

GBC Philosophy of Ministry:

What Guides and Drives Our Church?

Three Foundations of Ministry: What Our Church is Founded upon

The ministry of Grace Bible Church is rooted in three foundational realities: The exclusive saving power of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the ultimate authority of the sixty-six books of the Bible, and our absolute dependence upon God through prayer. By prioritizing these three foundations, we intend to protect ourselves from missional drift and pragmatism.

1. **Need for Christ:** We believe that the mission given to the Church by our Lord Himself is to go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to keep all that He commanded us (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Col. 1:28). We believe that this mission is carried out by proclaiming Christ both to unbelievers in the form of evangelism, and to believers in the form of discipleship. Because of this, the sum and substance of our ministry can be summarized in the person and work of Jesus Christ (Col. 1:28; 2 Cor. 4:5).
 - a. **We Preach Christ as essential for human salvation:** Mankind's greatest need is forgiveness (Exod. 34:6-7; John 8:24; Acts 13:38-39; Eph 1:7; Col 3:13).¹ And this forgiveness can only be found in the person and work of Jesus Christ (John 8:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12). Because of this, we proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in every sermon.
 - b. **We Preach Christ as the Ultimate Solution to every human problem:** We believe that the human need for Christ does not stop at salvation, but having been saved, every believer needs to grow in Christlikeness by continually beholding Christ. Growth and change can only come through Jesus Christ (Eph. 4:20-24; 2 Pet. 1:2-4). Psychology, the modern secular alternative to sanctification, only treats symptoms, but offers no cures for the maladies of the soul. Additionally, we believe that the ills of society are fundamentally a spiritual problem caused by sin. This means that temporal or earthly solutions like politics or trying to legislate morality are both ineffective and not the Church's responsibility. At the same time our rejection of superficial, earthly solutions does not prevent us from engaging in certain evangelistic ministries which have an earthly effect, such as, preaching the Gospel at abortion clinics for example.
 - c. **We Behold Christ through the Means of Grace to Become More Like Christ:** We practice and emphasize beholding Christ through the means of Grace. We believe that God uses His Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17), prayer (Ps. 37:4; Psalm

¹ <https://www.gty.org/sermons/81-140/mans-greatest-need-gods-greatest-gift>

119:18), fellowship (Heb. 10:24-25), providence (Deut. 8:2) and obedience (Phil. 2:12-13) to develop in us greater and greater degrees of Christlikeness. Because of this, we believe that beholding Christ should be the highest priority for every Christian (2 Cor. 3:18; Rom 8:29; Phil 3:12-14; Eph. 4:20-24; Col 3:1-2; Heb 12:2).

2. **Need for the Word:** We believe that the Bible is sufficient for all our problems (2 Tim. 3:16-17). We do not engage in so-called “faith-healings,” psychological models, or church growth methodologies. We believe that everything pertaining to life and godliness is available through Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:3) and knowing Christ is only possible by searching the Scriptures (John 5:39). The success of our church depends upon its faithfulness to the Words of eternal life written by the Creator of the universe found in the Bible.
 - a. **Expository Preaching and Expository Counseling:** We preach verse-by-verse through the Bible (Neh. 8:8) and we also seek to apply the wisdom of Scripture to our lives through life-on-life shepherding and biblical counseling. Our goal, whether preaching or counseling, is to faithfully explain the Scriptures according to the intent of the original authors in order to faithfully apply it to people’s lives today (James 1:25).
 - b. **Preaching the Whole Counsel of God:** We are called to preach the Word of God in every season being primarily concerned with pleasing the Lord, not men (2 Tim. 4:2-3; 2 Thess. 2:4; Gal. 1:10). We believe that preaching the gospel in every sermon is a priority. Christless sermons, devoid of the gospel, can never save anyone, while at the same time risk creating and comforting false converts. Along these same lines, it’s a priority for us to warn about the eternal, conscious, burning torments of a real place called hell. A place reserved for those who reject such a gracious and kind Savior. A punishment that Christ, who loved people perfectly, preached more about than anyone else in the Bible. We do this because we strive to love people the way Jesus loved people, and because it’s hateful to avoid such an important topic.
3. **Need for Prayer:** We pray because we need God’s help and we recognize that ultimately unless God builds the house we labor in vain (Psalm 127:1). We need His wisdom (James 1:5). Prayer is a primary means by which believers strive together for the cause of the gospel (Rom. 15:30; Col. 4:2-4,12; Eph. 6:18; 2 Thess 3:1).
 - a. **Shepherds that pray for the flock:** Christ is the Chief Shepherd who shed his blood for his flock, pastors then are called to prayerfully keep watch over His sheep (Acts 20:28). We believe it is the duty of pastors to pray for their congregants by name according to the specific needs of that member. This requires a pastor to commit to knowing those under his care, setting aside time for prayer, and to never allow his Church to grow so big that they can no longer pray for their members.

