomable, he is knowable by nature of his gracious self-disclosure and by giving mankind the capacity to comprehend him. This revelation is necessarily limited, but it is perfect truth and given according to God's merciful condescension. His revelation comes through multiple avenues, including creation, humanity, divine action, divine speech, apostles, and prophets, but it comes most clearly through the Incarnation of Jesus Christ and is now accessible primarily and authoritatively through the Bible. We believe that our conscience and actions must be directed by and submitted to God's revealed truth, which is accessible and comprehensible through the illumination of the Holy Spirit. [*Gen 1:26-27; Deut 29:29; Ps 19:1-6; Isa 40:18; 55:8-9; 66:1-2; Dan 2:21; Jn 1:14-18; Acts 14:17; 17:26-31; Rom 1:19-23; 2:12-16; Heb 1:1-2; I Pet 1:20-21; II Pet 3:2,15-16*]

## THE WORD OF GOD

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, infallible and without error in the original manuscripts, written by men under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Bible has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. The Bible, comprised of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, is Holy Scripture, accessible and sufficient for understanding and believing the message of salvation it discloses, and is absolutely trustworthy with regard to everything it communicates. [*Mk 13:31; Jn 8:31-32; 20:31; II Tim 3:16; II Pet 1:20-21*]

## THE TRINITY

We believe that there is only one true, good, and living God, who is of a singular essence, power, and eternal purpose, yet eternally exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We believe this Trinitarian God is without division of nature, essence, or being, though each person in the Trinity is distinct in both identity and role. The Father is neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; and the Holy Spirit is eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. The persons of the Trinity are equal in every



divine perfection. They execute distinct but harmonious functions in the work of creation, history, providence, and redemption. This One God possesses all life, glory, goodness, and blessedness in and of himself. [*Gen 1:1,26; Matt 3:16-17; 28:19; Jn 1:1-3; 5:26; 15:26; Rom 9:5; I Cor 8:6; II Cor 13:14; Gal 4:6; Eph 4:5-6; Col 2:9*]

## **GOD THE FATHER**

We believe in God the Father, the everlasting, infinite, perfect, personal, divine being who is the sovereign and rightful ruler of all that exists. The Father is perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. The Father created all things and upholds, directs, disposes, and governs all creatures, actions, and things by his wise and holy providence according to his infallible foreknowledge and the immutable counsel of his own will. The Father, in his ordinary providence, makes use of all natural and spiritual means yet is free to work without, above, and against them at his pleasure. He does this to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and grace. He is sufficient in himself, not standing in need of any creature that he has made. He conducts himself with steadfast mercy towards humanity. He draws men to himself through his Son, forgiving of sin and delivering from death those who come to him through Christ for salvation. It was the will of the Father to save humanity through the cross of his Son. The Father hears and answers prayer according to his wisdom, love, and providence. He carries out all things in their proper time and order that they would consummate in Jesus Christ to reveal the supremacy of his name and purposes, and especially the greatness of his love. [*Ps 139; Isa 55:10-11; Dan 3:27; Hos 1:7; 2:21-22; Matt 4:4; 23:9; Lk 10:21-22; Jn 3:16; 6:27; Acts 17:24-31; Rom 1:7; 4:19-21; Col 1:16-17; I Tim 1:1-2; 2:5-6; I Pet 1:3; Rev 1:4-6*]

## **GOD THE SON**

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Father's unique, uncreated eternal Son, very God of very God, and the image of the invisible God. He took upon himself our nature, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. The Son is fully God, therefore he is able to purchase our souls for God. He is fully man, therefore he is able to represent mankind as the sin bearer. The Son exists forever as fully God and fully man without confusion, without change, without division, and without separation of his two natures. While on earth, Jesus lived a sinless life as a man by the influence and power of the Holy Spirit. He performed many signs and wonders, taught the words of eternal life, called people to repentance and faith, taught that the kingdom of God was at hand, and inaugurated the New Covenant. He offered himself as a penal substitutionary atoning sacrifice for sinners, bearing our sins in his body and suffering under the wrath of God for us. He was physically crucified, suffered, bled, died and was buried. By the blood of his cross, he secured for us eternal redemption and made a way for life everlasting. He was literally and physically raised from the dead on the third day and physically appeared to his disciples in his resurrected body. He ascended into heaven, where he now sits at the right hand of the Father and is perpetually interceding for the saints. He lives today and awaits the time when the Father will send him personally back to earth for the final resurrection of his people. He will judge his creation and bring in the final movement of redemptive history. He is due from angels, men, and every other creature any and all worship, service, or obedience he is pleased to require. At his appearing, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord. [*Isa 53:10; Matt 1:18-25; 20:28; Lk 1:26-38;*

