

# Seven Guiding Values

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## *Summary*

The Conference Leadership perceives that the direction that the Lord is leading the CCCC is consistent with the historic vision and priorities of the Conference. This work flows from the teaching of Scripture and is rooted in the local church. We believe that the Lord is now leading us to join together to do His work in this generation with the same conviction and courage that has characterized the CCCC for over 60 years.

There is a Spirit-driven move happening across the United States that is slowly realigning most Evangelical denominations with God's heart-mission to effectively reach all peoples with the love and the gospel of Christ. Such a move of God is both critical and refreshing given the current spiritual state in which we live. The American Church Research Project's David Olson concludes that there is a crisis facing the American Church. North America is the only continent on the earth where Christianity is not experiencing at least some net growth. In fact, the number of new churches being established is not keeping pace with the decline, let alone impacting the annual population increase America experiences each year.

We are committed to respond by aligning the ministry of the Conference with our God-given mission. We have discerned that the Holy Spirit has confirmed for us seven key "values" that provide the needed focus for the CCCC to faithfully and obediently walk with God into the preferred future He has for us.

## 1. A Culture of Believing Prayer & Intercession

### **Biblical Basis**

In His humanity Jesus was utterly devoted to prayer (Luke 5:16; 6:12-16; 9:18; 9:28-29), and he taught his disciples to be also (Luke 11:1-13; 22:39-46). The Apostles learned this from Jesus and passed on to the early church the importance of devoting themselves to personal and corporate prayer (Acts 1:14; 2:42). The Apostle Paul also exhorted the churches to make believing prayer a central emphasis of life and ministry together (Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:17). By His perfect sacrifice for sin Jesus is the perfect mediator between Holy God and sinful humanity (1 Tim. 2:5). Through Him we can approach God now with boldness and confidence, and He calls us to do so (Heb. 4:14-16). The Church is to come before Him continually with spiritual sacrifices of praise (Heb. 13:15), the sacrifice of our own lives (Rom. 12:1), and fervent intercession for one another and for His Kingdom to come in this world (1 Peter 5:7; James 5:13-18; Matt. 9:36-38)!

## 2. Healthy Pastors

### **Biblical Basis**

The local church pastor is an "under-shepherd" charged with leading a portion of those who belong to Christ (1 Pet. 5:2-4). All pastoral care, direction, protection and nurture find their Source in Christ, the Good Shepherd Who lays down His life for us as seen through the "I Am" statements of Christ (John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9-11, 14-15; 14:6; 15:1-5). Therefore, the local church pastor must find his or her identity and ministry passion solely in Christ Jesus and must lead the flock as much by personal example as by teaching (1 Tim. 4:11-16; Phil. 1:21; Eph.

1:3-14). A healthy pastor does nothing out of selfish ambition or personal gain, but is compelled by the love of Christ (Phil. 2:3; 2 Corinthians 5:14), grows continuously in both skill and in the fruit of the Spirit (2 Peter 1:3-8; Galatians 5:22-23), and has a clear understanding of his or her calling before God – multiplying himself or herself through the making of disciples, co-leaders, and more pastors (2 Tim. 1:3-7; 2:1-2).

### 3. Healthy Disciple-Making Churches

#### **Biblical Basis**

The New Testament teaches that the Church lies at the very center of the eternal purpose of God (Ephesians 1:22). The Church is God's new community, His household (Ephesians 2:19-22). Christ died "to purify for Himself a people that are his very own" (Titus 2:14). So the Church (*ekklesia* = called out assembly) is called out of the world to belong to God, but it is also sent back into the world to witness and to serve (1 Peter 2:9). Our mission is modeled on the mission of Jesus (John 20:21). It is an incarnational mission of going into the world to make disciples who will love God and love others and multiply (Matthew 28:18-20; 22:37-40). The picture of "healthy" church life as described in Acts (2:42-47, 11:19-30, and 13:1-3), was a body of believers devoted to apostolic teaching, *koinonia* (sharing life and mission together), breaking of bread (worship and Eucharist), and prayer. This way of life together was inherently missional and "the Lord added daily to their number those who were being saved." (Acts 2:47) Multiplying disciples was normative, and multiplying communities of disciples in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth was what the gift of the Holy Spirit was given to empower the Church to do (Acts 1:8).