- b. **Members that pray for each other:** We ask our members to set aside time to pray for one another in obedience to Scripture (2 Cor 1:11; Eph. 6:18; Col. 4:2-3).

Three Spheres of Ministry: How We Build on the Foundation

While the foundation of our church is built on our need for Christ, the Word, and prayer, we believe Christ primarily builds on that foundation in three spheres: our families, one another (fellow church members), and the lost near our church. With this in mind, we spend the bulk of our time focused on these three groups of people. We feel as though Christians from outside our church, even those we've been close with in the past, are a lower priority than these three groups and our schedules intentionally reflect that. Where some would pour their efforts into producing podcasts, conferences, or other external ministries and relationships, we believe that the most faithful use of a church member's time is in the interpersonal spheres of family, local-church, and the lost in our community. We have a strong desire to plant more small, family focused, discipleship oriented, evangelism driven churches. We believe that small churches are more efficient and effective in fulfilling the Great commission.

1. **Loving Our Families:** We believe that the family is an institution created by God Himself for the purpose of raising and making disciples (Deut 6:4-9; Eph. 6:4). We desire to recognize God's design for the institution of marriage in the way we worship as a church. As preacher Adrian Rogers once said, "The Church ought to be a family of friends and a friend to the family." Richard Baxter once said, "You are not likely to see any general reformation, till you procure family reformation." In many ways a church rises or falls on the strength of its families.
 - a. **Encouraging God's Distinct Roles for Men and Women:** We believe in recognizing God's distinct roles for men and women.² In summary, we believe that men should be servant-leaders who serve by leading the home (Eph. 5:23; 1 Cor. 11:3; Gen. 2:7, 17; 1 Tim. 2:12-13; 1 Peter 3:7-9) and being faithful providers (Eph. 5:28-29; Gen. 3:17-19; 1 Tim. 5:8)³. In order for the church to function properly, fathers must function as shepherds of their home. Women on the other hand, should be workers at home (Titus 2:3-5) and a helpmate to their husbands (Gen. 2:18; 1 Pet. 3:1-4; Eph. 5:22-29).
 - b. **Encouraging Parents in their God ordained Role:** The training of children should be done almost exclusively by parents (Deut. 6:6-7; Eph. 6:4). With this in mind, we are committed to training parents how to train their children. We feel this training should be modeled by the parents' daily personal worship habits, and carried out during daily family worship. A systematic time of parent-led discipleship is encouraged. This is best accomplished by stay-at-home mothers who homeschool their children.

² <https://www.sermonaudio.com/series/177754?sort=oldest>.

³ A faithful provider is a man who can pray the following earnestly, "Father, I'll work any job, make any amount, and live frugally, if you'll show me how I can provide for my family while being a faithful husband, father, and churchman."

- c. **Including Children in Main Service:** While we do have an unstaffed nursery, we do not have a Children's Ministry. Our children are present to worship God with the congregation. We do this for many reasons, but the five most important include:
- i. **Lack of Biblical Basis:** We do not see age-segregated (including high school, college, and senior) ministry modeled in Scripture, so we cannot justify allocating the significant resources it requires.
 - ii. **Preserving Parent's Roles:** We believe that age-segregated ministries have the potential to undermine the parents' role of training up their children by over-promising the effectiveness of children's ministry. This then can lead parents to be tempted to treat children's ministry as a replacement for at home discipleship.⁴
 - iii. **Presenting a Testimony of Faith:** Because our children are theologically trained by their parents at home, they have no need of a separate children's lesson. The church service then becomes a unique opportunity to see the faith lived out by people of all ages (2 Tim. 1:5; Titus 2:2-3).
 - iv. **The Need for All Saints to be in Main Service:** Children's ministries notoriously require many volunteers, who must then miss service and be separated from the body.⁵ We cannot justify asking members of our church to miss service to watch the children of others.⁶
 - v. **Protecting from Seeker Sensitive Practices:** Finally, We believe the typical children's ministry makes children easy prey for the Seeker Sensitive movement when they grow up. The Youth and Children's approach to ministry bears many resemblances to the Seeker Sensitive movement. By engaging in excessive tailoring to unbelievers and an unhealthy overreliance on entertainment, we believe that Age Segregated Ministries can train children to be comfortable in bad churches.
 - vi. **Summary:** For all of these reasons we believe that age-segregated ministry is superfluous when it comes to making disciples.
- d. Our hope is that loving our families in these ways will lead, by God's grace, to families being well shepherded, to children being properly disciplined, and the future leadership of the Church being developed in the families of our church. Ultimately we believe that church needs the family, as much as the family needs the church.