*Jn 1:1-18; 8:46-47; 20:28-31; Acts 1:11; Rom 5:6-8; 6:9-10; 8:34; 9:5; I Cor 15:1-28; II Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13; Eph 1:7; Phil 2:5-7; Heb 7:25; 9:28; I Tim 3:16; I Pet 2:21-23; Rev 5:9-14]*

## **GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, eternally one with the Father and Son, uncreated and sharing fully in the divine essence, who convicts and convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. His primary roles are the perfection, sustenance, and empowerment of the designed works of God, directed by the Father and enacted by the Son. Through illumination, he enables men to understand God's revealed truth. The Holy Spirit is the divine agent by whom believers are born into the Kingdom of God, and he is the giver of true faith in Jesus. It is the gracious work of the Holy Spirit that opens our blind eyes to the glory of the gospel, draws us to Jesus in repentance and faith, and adopts us into God's family. Apart from the Holy Spirit, no one sees, comprehends, or experiences the deep love of God as revealed in the gospel. As our abiding helper, the Spirit effectually calls, sanctifies, empowers, baptizes, indwells, gifts, guides, teaches, and equips all believers for service and witness. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit counsels, governs, and protects the child of God from spiritual defeat and oppression. The Holy Spirit empowers all believers to live a faithful and fruitful life on mission for the glory of God. He enables believers to live in union with God the Son and God the Father. [*Jn 14:16-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:8-14; Rom 8:9,12-13; I Cor 2:10-11; 3:16; 6:19; 12:13; II Cor 3:6; Gal 5:22-26; Eph 6:11-18; Titus 3:5*]

## **CREATION**

We believe that God created all things, both visible and invisible, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness. He created every molecule and every galaxy, every angel and every creature, everything physical and everything spiritual (Himself excluded). All of creation has its beginning and end in God's will, and it does not exist independently from him, nor does creation reflect a prior deficiency in God, but its formation and maintenance represent a continuing exertion of his creative power and ability. We believe that the culmination of His creative work was the creation of Adam from the dust of the earth, and Eve from Adam's side. Both Adam and Eve were created equally in the image of God, without sin, with God's natural law of conscience written on their hearts. They were created with the ability to completely refrain from sin. However, as free moral creatures, they also lived with the ability to sin. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man and woman in his own image, and therefore every person of every race and sex possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love. We believe that God created men and women as gendered beings, each created in the image of God, fully equal in value, dignity, and worth, with complementary roles in the created order. [*Gen 1; 2:7; Ecc 7:29; 12:7; Job 26:13; 33:4; Ps 24:1-2; 33:5-6; 104:24; Isa 55:10-11; Jer 10:12; Matt 10:28; Jn 1:1-3; Acts 17:24; Rom 1:20; 2:14-15; Eph 4:24; Col 1:16; 3:10; Heb 1:2; 11:3; Rev 4:11*]

## **THE FALL**

We believe that Adam and Eve received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God's command allowed them, while they kept it, to remain joyfully whole in their communion with God and have dominion over the earth and all living things. However, being

influenced and seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, they sinned by eating of the forbidden fruit. They incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God and became dead in sin. In their spiritual death, they were wholly corrupted in all their parts and faculties of soul, spirit, and body.

