

# **CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST**

## **STANDARDIZED ORDINATION CURRICULUM**

### **PENDING THE APPROVAL OF THE GENERAL BOARD AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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# FOREWORD

Bishop Charles Harrison Mason, the Founder and Senior Bishop of the Church Of God In Christ, Inc., was aware of the need for a standardized, certified approach for ordaining clergy. In 1952, Bishop C. H. Mason commissioned the Board of Bishops to develop and implement a standardized curriculum for use across the length and breadth of the Church. The Church was not a fledgling weak organization but was a growing concern. At this time Bishop Mason entered his season of physical decline. It was a formidable struggle to guide the Church using special commissions and individuals. While sincere men wrestled with issues of authority and organizational structure, Bishop Mason's request for an ordination curriculum was not accomplished. In 1961, our humble and consecrated Founder died.

In 2010, under the leadership of Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake, the General Board, the Board of Bishops, Bishop James O. Patterson, Jr. and the General Assembly; the committee - Bishop William Watson, Dr. David Allen Hall, and Dr. Harold V. Bennett began the arduous task of compiling, developing, editing and testing the Standardized Ordination Curriculum. The technical support and financial assistance of the Publishing Board, its chairman, Attorney John W. Daniels, Jr., and the Church Of God In Christ Publishing House provided the publishing, printing, distribution and logistics to make the project successful. A total team effort was commensurate to the charge.

After nearly three years of development, the Standardized Ordination Curriculum is ready for use. During this period of collaboration 25 jurisdictions provided support and implementation of the curriculum for testing. During this season, the Lord called home Bishop J. O. Patterson, Jr.; Curriculum Vice Chairman, Bishop William Watson; and contributing writer, Bishop Barr K. Thoroughgood.

Those of us who remain are godly proud of the unified effort. We can collectively say in a posthumous way to Senior Bishop Mason, "Yes Sir Bishop! The Job is completed. To God, Be the glory!"

Bishop David Allen Hall, Sr.  
*Curriculum Chairman*

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# OVERVIEW OF ORDINATION

Bishop George Dallas McKinney, Ph.D.

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In 2007, the Church Of God In Christ celebrated 100 years as a Pentecostal Holiness Denomination. From 1897 to 1907, under the leadership of Founder Bishop Charles Harrison Mason, the Denomination existed as an unincorporated Holiness Denomination. A cotton gin in Lexington, Mississippi was its first church. From this humble beginning, the Church has grown to become one of the 10 largest denominations in the United States. There are churches in all 50 states plus a significant presence in 60 countries around the world. The phenomenal growth has taken place by God's grace in spite of the absence of a unified system of Bible Colleges and training institutions. Recognizing the need for a trained clergy, the National leadership has established C. H. Mason Seminary as an affiliate of the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, GA in 1970 and the All Saints Bible College was established in 2000. This was a significant beginning in our effort to provide training for both clergy and laity.

In our Biblical and Protestant tradition, we affirm the Priesthood of the believer and the ordination that Christ offers in John 15:16.

*"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."*

Please note that the Ordination Christ offers, is for every believer. All who are born again and sanctified for God's service are called and ordained to minister and to witness. This ordination by Christ does not obviate the need of denominational ordination of those who are separated and consecrated for service as Pastors/teachers, Evangelist, Missionaries, Chaplains, etc. The ordination by the denomination is a confirmation of Christ's call and the Holy Spirit leading for special ministry and service.

The ordination is not a license to preach. One of the Church fathers rightly proclaimed, "Every born again believer must preach – and use words when necessary." Denominational Ordination should affirm that the ordained person has met certain moral, ethical, spiritual and educational standards and is qualified to practice as a clergyman. Every profession has its standards and procedures for admission to practice in the profession. This is true regarding the practice of medicine, law, accounting, architecture, teaching, etc. Since ministry is the highest calling, should there not be a clearly established procedure of admission to the practice of the "Cure of Souls?"

Further, the ordination procedure gives the denomination an opportunity to screen candidates who pose a danger to the local church and its members. It is



well known fact that many predators, pedophiles, rapists, thieves and other unsavory characters view the church as an easy target. Therefore, the Bishop and the Ordination Board must be vigilant in fulfilling their duty to screen and reject those candidates who pose a threat to the health and safety of the local church and denomination.

Each Bishop presiding over a Jurisdiction is responsible for the establishment of an Ordination Board and examination procedure to facilitate the Elders and his Jurisdiction. The selection of the Ordination Board, the ordination exam and procedure differ from Jurisdiction to Jurisdiction. Some Bishops have developed procedures that require Bible College level classes, character and criminal background checks and board examinations. Others have an informal program that requires a letter of reference from the candidate's pastor and an informal exam.

It is long overdue that the denomination establishes National Ordination standards so that there will be common ground rules and common expectations in each Jurisdiction.

In summary, the Ordination is:

- A recognition that a candidate has come under the authority of God's word and the denominational leadership. It confirms that the candidate represents an established denomination.
- A certification that the candidate has met certain requirements established by the State to perform Priestly duties, such as weddings, conduct funerals, serve as Chaplain in the military, hospitals and other institutions.
- A confirmation that candidates are prepared to serve as Pastor or Shepherd of God's people:
  - a. To organize or accept appointments as leaders of local congregations;
  - b. To administer the sacrament;
  - c. To dedicate public buildings;
  - d. To represent the community of faith in local emergencies and/or disasters;
  - e. To be an ambassador or spokesman for the Kingdom of God.

This proposal establishing a National Standard will make available the best practice to all Bishops and Jurisdictions. The aim and goal is to raise both the spiritual and professional levels of competence in ministry throughout the Church Of God In Christ (COGIC).

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# THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST ORDAINED ELDER

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Bishop William Watson

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## THE CULTURE AND STANDARD

To be an ordained elder in the Church Of God In Christ is to be called to the service of Christ and His church. The term “elder” is used in the Church Of God In Christ and by most Christian churches. The position of elder can be misunderstood by the ordination candidate. This is a culture that must be understood and utilized to help one perform the duties and calling of the office. This is a high calling in the Church Of God In Christ. Whether one operates in the local assembly, the jurisdiction or the general church, the rank of elder is appreciated. It is a term that denotes seniority in the Church. (See discussion about the elder in the Church Of God In Christ Official Manual pages 99-141.) This will inform the candidate of what the expected and hoped for duties of an elder can be. (See I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:4-11.)