2. **Loving One Another:** We believe that the Church, at its heart, is a people united in love to one another by their Savior (John 13:34-35; 17:20-23; Rom. 12:9-10; 1 Cor 12:12-27; Eph 1:15, 22-23; Col 3:14; Phil 2:1-11). And because much of the New Testament is

⁴ We believe that God can work through age-segregated ministries because God's word doesn't return void. However, this does not necessarily justify methods that are not mentioned or modeled in Scripture and have significant drawbacks.

⁵ Often the end result of this segregation is that churches create, in practice, multiple separate churches within a church.

⁶ We recognize that this does not apply to those children's ministries which do not run during the main service; however, since many do, we feel that this criticism is important to recognize.

written to churches, this love is almost exclusively described within the context of the local church. This is why those who are either not attending a church, not a member at their church, and/or not involved in their local church should be concerned about their salvation (1 John 3:10; 5:1). Instead, God calls believers to imitate Paul who says, “we were pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become beloved to us.” (1 Thess. 2:8; 3:12; John 15:12; 1 Pet. 1:22) No church can survive without love, and no one is a true Christian who does not love his brothers (1 John 3:10). True believers will always exhibit love for their brothers (Rom 12:8; 1 Thess. 4:9-10; 5:11). We believe that love expresses itself in the following ways.

- a. **Shepherding:** Where other pastors might be tempted to develop a very broad reaching ministry, we believe in developing depth. We focus on our local congregation. This means that conferences, podcasts, and other external ministries are either nonexistent or very rare. This also means that we avoid excessive programs and staff, so that we can prioritize developing and employing Shepherds. (John 10:11; Acts 20:27-31; Eph 4:11-16; Col 1:24-29; Gal 4:19; 1 Thess 2:7-12; 5:14; Heb 3:12-13; 13:16-19; 1 Thess 5:12-13)
 - b. **Discipleship:** Because we love one another, we believe that everyone should disciple and be discipled. This requires church members to spend a significant amount of time living life on life with one another. It is our hope that the future leaders of our church will be developed from the congregation by the current leaders of our church (Matt 4:18-19; 2 Tim 2:2; Gal. 4:19).
 - c. **Hospitality and Service:** We emphasize hospitality by making it a priority to have church members and unbelievers into our homes (Rom 12:13; Heb. 13:2). We desire to serve one another (Gal. 5:13) and to be poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and faith of others (Phil. 2:17).
3. **Loving the Lost:** We believe that Christians are called to proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called us out of darkness (1 Peter 2:9) and to be witnesses to a lost and dying world (2 Cor. 2:14-17; Acts 1:8). Evangelism is how the Church grows. It's the lifeblood of the Church both in terms of numerical growth and in terms of growing in Christlikeness (sanctification).
- a. **Evangelism is An Expectation for Every Member:** Members of the church are expected to have a desire to evangelize both corporately (with the church) and personally. We believe Our Lord's promise that He will build His Church; therefore, we faithfully proclaim the gospel. We do this by handing out tracts, going door to door, and other outreach opportunities. (Matt 28:18-20; 5:11-16; Luke 11:33; 24:45; Acts 5:42; Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:17; 2 Cor 5:18-21; Eph 6:19-20; Phil 1:14; Col 4:3; 2 Thess 3:1; 2 Tim 1:7-8; Matt 10:33).
 - b. **Evangelism is A Primary Focus:** We desire to grow the Church by multiplication instead of addition, meaning we pray that God will save people through our evangelistic efforts more than attract already church people to our

church. At the same time we welcome like minded brothers and sisters who are ready to love whoever the Lord brings to our church.

- c. **Evangelism Requires Sacrificially Loving Difficult People:** Our desire is for the Lord to send the broken, hurting, and hard to love. To spend and be spent for others (2 Cor. 12:15; 2 Tim. 2:10; Acts 20:31).

Updated: 5/5/2026