We believe that Adam was the representative head of all mankind; therefore, the guilt, death, and corrupted nature caused by this sin was imputed and conveyed to all his posterity descending from generation to generation. For this reason, we believe all human beings are born with a sinful nature. Since this original corruption, we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and opposed to God himself, our wills being completely enslaved to sin. We are totally depraved, not to mean we are as bad as possible, but we are unable to not sin and are wicked to our core, thoroughly tainted with sin. We are thus wholly inclined to all evil and suppression of the truth, and from this disposition proceeds all actual sin. This corruption of nature, during this life, remains in those that are saved. Through Christ, it is pardoned and mortified, but it is never completely overcome until our glorification. We believe that although our nature has been corrupted by sin, every single human remains fully created in the image of God. While this image has been marred by sin, it has not been completely lost or destroyed by sin. Therefore, every person, regardless of race, ethnic background, sex, age, marital, or social status, is still worthy of dignity, honor, and respect. *[Gen 1:27-28; 2:16-17; 3:1-24; 5:3; 6:5; 8:21; Job 14:4; Ps 51:5; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Jer 13:23; 17:9; Matt 7:11; 15:18-20; Acts 17:26; Rom 1:18; 3:10-18,23; 5:12-19; 7:7-25; 8:7-8; I Cor 15:21-22, 45-49; II Cor 11:3; Gal 5:17; Eph 2:1-3; Col 1:21; Titus 1:15; Jas 1:14-15; I Jn 1:8,10]*

## REDEMPTION

We believe that God, in his mercy and love for the world, chose not to abandon creation in its fallen state, but rather chose to redeem creation and make salvation for humans possible. Immediately after the Fall, God covered the nakedness of Adam and Eve and promised that the serpent would be defeated. The continued refrain of God throughout both the Old Testament and the New Testament is that he is working for the redemption of all things, and is making a way for salvation for all people who would trust him. This salvation is the gracious purpose of God according to which he justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness and grace, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. *[Gen 3:14-15, 21; Deut 30:11-20; Isa 66:17-25; Acts 15:16-18; 17:30-31; Rom 5:20-21; 8:20-23; 10:5-13; Eph 1:7-10; Col 1:19-20; Rev 21:1-8; 22:1-5]*

God's work in redemption is universal in scope and includes not just the salvation of individual persons. Redemption encompasses a complete recreation of the created universe to cleanse it from the effects of sin. In this work of redemption, God, through the work of Jesus and by the power of the Spirit, determined to bring life where sin brought death, purchase sinful souls for God, delivering sinful humanity and broken creation from darkness and futility, and reconcile wayward sinners to God the Father through the institution of the New Covenant.

We believe that by complete and perfect obedience to God throughout the entirety of his life, by his penal substitutionary atoning death on a cross, and by his glorious resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ obtained forgiveness of sins and the gift of his righteousness for all who trusted in God prior to the cross, and all who trust in Christ thereafter. Through living a perfect life and dying in our place, the just for the unjust, Christ absorbed and became sin and succumbed to our due punishment thereby satisfying the wrath of God against us. We further believe that the work of Christ on the cross for sin warrants and impels a universal offering of the gospel to all persons, so that to every person it may be truly said, "God gave his only begotten Son so that whoever believes in him might not perish but have eternal life." Those whom God effectually calls will hear his voice and follow him. Jesus Christ will not cast out whoever comes by the drawing of God through the invoking of the Holy Spirit. [Matt 28:19; Jn 3:16; 4:14; 6:37; 10:27; Acts 1:8; Rom 3:23-26; 5:6-9, 18-19; 8:1, 34; 14:9; I Cor 15:3; II Cor 5:14, 21; Gal 3:13; Eph 1:7; 2:3-6; Phil 3:9; Col 1:14, 23; I Thess 1:10; 1 Pet 2:24; 3:18; Rev 22:17]

We believe that human beings are accountable for their response to the forgiveness, pardon, and reconciliation offered to them in the Lord Jesus Christ. When an individual trusts in Jesus, that person is justified by God and adopted into his family. Justification occurs by and through Christ and because of his work on the cross and is apprehended through faith. No man is justified in the sight of God partly by Christ and partly by works; it is fully by Christ, and Christ alone. In light of this glorious salvation, God's will for believers is that they exhibit transformed lives evidenced by purity, holiness, and growth in Christ-like character. He desires that they each participate, according to their spiritual gifts, in the task of effectively sharing the gospel message of salvation with those, near and far, who have yet to believe in Jesus. We believe that those who are redeemed and come to saving faith will never lose their salvation but will remain in him.