In the Church Of God In Christ an ordained elder is defined as one who has successfully completed an apprenticeship period, has shown a satisfactory record, and has shown a satisfactory relationship with his peers and his superiors in the ranks of ministry. He has been trained and educated in the ceremonies and duties of the office. He has exemplified biblical knowledge, prayer life, and ministry abilities. He has worked successfully in the local church as an unlicensed and licensed minister and has been approved after the rigors of ordination examination.

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ELDER AND HIS PASTOR

The Office of Pastor is but one of many gifts in the body of Christ. It is a calling that not every elder will receive. According to the constitution of the Church Of God In Christ, the pastor is the chief executive officer over the congregation. He is the chief interpreter of scripture and responsible for the spiritual formation and nurture of his congregation. Every pastor needs qualified and spiritually mature ordained clergy and elders, to support and help the development of the ministry. The elder should be ready and able to perform all acts of ministry and ceremony. The relationship between him and his pastor should enable them to share in a trusting relationship that will allow the elder without charge to perform ministry unimpeded. Therefore, the elder must maintain respect, humility, and honor for his leader and never seek to outgrow or outshine his pastor. The elder should consider himself an extension of the pastor's desire for effective ministry in the Church. He becomes the chief tool in the pastor's hand for extending and directing the Church in positive

arms to be used upon command.

## **DUTIES OF AN ORDAINED ELDER**

Once one receives the promotion to the office of elder, there are many functions within the Church Of God In Christ, both of a religious and civil nature that are reserved exclusively for one who has achieved the office of an elder i.e., communion, marriage ceremonies, and funerals. Indeed, the secular community in many instances only recognizes acts performed by ordained ministers. For example, one cannot pray in Congress unless one has been ordained by his organization.

After ordination, the elder must continue to serve within the local congregation faithfully fulfilling his calling within the congregation and assisting the pastor as requested. The elder should seek to accentuate the development and growth of the local ministry by supporting the vision of the pastor, while continuing to develop his own ministry. The two are not mutually exclusive. As mentioned earlier, not all elders have been called to the Office of Pastoral. Nevertheless, those who have been called should demonstrate to the Jurisdictional Bishop his preparedness for appointment to a local congregation. Others should focus on those things which are necessary to develop the ministry within the local setting.

The ordained clergy without charge should become an aggressive soul winner. Too many elders that don't serve in the role of pastor do little or nothing. Sitting around without purpose is a waste of the credential. Winning souls is paramount activity. The clergyman should be well versed in the Romans 10 Chapter passage, I John 1:8-10 and II Peter 1:3-11, to cite a few. He should be thoroughly equipped in his explanation of leading people to faith and opening up their understanding about holiness/sanctification. Every pastor should challenge the clergy that God has assigned him to not rest until his skill at soul winning is proven. Every minister reading this text should understand his call to be productive!

The culture and pattern that helps a candidate for ordination can be seen in the Book of I Kings where Elijah and Elisha shared mentor and student relationship. This example is but one of the many examples in the Bible that the Church Of God In Christ considers worthy of helping develop the next group of elders. Another is Paul and Timothy. Another is Titus and Timothy. Each of these became sterling men under the tutelage of men who developed into important leaders for the Lord. The Church Of God In Christ is endeavoring to do the same in the life of every candidate that seeks ordination.

## QUESTIONS:

### Essay:

Explain the role of an ordained elder in the Church Of God In Christ.

### Multiple Choice:

The Bible gives examples of mentor/student relationships. Which of the following does not belong?

- a. Elijah and Elisha
- b. Paul and Timothy
- c. Paul and Titus
- d. David and Jonathan

### True Or False:

The ordained elder is fully empowered to decide which ministries and interpretations of scriptures he will use in the local church. **T or F**

# THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

Dr. Alonzo Johnson with Bishop Martin Luther Johnson

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## THE INTRODUCTION

The goal of this unit is to thoroughly examine the COGIC Statement of Faith (SOF), also known as the Affirmation of Faith (AOF). The phrase Statement of Faith will be used in this document because it is the title that was originally used in our published documents. The SOF is a key document in the COGIC because it is intended to summarize our Basic Doctrines and Articles of Religion, the core doctrines of our church. Aside from summarizing our core doctrines, the SOF also demonstrates how our theology connects with the historic doctrines of the Christian Faith. The first section of this study will examine the role of creeds in the Christian community. Following this, we will look specifically at the affirmations that are contained in the SOF.

### Course Aim:

As a result of completing this course, the student will have a more thorough understanding of basic Bible doctrines, core COGIC doctrines and teachings, and they will more fully understand the strengths and weaknesses of other non-Christian groups and Christian churches.

## THE TEACHER'S GUIDE

The Guide includes a more extensive glossary of terms, examination questions and answers, copies of each version of the Statement of Faith, and practical insights on teaching the course.

### A. Readings and Supporting Documents

The Official Manual, 1940 Edition

The Official Manual, 1957 Edition

The Official Manual, 1973 Edition

The COGIC Hymnal, 1982

Church Of God In Christ Discipleship Bible, Centennial Edition

Ithiel C. Clemmons, Bishop Charles Harrison Mason and the Roots  
Church Of God In Christ.

E. J. Dabney, What it Means to Pray Through

John H. Leigh, Creeds of the Churches, 1973

J.N.D. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrine, 1978 Edition

Hank Hanegraaff, Christianity in Crisis: 21st Century, 2008

## I. Activities

When you get to the section with the individual affirmations of the Statement of Faith, have the students to break into groups and write answers to each of these questions for every affirmation:

What claims are we rejecting? What is the biblical basis for our rejection of each claim? Why? What is the biblical support for each claim? Have the students to use their Official Manual to identify the doctrines that are disapproved by COGIC; note specifically how the affirmations in the Statement of Faith speak to these doctrines that have been disapproved.

Have students to do a study of the theology of Bishop Carlton Pearson and compare his beliefs with the affirmations in the Statement of Faith.

## THE COGIC STATEMENT OF FAITH (SOF)

### Version One

We Believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible written Word of God. We Believe that there is One God, eternally existent in three Persons; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

We Believe in the Blessed Hope, which is the rapture of the Church of God, which is in Christ at His return.

We Believe that the only means of being cleansed from sin, is through repentance and faith in the precious Blood of Jesus Christ **and being baptized in water**. We believe that regeneration by the Holy Ghost is absolutely essential for personal salvation.

We Believe that the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross provides healing for the human body in answer to believing in prayer.

We Believe that the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, according to Acts 2:4, is given to believers who ask for it.

We Believe in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling, the Christian is enabled to live a holy and separated life in this present world. Amen.