### 4. Healthy Church Multiplication

#### **Biblical Basis**

Jesus taught that a faith response to his incarnation and message of salvation would result in the establishment of the church(es) (Matthew 16:15-18). His final commandment to his disciples was to live as witnesses of his life and message (Acts 1:8) and be involved in a life of making disciples (Matthew 28:18-20). The Book of Acts teaches that the church was the primary vehicle for this disciple-making ministry. Healthy churches, seeking the will of God and relying on the power of the Holy Spirit, became multiplying churches (Acts 13:1-3). Paul's missionary journeys are more appropriately called, "Paul's church planting journeys". More churches developed more disciples which in turn resulted in more churches (Galatians 1:1-5). All New Testament letters, with the exception of Philemon, were written to address the needs of churches and pastors. Church multiplication was a normative part of the life of churches birthed in the first century.

### 5. A Community that Lives out a Shared Life and Shared Mission

#### **Biblical Basis**

God exists as one God in a community of three unique persons (Gen.1:26, 11:7, Deut. 6:4). Not only did he create humankind in his image, but Jesus himself, to whom the whole church belongs, revealed to what end he has shared his glory with his community of followers when he said in John 17:22, "that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me." In that statement is a unity in the church likened to that of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (perfect unity yet distinct), united by love of God for the common purpose of his saving work on earth ("so that the world..."). The Christian life is depicted as a

meal hosted by the Lord and shared by Christ's faithful at his invitation and preparation through his death and resurrection (see Isa. 25:6, Acts 2:42, 1 Cor. 11:25). The church brought to table with the Lord at once reveals a community that is:

- A. Family unit (shared life); see Rom. 8:16, Mat. 12:46-50, Rom. 16:1-16
- B. Submitted to Christ as the host (his purpose becomes our common mission in bringing others to the table); see Matt. 28:18, Eph. 1:22-23
- C. Reconciled to God and one another (a place of peace); see Gen. 31:46, Exo.24:11
- D. Eating/using what the Lord provides (shared gifts through the Spirit); see Eph. 4:4-16

## 6. A Culture of Peacemaking & Reconciliation

### **Preamble on Shalom**

Shalom begins in the reconciliation work of Christ (Ephesians 1:7-14). It continues with reconciliation between those who believe (Matthew 18:15-20). Shalom then engages those who do not have faith in Christ (Hebrews 12:14). The term peacemaking gives us the impression of two opposing opinions or sides whom now "get along." The Biblical concept of Shalom is much different. While Peacemaking is man-centered, Shalom is God-centered. Peacemaking is about arbitration. Shalom is about mirroring God's image. The focus of Shalom is Jesus — not a peace accord. Peacemaking is about what's right or fair. Shalom is about what is righteous and just.

### **Biblical Basis**

In Ephesians 2:14-18 Paul defines Jesus as our Peace. In Matthew 11:28-30 Christ says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." This light burden refers to the Ten Commandments which were summed up in just two statements, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37&39). It is those who live in shalom who mirror the image of Christ. Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the sons of God" (Matthew 5:9).

## 7. A Membership Reflective of the Harvest

### **Field's Diversity**

### **Biblical Basis**

In His Great Commission, Jesus commands the church "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). He simply and clearly states, "all nations," not just the ones we like or that are close by or that agree with us. The body of Christ is composed of all people groups (Galatians 3:26-28), breaking down all human barriers such as race, economic status, gender, or even generations. This has been evident since Pentecost which fulfilled the prophecy that, "I will pour out my Spirit on all people" (Joel 2:28-32, Acts 2:17-18). Practicing for heaven is a worthwhile earthly exercise. Worshipers in heaven recognize the work of Christ to ransom "people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:9-10). One day the kingdom will be comprised of every people group together exercising authority on earth. In the church we are to demonstrate on earth, right now, what will be in his glorious kingdom.