Believers may fall into sin through neglect, spiritual weakness, and temptation, whereby they grieve the Holy Spirit, degrade their graces and joys, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves. Even so, they will be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, sanctified by his Spirit, and will never fully fall away from the state of grace but will endure to the end. They will never fall fully and completely, because God, by His grace, protects and preserves them. The intercession of Christ for those God has called is efficacious unto eternity. [Ps 32:3-5; 51:8-12; 89:31-33; Isa 8:20; 63:17; Jer 31:3; Matt 7:22-23; Mk 6:52; 16:14; Jn 10: 28-29; 17:11, 24; Rom 5:2-5; 12-16; 8:33-39; I Cor 11:32; Eph 1; 4:30; Phil 1:6; 2:13; II Thess 3:3; II Tim 2:18-19; 3:15-17; Heb 6:17-18; 7:25; 9:12-15; 10:10-14; 13:20-21; I Pet 1:5-9; II Pet 1:10; I Jn 2:3; 3:9, 14, 18-24; 4:7; Rev 2:4]

We believe that salvation is a mystery. While acknowledging our finite and incomplete understanding of God's ways, we believe that God, by his providence and eternal counsel, chose some persons to life and salvation before the foundation of the world, as revealed in the Scriptures. These he effectually calls to himself, having predestined them in love to become holy and blameless children of God.

Whomever he calls, he will justify and keep by his power through faith unto salvation. His choice was of himself, for his own pleasure and glory. His choice was not made with reference to any

foreseen faith, works, or deeds in the creature as his motive. His choice prevails and triumphs over human resistance to bring his own to saving faith. Prior to justification, God regenerates the heart of the elect to freely choose and embrace Jesus as their Savior. The grace of redemption is that by which God effectually calls his chosen, converting them to himself, and quickening them from spiritual death to spiritual life. Saving grace is operative by and through God alone, not in cooperation with man, meaning that those who are redeemed always come to saving faith, as they are made willing to come to Christ by the drawing of God, and receive through faith their redemption and eternal salvation. [Ezek 11:19; 36:26; Matt 22:14; Jn 6:44; 14:6; 17:6,9,19; 11:51-52; Acts 13:48; 26:18; Rom 3:20,28,30; 8:2, 30-33; 9:11; 11:5-7; I Cor 2:10-12; Gal 5:4; Eph 1:2-12, 17-19; 2:1-9; Phil 2:13; II Thess 2:13-14; II Tim 1:9-10; Titus 3:4-7; I Pet 1:2; Rev 5:9]

We believe that the Kingdom of God, proclaimed and inaugurated in the ministry of Jesus, is the consequence of God's redemptive work in the world, and puts into view the expansive restoration of all of creation which will find its ultimate fulfillment in the work of Jesus at his Second Coming, in which he ushers into reality the final movement in his redemptive plan, the recreation of all things. This Kingdom, though not fully realized, is among us now, and encompasses all things which are actively under the dominion of Jesus, and is continually growing through the work of the Spirit in the proclamation of the Gospel to bring sinners to repentance and subjection to the Lordship of Jesus. [Matt 4:23; 6:10; Lk 7:21; I Cor 15:24-26; Eph 1:20-23; Col 1:13-14; Rev 5:9-10; 21:1-4, 22-27; 22:1-5]

## KINGDOM

We believe that when Jesus proclaimed that the Kingdom of God was at hand, that he was bringing the Kingdom of God to earth through his ministry. This kingdom, under the righteous rule of Jesus, encompasses all areas of creation that are in subjection to his will, purposes, and mission. While it came to earth through the ministry of Jesus, it continues to expand and grow through the empowerment, wisdom, and activity of the Holy Spirit in and through the Church. In this kingdom God rules with absolute sovereignty toward the full redemption of creation from the brokenness of the Fall. One day it will reach its final consummation in the great and glorious return of Jesus to this earth to once and for all establish, confirm, and lead this kingdom as it is fully realized for the first time in redemptive history, finally and fully defeating the kingdom of darkness.