**Version Two** *(the version of the Statement of Faith that is currently most widely used and referenced as the Affirmation of Faith, as opposed to the Statement of Faith )*

We Believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible written Word of God.

Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

We Believe in the Blessed Hope, which is the rapture of the Church of God which is in Christ at His return.

We Believe that the only means of being cleansed from sin, is through repentance and faith in the precious Blood of Jesus Christ.

We Believe that regeneration by the Holy Ghost is absolutely essential for personal salvation.

We Believe that the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross provides healing for the human body in answer to believing prayer.

We Believe that the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, according to Acts 2:4, is given to believers who ask for it.

We Believe in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling, the Christian is enabled to live a Holy and separated life in this present world. Amen.

## COMPARING THE STATEMENT OF FAITH AND THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The first and most obvious difference between the Statement of Faith and the Affirmation of Faith is structural and refers to the layout. The SOF contains six statements that state eight distinct doctrinal affirmations. The AOF, on the other hand, is broken down into eight statements containing same eight affirmations. With the exception of what I will note below, the contents of the two statements are the same. The major difference between the SOF and the AOF centers on this affirmation: *“We Believe that the only means of being cleansed from sin, is through repentance and faith in the precious Blood of Jesus Christ and **being baptized in water.**”* This latter phrase, **“and being baptized in water”** is, rightfully so, omitted from the AOF; thus the statement ends with what we actually believe, that “We Believe that the only means of being cleansed from sin is through repentance and faith in the precious Blood of Jesus Christ.” As a body, the Church Of God In Christ has never taught that water baptism is a requirement for salvation. Water baptism is neither a precondition for nor does it produce salvation. It is an ordinance of the church that we participate in because we are already saved. It is done out of obedience but it is not required for salvation. The phrase, as it was presented in the original SOF is misplaced and reflects, whether intentionally or not, an Apostolic-Pentecostal perspective that we have long rejected. Apostolic-



Pentecostals have long been noted for their reference to Acts 2:38 as their justification of the belief that water baptism is a pre-condition for salvation, without which one cannot truly be saved. We have, on solid biblical grounds, rejected this notion. (We will address this issue more fully below)

The second key difference between the SOF and the AOF centers on one word, "in"; which is not a major point, but it is important to note. In the SOF, we have this phrase regarding our teaching on healing: *"We Believe that the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross provides healing for the human body in answer to believing in prayer."* The correction is made in the AOF as the word "in" is removed after "believing." We do not believe that healing comes because we believe "in" prayer, for even demons and sinners believe in prayer. But miracles of healing come because of "believing prayer", prayer that is made by faith (James 5:15).

## KEY TERMS

- |                                |                              |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Statement of Faith          | 24. Doctrine of Soteriology  |
| 2. Creed                       | 25. Sola Fides               |
| 3. Apostles' Creed             | 26. Sola Christus            |
| 4. Nicene Creed                | 27. Sola Gratia              |
| 5. Ordinances                  | 28. Sola Scriptura           |
| 6. The Articles of Religion    | 29. Initial Evidence         |
| 7. Heresy                      | 30. Holiness Codes           |
| 8. Orthodox                    | 31. New Age Spirituality     |
| 9. Judiazers                   | 32. Mysticism                |
| 10. Apologetics                | 33. Prosperity Preaching     |
| 11. Early Church               | 34. Revelation               |
| 12. Roman Emperor              | 35. Fivefold Ministry        |
| 13. Seven Ecumenical Councils  | 36. Prophetic Anointing      |
| 14. Deity                      | 37. The Office of a Prophet  |
| 15. Chalcedon                  | 39. Verbal Inspiration       |
| 16. Read-On Preaching          | 40. Plenary Inspiration      |
| 17. Word Church                | 41. Literal Infallibility    |
| 18. Biblical Infallibility     | 42. Historical Criticism     |
| 19. Biblical Inerrancy         | 43. Redaction Criticism      |
| 20. Normative Authority        | 44. Literary Criticism       |
| 21. Rapture                    | 45. Pre-Tribulation Rapture  |
| 22. Tribulation Period         | 46. Mid-Tribulation Rapture  |
| 23. Millennial Reign of Christ | 47. Post-Tribulation Rapture |

## CREEDS IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

Creeds, statements of faith, affirmations of faith, and such statements have been in existence in the Christian church since the **New Testament Era**. They are significant in that they are designed to summarize the core doctrines and practices of religious organizations. They have been developed in response to two key factors. On the one hand, creeds were developed by the church in order to protect itself from the false doctrines and teachings of people within the church, some of whom would be deemed as **heretics**. The beliefs of **heretics** were rejected and deemed heretical (totally contrary to the faith). The Creeds were developed in order to make the normative **orthodox** positions clear. (Paul's struggles against the **Judiazers** in the Galatian church is an example of what the church has had to do in order to rid itself of false, heretical teachers). On the other hand, the church developed creeds in order to defend its core beliefs against the claims of an unbelieving world. This task of defending the faith against the claims of unbelievers is properly known in the history of the church as **apologetics**.

In the **Early Church**, within the first and second centuries, and in the Middle Ages, the pressures on the church to clarify its doctrines led to great debates within and outside of the church. Ultimately it required intervention from the **Roman Emperor** to bring together church leaders from throughout the Empire, representing all theological positions, into the first of what would be known as the Seven **Ecumenical Councils** of the church, which took place between 325 A.D. and 787 A.D. In these councils, the church had to make decisions about what they regarded as the true, biblically and historically accurate, doctrines of the church. The principal creeds of the **Middle Ages** were produced during these Ecumenical Councils.

New converts, Christian being persecuted for their faith, leaders of all ranks, learned and repeated creeds as a means of demonstrating their Christian commitment. For some of them, this commitment would lead to their death. One of the earliest creeds that was produced in the history of the church was the **Apostles' Creed**. It is traced back to the 2nd Century, but its core claims go back to the First Century. The creed's significance is linked to several factors. To begin with, it was useful for training new converts and was used as a tool for preparing people for baptism. During this period of time, Christians were still being put to death in the Roman Empire for confessing their faith in Christ. Having a core of beliefs as the defining statements of Christian doctrine was literally a life and death matter for these early believers. So in this creed we have a summary of the core beliefs of the Christian faith stated in a succinct form:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

The first creed to emerge from one of the Ecumenical Councils was the **Nicene Creed** of 325 AD, which was produced by the Nicene Council. The demand for the creed was fueled by the fact that the church, from Bishops to the laity, was split down the middle regarding what it believed about the person and work of Jesus. More specifically, they had to deal with a couple of primary questions.

- (1). Do we believe in Oneness of God, monotheism?
- (2). Is Jesus Christ equal to, subordinate to, of the same nature as God the Father?
- (3). How did Jesus Christ come to be who he is as the “Son of God?”

In response to these questions and others, the church put forth the following claims in what has come to be known as the Nicene Creed:

We believe in one God, the Father All Governing, creator of all things visible and invisible; And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the son of God, begotten of the Father as only begotten, that is, from the essence of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not created, of the same essence as the Father, through whom all things came into being, both in heaven and in earth; Who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate, becoming human. He suffered and the third day he rose, and ascended into the heavens. And he will come to judge both the living and the dead. And in the Holy Spirit.

In the creed, and the postscript, we see clearly the Early Church’s concern about protecting the doctrine of the **diety** and eternality of Jesus Christ. To suggest that Jesus was anything less than and God was deemed heretical and the Nicene Creed stands as the historical statement on the Church’s prevailing understanding of Jesus’ relationship to God the Father. This statement has been the cornerstone of Christian theology since its inception in 325 AD. The Constantinopolitan Creed of 381 AD was developed in response to the question of the diety and authority of the Holy Spirit. One sees in it an extension

of the claims of the Nicene Creeds regarding the person and work of Jesus. In this instance, however, they are made in regards to the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

*“And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and life-giver, Who proceeds from the Father, Who is worshipped and glorified together with the Father and Son, Who spoke through the prophets.”*

In the decades following the passage of the Creed of further theological and biblical debates emerged requiring further attention from church leaders. In 451, for example, another council at **Chalcedon** yielded a new creed that focused on the question of how the church understood the relationship between the humanity and the divinity of Christ (see the chapter on theology)

## **EVERYTHING IS GOING DOWN BUT THE WORD OF GOD! THE COGIC STATEMENT OF FAITH**

As we examine the COGIC Statement of Faith, we must look beyond the specific statements in the document and consider also some of the other factors that shaped its emergence. In studying the development, content, and the structure of the Statement of Faith, we notice that COGIC history and doctrine are shaped by our great reverence for the Word of God. From the life and teachings of Bishop Charles Harrison Mason, our Founder, our Biblical Doctrines, Articles on Religion, our unofficial Statement of Faith, our congregational songs, and personal testimonies, to the sermons that we preach weekly, our deference to the Word of God is unquestionable. In the historical unit in this book, Dr. David Daniels, III, notes the following, which should be kept in mind here:

The Church Of God In Christ published three key doctrinal statements. By 1909, a brief theological statement on God was published. This statement discussed the Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. By 1918, the brief theological statement from around 1909 was expanded to include such topics as Fallen Nature, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Water Baptism, the Second Coming of Christ, Sabbath, General Church Officers, Church Property, and Political Government. In 1928, the General Assembly included the expanded doctrinal statement within the constitution. In the 1930s, the first edition of the Church Of God In Christ manual was published with a set of Articles of Religion which focused on the doctrines of the Trinity, Scripture, Creation, the Church, Justification, Sanctification, the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, the Second Coming, and other topics.

he topics that are noted in these articles are strongly and thoroughly biblical. Among us, you could hear songs that pointed to the “power” and the authority” of the Word of God in the lives of believers. With conviction, passion and fervor we sing: *“Everything is Going Down, But the Word of God, Everything is Going Down, But the Word of God!”* *“Every word of God is Right!”* *“In the Word of God, I’ve Got a Hiding Place, in the Word of God, I’ve Got a Hiding Place. . . Throw Me Overboard, I’ve Got a Hiding Place, Throw Me Overboard, I’ve Got a Hiding Place!”* *“Preach the Word, Preach the Word, Preach the Word, if I Never Ever See You Anymore!”*

Beyond our singing, our Word-centered faith is revealed in the folk preaching tradition that emerged among, **“Read On” preaching**. Using the gifts and the voice(s) of readers, our leaders led their people in word-by-word, line-upon-line, precept-upon-precept, explorations of the sacred texts of Scripture. Whether teaching on family values, ministerial ethics, church decorum, giving an impassioned Sunday Sermon, or a Friday night pastoral message, the primary reference point in “Read On” preaching was the Bible. To be sure, this practice emerged in part because of the strength of the African American oral traditions and spoken word traditions, coupled with the literacy challenges that plagued many ministers. But it would be a great mistake to reduce the emergence of the “Read On” preaching style as a simple evolution from these two social forces. More deeply than the oral traditions and the literacy issues was the profound yearning in the COGIC tradition to be a **“Word Church,”** [decades before this term would become popularized by persons in the **Word of Faith Movement**--a name given to churches that grew out of the Holiness-Pentecostal works and ministries of the likes of Oral Roberts and Kenneth Hagin, Sr.

### **The First Affirmation: What do we Believe About the Bible?**

We Believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible written Word of God.

### **TEACHING INSTRUCTIONS: Reference the Articles of Religion, the sections covering the Bible**

This affirmation answers the question: What is Scripture? In answering this fundamental question, we state categorically that the Bible is God’s definitively written Word. In addition to telling us what the Bible is, this affirmation also tells us what we believe about the Bible. The following statement from our Official Manual of 1940 is very instructive in explaining our view of the Bible.

complete and infallible guide and standard of authority in all matters of religion and morals; therefore, whatever it teaches is to be believed and whatever it commands is to be obeyed, and whatever it condemns is to be renounced as both wrong and sinful; and whatever is not read therein nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man as necessary to salvation. 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

This statement, as is the case with our earlier doctrinal statements in the Articles of Religion, and our SOF, does not identify us with a particular “school” of biblical interpretation, whether evangelical, conservative, fundamentalist or liberal. Nor does it address many of the critical issues of biblical scholarship which have been raised for centuries by scholars regarding what the church should preach and teach about the Bible.

In some denominations, the Bible is simply a historical reference point for understanding how God has revealed Himself to us in human history. They believe that the historical, literary, scientific, moral, and theological claims of the Bible must be interpreted with the use of modern, scientific scholarly tools. On the other end of the spectrum, there are churches who believe that the Bible is to be interpreted literally and is to be understood as the “Word” of God in its fullest sense. As the Word of God, it is only understood by faith, through divine revelation; and the tools of modern science may assist us in explaining certain facts about Scripture but they can never fully explain the Bible without the benefit of faith. This approach to the scriptures argue that all of the historical, scientific, literary, theological and moral references in the Bible are to be read literally and believed to be true. The theories about how to interpret the Bible gave rise to the notions of **the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Bible, literal infallibility, historical criticism**, redaction criticism, literary criticism, and a host of other methods for interpreting the Bible.