We believe that the kingdom establishes a new community, in which all believers are participants and citizens by nature of their inclusion into the community of the New Covenant. As citizens and ambassadors of God's Kingdom, believers should not withdraw from culture in seclusion nor embrace every element of culture, becoming indistinguishable from it. Rather, they should live as salt and light in the world. The Kingdom of God is marked by the love and mercy of God himself, which impels all believers to love and serve those around them with the same love of service that Jesus had for the world while on this earth. [I Sam 7:12-16; Ps 110: 1-7; Isa 9:6-7; 11:1-10; Matt 4:23; 5:13-16; 13:31-33; 25:31-32; Mk 1:14; Acts 1:8; Rom 14:17; II Cor 5:18-21; 6:14-18; Phil 3:20-21; Col 1:13-14; I Pet 2:9-12; Rev 5:9-14; 21:1-4; 22:1-5]

## CHURCH

We believe the Church is the holy, gospel-shaped, catholic community comprising the New Covenant people of God, consisting of all who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation, and is the spiritual body of Christ. This includes all the redeemed of the ages, believers from among all peoples from every tribe, tongue, and nation. The primary purpose of the Church is to worship God and glorify him by building up believers and effectively reaching the world with the gospel of Christ. We believe that Christ is the King, the High Priest, the Holy Prophet, and the Senior Pastor of the church. God ordained the ministry of the Church of taking the gospel to a lost world and of making disciples who make disciples. The ministry of the Church accomplishes his redemptive purposes among all peoples, and is carried out primarily through local expressions of the Church. The local congregation is a gathering of believers who are associated by the New Covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Spirit, observe the Sacraments, are governed by his laws, and exercise the gifts, rights, and privileges within them by the power of the Word and the Holy Spirit under unified, shared leadership. The primary officers in the church are elders and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. Both men and women play a necessary and vital role in the life of the local church. When men and women walk out their respective roles and responsibilities as laid out in the Scriptures, both genders are complemented and shine more gloriously. We believe that God, grounded in the ordained principle of male headship, intended that the primary governing and teaching role of elder is given to biblically called and qualified men. Both men and women, who are biblically called and qualified, may and should serve the church as deacons. [*Gen 1:27; 2:22-25; Matt 16:15-19; Acts 2:41-47; 3:22-23; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 14:23, 27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:17-32; I Cor 3:16; 7:17; 9:13-14; 11:2-34; 12:1-31; Gal 3:28; Eph 5:22-33; Col 1:18; 3:1-19; I Tim 2:11-15; 3:1-7; II Tim 2:2; Titus 1:5-9; Heb 4:14; 8:1; I Pet 3:1-7; 5:1-4; Rev 2-3; 5:6-10; 21:2-3*]

## BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that God gave two Sacraments to the church. They point to and invite participation in the message of the Gospel. Those Sacraments are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. While being means of grace from God, the Sacraments do not contribute to our salvation in any legal sense. Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of outward obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, death to sin, burial of the old life, and resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to a believer's faith in an ultimate bodily resurrection unto eternal life with Christ in His Kingdom. The Lord's Supper is an act of worship and obedience. Believers, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate his second coming. While Jesus' glorified body is at the right hand of God the Father, it is through the Lord's Supper that our hearts are lifted up to heaven where we commune with Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. The body and blood of Jesus are made spiritually present to the Christian by faith, so they are as really present to the spirit of the believer as the elements are physically present to the body. In this sense, we believe in the real presence of Jesus at the Table, through the Holy Spirit. The Sacraments serve as beautiful,

grace-filled pictures of what Jesus has already done for us in the gospel. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are significant expressions of worship and submission to God for the believer. *[Matt 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mk 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Lk 3:21-22; 22:19-20; Jn 3:23; Acts 2:37-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 18:8; 20:7; 22:16; Rom 6:3-5; I Cor 1:17; 10:16-21; 11:17-34; Gal 3:27; Col 2:11-12; I Pet 3:20-22]*