The questions raised in biblical scholarship regarding the literary, historical, scientific and theological contents of the Bible also played major roles in the development of various versions of the Bible, such as the King James Version, Revised Standard Version, the New International Version, etc. Again, as our approach to Scripture does not endorse a particular brand of biblical scholarship, it also does not specifically endorse a particular version of the Bible. The closest and most explicit statement on this subject is in our 1973 Official Manual, where the writers are clearly referencing an approach to the Bible that employs the tools of Christian fundamentalists, without an official endorsement of that scholarly tradition:

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God and contains one harmonious and sufficiently complete system of doctrine; that all of their parts are consistent with each other; and that it is our duty to trace out this consistency by a careful investigation of the meaning of particular passages. . . . We believe in the full inspiration of the Word of God. (By inspiration we mean the act whereby God, the Holy Ghost, gave us the scriptures communicating the truth to us through the agency of fallible men, of any kind and that even to the most minute detail, we might receive the truth which God, the Primary Author, intended to convey to us. (p.40).

As this statement reveals, our preaching and teaching have historically been closer to conservative biblical scholarship and we tend to take the Bible at face value, reading it more literally and believing what it says. However, since the purpose of this affirmation is to state the significance of the Bible to our faith, the key here is simply to note that we believe the Bible to be the "absolute" final authority on matters of faith, morality, and polity. We have not attempted to eliminate critical discussions or to avoid questions about the Bible, but we are absolutely clear about the fact that it is, whatever the version, and irrespective of the approach, always exclusively "God's Word." As God's Word, we have never approached it for the purpose of fostering or promoting scholarly debates, however important these may be. Our goal has always been to view the Bible as the book that provides us living information about a living God, who wants His church of today to experience His glory as the New Testament church did. As you read all of the affirmations that are contained in the SOF, you will see each revolves around our interpretation of Scripture and our attempt to point to its relevance in our daily lives. The Bible for us is primary because of the following key reasons:

1. It is the only book that fully explains God's plan for human salvation.
2. It is the definitive reference point for the church's preaching and teaching on the future of human history, the eternal destiny of each believer, and the future state of the church.
3. It is the source of all true doctrine.
4. It is the primary reference point for shaping our moral vision, determining what we believe to be right and wrong.
5. It is the guideline that we follow in teaching and modeling discipleship among believers.
6. The Bible is central in COGIC faith and practice because here we see the "model" of the church, as demonstrated in the New Testament. As a New Testament based denomination, COGIC, following Bishop

...Mason, looks to the Bible as a reference point for what we believe the church should be today. One of the problems that Bishop Mason had with the professors at Arkansas Baptist College centered on, and according to Bishop Ithiel Clemmons, the fact that he did not agree with the way that some professors interpreted the Bible. Bishop Mason believed that the church of today should seek to experience God in a manner that was similar to the New Testament experience. This included being sanctified, filled with the Holy Ghost and receiving miracles from God. The Bible is the book that tells us the story of God's interaction with His church; it is absolutely essential for the church to model biblical spirituality, as well as doctrine.

Among these points, the first is the primary and most significant in determining our approach to the Bible. It is significant for us because it gives us the plan of salvation. Doctrines and moral practices that reject or belittle the priority of the Bible are problematic for us and are ultimately to be rejected. Among the reasons why we do not follow the teachings of Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Mormons, Masons, to name a few, is that each of them require a person to seek salvation by following the teachings of other sacred books aside from the Bible, such as the Koran, the Book of Mormon, The Watch Tower, etc.

**The Second Affirmation: This Affirmation addresses the question: Who is the God of the Bible?**

We Believe that there is One God, eternally existent in three Persons; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

**TEACHING INSTRUCTIONS: Reference the Articles of Religion, the sections covering the Doctrines of God (Theology), the Son (Christology) and the Holy Spirit (Pneumatology).**

This affirmation asserts our Trinitarian beliefs. If the first affirmation of the Statement of Faith affirms the Bible as the "inspired and only infallible Word of God," the second affirmation addresses our view of the God who stands behind the Word. The doctrine of the Trinity, like the doctrine of the Incarnation of Jesus, the Virgin Birth, the resurrection, and the 2nd Coming of Christ, is a doctrine that can only be fully grasped through faith and revelation. The best of human reason and thought can never fully explain the doctrine. Nevertheless, we have not moved away from affirming it and explaining why we believe in the Trinity. To begin with, we must note that the word "Trinity" is not a biblical term. Therefore, we need to begin by explaining why we believe that it offers the best and fullest understanding of the God of the Bible.



roughout the Bible, God is revealed to us as one who is three-in-one and e-in-three. When and wherever we see God in Scripture, the three-in-e and one-in-three basis is maintained. God is never Father, Son, or Holy irit; rather, from Genesis to Revelation God is always revealed as Father, n, and Holy Spirit, always "three" and always "one." Our doctrine of the inity is thoroughly biblical and primarily rooted in the New Testament. We ed only begin with the life and teachings of Jesus to understand why we are oroughly and definitively Trinitarian.

### **he Trinity and the Birth of Jesus.**

Matthew and Luke are the only two of the Four Gospels that have the infancy arratives, the stories about the birth and early Life of Christ. In both books, e are told that Jesus' conception and birth were acts initiated and made possible through the Holy Spirit. Yes, we literally believe that Jesus was miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit, as Matthew 1:18 and Luke 1:35 say: Luke 1:35: The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will e called[a] the Son of God. (NIV)

Matthew 1:18: 18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about[a]: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came ogether, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

Matthew and Luke are nothing if not clear about the role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' birth. And, as Luke notes, the Holy Spirit's work is not in isolation from the Father's "power" that was working in order to make the conception happen. What we see here is the action of one God who manifests as Father and Holy Spirit in making the birth of Jesus possible. As a matter of faith and as a subject of human reason, this idea does not make rational sense. It flies in the face of our normal experiences, it defies all that we understand about the laws of nature, and the principles of science. Yet, from these and a host of other biblical references, we are left with this major theological principle, the doctrine of the Incarnation, God becoming "flesh" and dwelling among us (John 1). And from this we see the Trinitarian basis of New Testament thought.

This pattern, that of God manifesting Himself in the life of Jesus directly, with the undergirding of the Holy Spirit. In two of the key ceremonial events of Jesus' life, his baptism and in the inauguration of his public ministry, we likewise see how the Father and Holy Spirit work together in Jesus' life. When he was baptized, as Luke 3: 22-23 says: 22 and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: You are

was about thirty years old when he began his ministry.” These references are not accidental, they reflect the New Testament’s fundamental teachings about who God is, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. When Jesus got ready to begin His public ministry, the Holy Spirit “led” (drove) Him into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil (Luke 4:1).

## **Jesus’ Teachings**

No New Testament references to the Trinity is stronger than those which are appended to the lips of Jesus. Jesus thought and taught in strong Trinitarian terms. To begin with, He understood Himself totally and absolutely in terms of His divine “Sonship.” Sonship is a meaningless doctrine without the notion of the Fatherhood of God. These references are perhaps strongest in the Gospel of John. Jesus claims “oneness” with the Father John 14:9-11:

9 Jesus answered: Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, Show us the Father? 10 Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. 11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.

If we follow the Lord’s words, we must conclude that He acknowledged His definitive and absolute connection to God the Father, recognizing their distinction in “person”, i.e. as Father & Son, but the unity in being: “I am in the Father and the Father is in me.” John’s Gospel makes the connection between Jesus and God more emphatic and puts it in its eternal perspective: John 1:1-21 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2.(NIV) He was with God in the beginning. John makes extensive references to the Trinitarian basis of Jesus’ thought. The following are a few:

### **1. John 14:26**

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. John 14:25-27 (in Context) John 14 (Whole Chapter)

### **2. John 15:26**

[ The Work of the Holy Spirit ] “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. John 15:25-27 (in Context) John 15 (Whole Chapter)

### 3. John 16:13

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. John 16:12-14 (in Context) John 16 (Whole Chapter)

### 4. John 16:15

All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.” John 16:14-16 (in Context) John 16 (Whole Chapter) (NIV)

What we learn from these and countless other references is that Jesus’ understanding of Himself was entirely shaped by this Trinitarian idea of His equality with the Father and the Holy Spirit’s union and equality with the two of them.

## OTHER NEW TESTAMENT REFERENCES TO THE TRINITY

The Epistles are filled with statements that fit within our understanding of the Trinity. One of the more moving is found in Titus 3:4-6:

4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior. (NIV)

The language here is so clear and so direct, and it is so Trinitarian in scope. God’s love is manifested through Christ, and perfected in the believer through the Holy Spirit. The power, kindness, and love that produce salvation are acts of God, the Father; but Paul notes that the Father’s love is demonstrated through His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus’ act to save us was performed when He died on the Cross. But the Holy Spirit’s work was necessary because it provides the cleansing, spiritual, power that was necessary in order to save human beings. Paul’s statements in Ephesians 1 correspond to what he says here. God the Father provides heavenly blessings to believers through Christ. This salvation is “sealed” through the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:3; 10-14). The benedictory statement in II Corinthians 13: 13-14 further supports our approach to the Trinitarian themes of the New Testament. “13 All God’s people here send their greetings. 14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” (NIV). Aside from these direct references, many New Testament passages support our teachings on the Trinity, among them are: Matthew 28:19; Romans 8:1-2, 4; Acts 10:38; Hebrews 9:14; I Peter 1:3; Eph 4:4-6)

Beginning with Genesis 1, the Bible uses various names, titles and descriptions for God, “El,” “Elohem,” “Lord,” “Yehweh,” “I am that I am.” These and a host of other terms point to God’s supremacy, omnipotence (all-powerful), omnipresent (fully present everywhere), omniscient (all-knowing), “incomprehensible,” and “unknowable.” In this doctrine we come to a fact beyond our ability to grasp: at worst God is completely unknowable to us as human beings; at best we can learn some things about Him and speak of those things that God elects to reveal to us about Himself. From its earliest Jewish and Ancient Near Eastern foundations, the God of the Bible is declared to be the creator of the universe, Genesis 1:1. From the heavens and the earth, the celestial bodies, to all of the life and vegetation on earth, to the creation of man and woman, the God of the Bible is first and foremost known as the creator. Aside from being the creator, we learn early on in the Old Testament that God, while being One, is manifested as a plural being. Thus it is said in Genesis 1:26: “Let us make man in our own image.” The statement affirms the “eternal oneness of God”, which is to say that we are monotheists. Yet we believe that the God of the Bible is at one and the same time always manifested to us as being three persons in one being: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

### **The Trinity and the Apostolic View of the Godhead**

Our statement on the Trinity emerged over time and in response to some internal and external forces within Christendom. For example, in the 1957 version of the Articles of Religion, there is a much more extensive discussion of what we believe about the Trinity. It added more biblical references and more specific elaboration on exactly why we adhere to a Trinitarian faith. This was not an accidental or incidental occurrence; in fact it happened in response to the growing influence of Apostolic Pentecostalism. The Pentecostal movement experienced a severe split in 1917 when the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World organization was started. While maintaining the holiness doctrine, and the Pentecostal doctrine of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, just as other Apostolic Pentecostal after them, denied the doctrine of the Trinity. Many accused the Church Of God In Christ and other Trinitarian Pentecostals as heretics and claimed that we worshipped “Three Gods,” the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They also rejected our baptismal formula: “In the Name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost,” and instead baptized their converts “in Jesus’ Name.” From the pulpit to the airways of local and national radio, our leaders affirmed our Trinitarian convictions against the Apostolic denial of the Trinity and their rejection of our

aptismal formula.

Our statement on the Trinity has evolved in over a period of time in opposition to the claims of Apostolic-Pentecostal rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity. For the purpose of this study, we should note that Apostolic-Pentecostals do not differ with us in believing that there is a "Godhead," the idea that God is manifested in history as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit respectively. Nor do they deny, like the modernist **Unitarians**, the deity of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Instead, Apostolic-Pentecostals differ with us over the question of the "oneness" of God. Our primary disagreement is over the question of the "oneness" of God. We believe that it is the idea of the Trinity, that is of their being "one" God, manifested equally and fully as one being, through three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The three are equal in authority and are always fully manifested in each other. When we speak of God the Father, it is because of the fact that He has a Son, Jesus, and that the Holy Spirit is both the gift and the power of God operating in the world today. When and wherever they operate, the three are always to be understood as one being. It is impossible to separate the three beings of the Trinity from each other.