## **GOSPEL AND MISSION**

We believe the call and holy privilege of every child of God and all churches of Jesus Christ is to go and make disciples of the nations. God creates transformed lives evidenced by purity, holiness, and growth in Christ-like character by means of new birth. The Holy Spirit imputes the love of Christ into the hearts of believers, thus transforming their love toward others, for his name's sake. This results in Christians who actively seek to take the gospel to sinners and who share in carrying out the Great Commission. The highest purpose for evangelism and missions is that the name of Jesus Christ and the glory of his kingdom be taken to the ends of the earth until he returns. *[Matt 9:37-38; 28:18-20; Lk 24:45-49; Acts 1:8; 2:37-39; 8:1-8; 10:34-35; 13:47; Rom 1:5; 10:13-15; 15:20-21; II Tim 4:5; I Pet 2:9; Rev 5:9-10; 22:17]*

## **SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

We believe the Holy Spirit imparts spiritual gifts to every Christian, man or woman, according to his own purpose and will. Being chosen and positioned in the church by God, each Christian serves as a necessary part of the body of Christ, and is equipped with gifts necessary and vital for both ministry and mission. The gifts are designed to testify to the presence of the Kingdom and the Holy Spirit, and they are distributed to equip the saints for worship, ministry, and the building up of the body of Jesus Christ. The miracles and revelatory gifts dispensed to the apostles and prophets of the early church are active today. They should be earnestly desired and pursued, in accordance to the clear and authoritative teaching of Scripture. The use of spiritual gifts is for the purpose of edification within the body, that it would be built up in Christ. We believe that God uses these spiritual gifts to display his glory and anointing in individual saints for the work of his ministry and mission, established in the timeless message of the Bible. *[Acts 2:1-4, 17-18; Rom 12:6-8; I Cor 12:4-11, 14-20; 13:8-12; 14:1, 12; Eph 4:11-12; I Pet 4:10-11]*

## **COMMON GRACE**

We believe that God has bestowed common grace on all peoples, by which he dispenses innumerable blessings on Christians and non-Christians alike, regardless of their moral standing before him. Music, art, creativity, medicine, food and drink, physical health, marriage and family, scientific studies, government, education, and nonprofit organizations all serve as evidences of God's common grace on humanity. Furthermore, through the common grace of God, every human has the potential to do good works and perform wonderful acts of service that directly benefit society. In no way does the common grace of God, or the good that comes from it, produce any right or moral standing before God; nor does common grace cover any of our sin. We are wholly unable to save ourselves or to contribute in any way toward our acceptance with God. Therefore, common grace exists, preeminently, for the glory of God and the good of humanity. *[Gen 39:5; Ps 145:9, 15-16; Ezek 33:11; Matt 5:44-45; Acts 14:16-17; Rom 1:19-21; 2:14-15; 13:1-7; I Tim 2:1-4; 4:10]*

## MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

We believe that God instituted marriage as a holy union, intended from the beginning of creation to serve as a picture of the relationship between Jesus and his church. This union is a part of God's original creative design, as set forth in Scripture, and is for complete fidelity (physically, emotionally, and spiritually) within heterosexual and monogamous marriage. Husbands are called to love, lead, and serve their wives, working for their purity and growth in Christian maturity, as Christ loves his church, and wives are called to honor, respect, and submit to their husbands. This complementary relationship provides the framework for their union, and serves to point people to Jesus and his Gospel. Singles are called to serve God with their sexuality, and, regardless of one's marital status, we believe the Christians should pursue purity and abstain from sexually immoral practices such as adultery, premarital sex, homosexuality, and pornography. *[Gen 1:26-27; 2:18-25; Matt 19:4-6; Rom 1:18-32; I Cor 6:9-20; 7:1-9; 10:8; Eph 5:3-14; 5:22-33; I Thess 4:1-8; I Tim 1:8-10; Heb 13:4]*

## JUDGMENT

We believe that in the end all deeds done by humans, angels, and demons will be judged by the rightful, righteous, and good Judge, God himself. His judgment is both right and just, and will be the final word regarding every moral being created. After the resurrection of the dead, God will render final judgment, which will include both eternal condemnation for the unrighteous. The unrighteous are those who were not united to Jesus through faith. Eternal blessing will be for those who are righteous, not because of what they did, but because of imputed righteousness they gained when they were united to Jesus through faith.