Apostolic-Pentecostals, on the other hand, believe that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are titles that point to three distinct manifestations of the being of God. They are never to be understood as to imply that the three are always equal and always manifested in and through other at the same time. In defending the biblical and theological grounds for their doctrine of the oneness of God, however, they fall into the Third-Century theological heresy that was associated with the works of a writer by the name of **Saballius**. He is credited with helping to foster the doctrine identified as **Modalism**, shaped by their peculiar understanding of the Godhead. Modalist argued that there is indeed a Godhead, but unlike Trinitarians, they believe that the Godhead can only be known through the various "operations," actions, or functions that the individual members of the Godhead take on at one time. They further argue that these operations of God are linked to dispensational periods, with each person of the Godhead acting independently in His role during a specific epoch. Thus, they claim that God is manifested as the Father in Creation (in the Old Testament), Son in Redemption (in the Gospels), and as the Holy Spirit (from the Ascension of Jesus throughout the history of the Church.) The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, then are related in that they are represent "one" manifestation of God in these given acts and dispensations.

Apostolic Pentecostals follow this same line of theological reasoning. In their doctrine, Jesus Christ is the "fullness" of the Godhead. And at given times He is known as Father, Son, or Holy Spirit; "Jesus is the Father, Son

...the Holy Ghost, so say the lyrics of a song. In both the Apostolic Pentecostal view and the Modalist foundation, the goal is to preserve the idea of the “persons” of the Godhead without affirming the doctrine of the Trinity. The central problem with the Modalist view is this claim that the Godhead only operates in specific “modes.” The modes suggest that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit can be distinctly separated from each other in terms of their function and manifestation. Fatherhood is an expression of who God is, Jesus the man was likewise a manifestation of God acting in a particular mode; as is the case with the Holy Spirit, who manifests God on an ongoing basis in the church.

## A Biblical Critique of Modalism

The problem with Modalist view is that it misses the most fundamental component of Jesus’ teachings about Himself. You cannot separate who Jesus was from His expressed relationship to His Father, as John reminds us, John 14:9-11.

9 Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10 Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. 11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.”

When Jesus spoke of His Father, He is not simply making reference to a particular expression of God, He was speaking about an inseparable relationship that He shares with His Father; they are “one.” They are one in terms of action and in terms of “being.” If we take the Modalist view at face value there would be no Godhead. Instead we would only have God appearing to us in these three “forms” or “roles”, without the biblical idea of God’s oneness.

There was never a time when Jesus was not “one” with the Father and the Holy Spirit. We believe that the persons of the Godhead cannot be separated in either way. One only has to look closely at the teachings of Jesus and the teachings of the Apostles to see that the entirety of New Testament theology is based on the idea that the Trinity is the definitive manifestation of who God is. And we get this principle most strongly from the person and teachings of Jesus: *“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”* (Col. 1:8).

Gal. 4:4: But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, 5. to redeem those under law, that we might receive

the full rights of sons. 6. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son to our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." 7. So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir. From the testimony of Scripture, interpreted through the light of God's revelation, our doctrine of God concludes the following:

(1) The **Godhead**. That God is one, but this oneness is manifested in three personalities. Thus we derived the notion of the "Godhead," God in Three persons, Blessed Trinity.

(2) God the Father. That though being one Godhead, God is made known to us as "the Father as indicative of a special relation between him and another person whom the Scriptures call his only begotten Son." (1957) More important to us than God's male image is the fact of His being the Creator of all things and his special relationship with his Son, Jesus Christ.

(3) Jesus is God's Son & Our Christ. The special Sonship and messianic identity of Jesus Christ is the very heart of all of New Testament theology. No truths are more abundantly proclaimed in Scripture than that Jesus is uniquely the Son of God, that God is His Father, and that of Jesus is eternally "The Christ." He was not one man among many, one Christ among others, a messiah. He was The Son of God, The Christ, and Israel's Messiah. In this sense, we reject all attempts to understand the birth, life, ministry, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus apart from what the Scriptures declare of Him as the Christ. This affirmation calls into question, rejects, and declares unscriptural all claims that Jesus Christ was anything but the Third Person of the Trinity. And He did not "become" the Son of God, He did not "become" the Christ. He need not become who He already was, as John says in Chapter 1: 1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." As the Christ, Jesus is eternally the Son of God. He was born of the Holy Spirit, He lived a sinless life, and His death provided salvation for all human beings. The modern notions of a "Christ" who lives within sinful human beings, or operates in the world apart from the work of the Trinity is unbiblical at best.

(4) The person and work of the Holy Spirit center on the fact that He is and always have been at one with, fully united to the Father and the Son. Their unity is eternal and absolute, in that you cannot have one without the other. The Holy Spirit is not simply an expression of God; He is an expression of the "fullness" of God, the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is "universally" present and manifested throughout God's created order. However, we do not equate the

connected to the Trinity or is divorced from biblical revelation. In this sense then, we do not believe that the Holy Spirit is necessarily the “same” spirit that is manifested in other religions or through human consciousness. Such New Age ideas run counter to and counter the Trinitarian claims of the Bible

### **The Third Affirmation: Our Confessions About the Future of God's World And His Church**

We Believe in the Blessed Hope, which is the rapture of the Church of God, which is in Christ at His return

### **TEACHING INSTRUCTIONS: Reference the Articles of Religion, the sections covering the Doctrines of “Last Things” (Eschatology)**

In this affirmation, we affirm our belief about the end of human history. Here we address the question: What is the end Christian end to history? As it is affirmed in our two preceding postulates, our view of the end of history is shaped by the Bible. We worship the God of Scripture, who is revealed as the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. From the Word of God, we gather with great faith and confidence that the *“The Earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,”* (Psalms 24:1). The created order began with God, who is the Alpha in Genesis, and will end with God, who is Omega in the book of Revelation. The hope of every believer individually, of the church and of human history in general is in the hands of God. We believe that human history is headed toward a definite end.

In our earliest versions of the Articles of Religion, our statements on eschatology are couched in a statement on the Second Coming. The statement there is succinct and states what the crux of our faith, that is that we believe in the New Testament idea of the Second Coming of Christ. The statement reads as follows:

We believe in the second coming of Christ and that the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife will be caught up to meet him in the air. 1st (Sic) Thes. 4:16-17: “For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. . .)