We believe that Heaven is a real place of eternal blessedness prepared by God for those who have been saved by grace through the shed blood of Christ. In Heaven, those who have repented of sin and trusted in Jesus, being completely freed from the presence of sin and temptation, will experience an ever-increasing level of eternal joy, pleasure, and delight in all that God is. We believe that Hell is a real place of eternal suffering for those who continue in unrepentant rejection of Jesus Christ as Lord. Furthermore, we believe that Hell is the ultimate destination for the fallen angels, while Heaven is the residence for faithful angels. There is no intermediate state in which the unsaved can atone for his or her own sins. *[Matt 25:31-46; Lk 16:19-31; Jn 14:1-6; Acts 10:42-43; II Cor 5:1-10; Heb 9:27-28; Rev 7:13-17; 14:9-11; 20:7-15; 21:22-27]*

## LAST THINGS

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the full realization and establishment of his kingdom. Jesus will return to the earth one final time to finally and fully lift the curse of sin off of the earth and bring everything under complete and total submission to himself. Heaven will come down to earth, and there will be a new heaven and new earth, where there will be no more pain, sorrow, sin, or death. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal joy of those who trust in Jesus, and the eternal punishment of those who do not trust in Jesus. *[Matt 16:27; Acts 1:11; 3:20-21; I Cor 15:12-26, 51-57; Phil 3:20; I Thess 4:15-17; II Thess 1:5-10; II Tim 4:1; Titus 2:13; Rev 20:11-15; 22:20]*



## **AFFIRMATIONS**

In addition to the above statement, we affirm the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Chalcedonian Creed, the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, and the Confessional Statement of The Gospel Coalition.



# MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

There are certain requirements and expectations for members at Frontline Church. By requirements, we mean those things you have to meet before becoming a member. By expectations, we mean those things that you commit to do and grow into. In becoming a member, you are becoming a part of this family. We are not perfect, and we don't expect perfection. But we do want you to know what it means to be a part of this family before you join.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

- A profession of faith in Jesus
- Submission to the authority of the Bible
- Baptized as a Christian
- Belief in Frontline Members Confessional Statement
- Ongoing commitment to a life of repentance and following Jesus
- Agreement to Expectations of Members
- Is at least 18 years of age

## EXPECTATIONS OF MEMBERS

- Regular attendance and participation in Sunday gatherings
- Active participation in a Frontline community group
- Actively engaged in serving on a team at Frontline
- Regularly pray for and missionally engage at least three people who don't follow Jesus
- Regular and faithful giving to Frontline
- Guard unity within the church body
- Follow the leadership of Frontline Elders
- Humbly receive church discipleship and discipline
- Pray for the church and church leadership
- If you leave, leave well and process that decision with an Elder

## EXPECTATIONS OF ELDERS

- Meet the requirements and expectations for members
- Pray for the church
- Care for the church
- Carry out church discipleship and discipline
- Oversee and lead the church
- Steward the resources of the church
- Teach and equip the church
- Guard doctrine and the gospel
- Live as an example to the church



# STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

We believe marriage is created and sanctioned by God and joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive covenant union. Furthermore, we believe that God intends and commands that sexual intimacy only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We will only conduct, perform, or bless marriages which are in accordance with this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and with Frontline's beliefs on marriage and sexuality.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, including but not limited to adultery, fornication, homosexual or bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, is sinful and offensive to God. In addition, we believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking God's mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Therefore, any person who commits any form of sexual immorality should walk in repentance.

We believe that every person must be afforded with compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior and attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the church.

All persons employed by the church in any capacity should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly. Furthermore, members and those who serve as volunteers should conduct themselves in accordance with this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality.

# ✠ FRONTLINE

## STATEMENT ON

## CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Corrective church discipline is an act by the Elders of Frontline towards a member designed to lead the person to repentance and restoration. This discipline may potentially lead, if the person in question continually refuses to repent, to the final step of excluding a professing Christian from membership and participation in the Sacraments, as well as barring from attendance at Frontline (see Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13). The procedure of discipline is as follows:

1. Elders of Frontline can subject Members to church discipline. Each potential case of discipline will be weighed on its own merits, considering the magnitude of the sin, the publicity of the sin, and the lack of repentance of the individual. Scriptures that will be used as a basis and guideline for church discipline include, but are not limited to: Matthew 18:15-22, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 1 Timothy 1:18-20, Galatians 6:1-5, 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15, 1 Timothy 5:19-21, Titus 10-11, and 2 John 10-11.
2. Members of Frontline are not guaranteed confidentiality regarding issues of church discipline, and understand that in submitting themselves to the authority of the church, issues of a sensitive or personal nature may become known to others. This includes, but is not limited to, notification of the authorities if a crime has been committed or if a real threat of someone being endangered exists (Romans 13:1-7), as well as other violations of Scripture that may not result in physical danger.
3. Members of Frontline may be dismissed from Frontline by the approval of the Central Elders. The dismissal of a church member may be made known to all church members. The Central Elders have the discretion to determine if the member's discipline should be made known to the entire church (1 Corinthians 5:1-5).
4. A person dismissed from Frontline for disciplinary reasons may be reinstated to full membership if the person's repentance is accepted as genuine by the Central Elders.
5. Each member of this church agrees that there shall be no appeal to any court because of a discipline process or dismissal.

APPENDIX B:

# NEW MEMBER MEETING BEST PRACTICES

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The New Member Meeting is designed to be a final touchpoint before someone becomes a covenant member of Frontline. At the meeting, we want to establish a pastoral connection, follow up on the New Member Questionnaire, and answer any outstanding questions. These relational touchpoints are springboards into healthy church membership.

New Member Meetings can be completed individually or as a small group. But in any case, we don't want the new member to feel like they are being rushed along in the process. Nor do we want them to feel like we are interrogating them. We want them to experience pastoral care and presence.

Prior to the New Member Meeting, new members are required to fill out the New Member Questionnaire. This questionnaire will cover their story, their baptism, and their current engagement. If you are taking part in the New Member Meeting, you **MUST** review each New Member Questionnaire ahead of time. Set aside dedicated time to do this prayerfully. Make a note of anything you wish to follow up on. Avoid glancing over it for the first time five minutes before the meeting.

## BEST PRACTICES

Below are a few "best practices" to touch on in each New Member Meeting.

1. Stress Commitment to Community, Giving, and Serving. In our church, covenant members go from renting to owning the mission of the church. We lay out these expectations for members in the class. You don't need to review each one during the New Member Meeting. Instead, briefly stress the commitment our members make to community, giving, and serving. These three expectations are vital to church membership at Frontline, and each commitment will be reviewed during annual member renewals.
2. Make space for Outstanding Questions. At this point, they should have had ample opportunity to ask questions. So this shouldn't take up more than 5 minutes or so. If it seems like it will take longer, consider an individual follow-up meeting dedicated to answering questions.
3. Lean Into Pastoral Prayer and Blessing. For each new member, ask a brief pastoral question. Consider questions like "What is one thing we can join you in praying for?" or "What is one hope you have in becoming a part of this family?" It might even be something based on their questionnaire. Then, as pastors, pray for and bless each person in the moment.
4. Sign Membership Covenants. Be sure to have covenants printed and ready to sign. You can find the covenant on the next page. You might read the covenant language aloud, so they know what they are signing. In addition, ask if there are any outstanding questions concerning Frontline Church and membership.



# MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, willingly enter into Covenant Membership with Frontline Church. By signing this Membership Covenant, I can say with a good conscience that I meet the requirements for membership at Frontline. By the Spirit's help, I commit to live in accordance with the expectations for covenant members of Frontline.

I have read and believe the Frontline Members Confessional Statement in its entirety. Further, I understand that complete agreement with the Doctrinal Statement of Frontline Church is not required. However, I will not promote or contribute to any division over particular theological distinctives found in that statement.

By signing below, I commit myself to this local expression of the body of Christ. As a member of this spiritual family, I promise to pursue love, pray earnestly, and guard unity within Frontline Church. To the best of my ability, I will work for the good and maturity of the church in Christ.

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DATE

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MEMBER SIGNATURE

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ELDER SIGNATURE