This statement contains a couple of key references which connect with the Statement of Faith and also gets more fully explained in the 1973 Official Manual: a. The Second Coming itself b. The notion of the bride and the Lamb. c. The Rapture. In the 1973 Official Manual, twelve distinct subjects are covered in explaining our doctrine of eschatology by further elaborating



1 some biblical doctrines that are related to the subject but not spelled out  
1 our earlier statements, such as: "Physical Death, Bodily Resurrection the  
intermediate State, the Second coming of Christ, the Anti-Christ, the Tribu-  
tion, the Battle of Armageddon, the Millennium, the Judgments, after the  
Millennium, the Future of the Wicked and Heaven." What you do not find  
1 our SOF or in our Articles of Religion is a definitive statement explain-  
ing whether we believe in the **Pre-Tribulation, Mid-Tribulation, or Post-  
Tribulation** view of the Rapture, and definitive statements on other related  
topics such as **dispensationalism**. We have always had varying opinions on  
these matters. What is not a matter of debate, however, is our belief God's  
absolute claim upon the destiny of His created order.

At any rate, our views about how God's future for the world is to be mani-  
fested among us are shaped by our reading of Scripture. Beginning in the Old  
Testaments prophetic works of Daniel, Amos, Joel, among others, we find a  
view of history that is at the root of our eschatology. The eschaton refers to  
an end, or the end of history, the end of the world and the end of humankind  
on earth as we know it. The end (**eschaton**) of foreign domination in the mind  
of some Old Testament thinkers was the **Messianic age**, while others under-  
stood it as the end of the world as seen in Joel 2: 30-32.

The New Testament Christian Community was an **eschatological**, or an end  
time community. Towards the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus began to  
prepare his disciples for his death, burial, resurrection, and His Second Com-  
ing. In John 14, he reminds them that He was leaving, but He would be re-  
turning to receive them. After Jesus ascended back to heaven, the disciples  
eagerly expected his sudden return. They greeted each other with the word  
"**Maranatha**," which means, "come Lord Jesus," (1 Cor. 16:22). The early  
Church was a waiting congregation, believing that the Lord would appear at  
any moment to rapture them. This idea, or reality is indicated in the teachings  
of Jesus as is seen in Matthew 25:31-46 and Luke 10:18, where Jesus points  
to an end time community with His references to the dividing of sheep and the  
fall of Satan from heaven (the celestial realm, upper atmosphere, not from  
the abode of God) as lightning (a rapid speed).

The Church Of God In Christ's faith in the Blessed Hope is consistent with  
the faith of the Church during the Pauline era. However, by the time of Paul,  
the church's teachings about the future shifted from the Jewish notion of the  
expectation of a Messiah, which was fulfilled in Jesus, to an **apocalyptic**,  
time-driven view with specific calculations about the date and times of Jesus'  
Second Coming. Apocalyptic writings are found in the Old and New Testa-  
ments. e.g. Isaiah 2: 12, 13:6,9; Zephaniah 1:7; Malachi 4:5-6; I Corinthians

...in I Corinthians 15:2, I Thessalonians 5:2, I Peter 5:10. It is interesting that each of the texts quoted above uses the term, “The Day of the Lord” and not the “Lord’s Day.” The “Day of the Lord” is an eschatological, or an end time expression that alludes to the end while the “Lord Day” refers to the Christian Sabbath, Sunday. Our faith in the blessed Hope and in the rapture of the Church is grounded in the Earliest Christian Hope as is expressed by the Apostle Paul as seen in I Thessalonians 4: 13-17; however, while we understand II Thessalonians 2:3ff as an apocalyptic table which suggests the events to appear before the coming of the Lord to rapture His Church, that no less diminishes our blessed Hope in the rapture of the Church of God.

The shift from the Messianic expectations to that of Apocalyptic calculations suggests a realization, or a feeling, that perhaps the rapture was no longer as definitely imminent as the Christians had previously expected; rather, while the shift placed a new emphasis on apocalyptic calculations, there is no less an expectation of the rapture of the Church. While the Church Of God In Christ believes that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Messianic hope as is promised in Holy Scriptures, we look forward to the ultimate and final consummation of the world and we expect to be raptured as members of the body of Christ at the return of Jesus Christ, I Thessalonians 4:16-18. The Church Of God In Christ’s belief in immortality and life after human death, coupled with our belief in the **sovereignty** of God, are the driving theological forces behind our belief in the Blessed Hope.

What you do not see in our Statement of Faith and in our Articles of Religion are specific references to and speculations about the time when the Second Coming and the Rapture would take place. To be sure, no theme outside of the preaching of the message of salvation, which was based on our belief about the Second Coming, was more strongly emphasized than word about the Second Coming of Christ. But our belief is anchored in what Jesus said in Matthew 25:13: *“ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.”* To us there is only the task of having to do what the Lord said “occupy until I come,” (Luke 19:13). In occupying ourselves with Kingdom work, we stand firm on our belief that God’s future plans for the world are being acted out daily. As they are, we look with expectation for what His plan will hold. We affirm and believe that He will return to **Rapture** His church (I Thess. 4:15f; I Cor. 15:51-53; Matt. 24:27; REV. 1:7; 20:1-6); that the world will be judged (Rev. 20:12); that there will be a period of **tribulation** (Rev. 6:17); a **millennial reign** (Rev. 20:12); and the appearance of a new heaven and a new earth (Rev. 21:1).

Our view of the future of the world is best described as a “Christ-centered”,

ible-based orientation. The future of God's world is based on what is revealed in the Word of God and demonstrated through the Church of Jesus Christ. A future that is disconnected from God's self-revelation in Christ is not a future that can claim New Testament authenticity and thus is to be rejected. Universalist notions of an infinite future for the world separate and apart from Christ, however well-meaning, are contrary to the New Testament depiction of the future of God's church and world.

In conclusion, despite the diversity of opinions that we may have on some of these matters, the following beliefs flow directly for this affirmation in our COF and from our Articles of Religion.

1. Our belief in the reality of death, which is a consequence of sin.  
(Romans 6:23; Hebrews 9:27)
2. COGIC affirms its belief in Christ's 2nd Coming (John 14)
3. Our belief in a Final Judgment (Matthew 25:31, II Cor. 5:10, Rev. 20:11f).
4. Our belief in the Resurrection of the Dead (I Cor. 15: 53f)
5. Our belief in an Eternal Heaven and an Eternal Hell (Rev. 20:12-15)
6. Our belief in the Tribulation and the Anti-Christ (Rev. 4 and following)

#### **The Fourth Affirmation: Our Affirmation About the Atonement of Christ**

We Believe that the only means of being cleansed from sin, is through repentance and faith in the precious Blood of Jesus Christ.

Here we answer the question: What is **salvation**? In theology, this is known as the **doctrine of soteriology**, which has to do with our understanding of what God has done in order to save human beings from sin. No doctrine is more central to our day-to-day spirituality and belief than our beliefs about the atoning death of Jesus Christ. Gathered around the Communion Table, we sing and proclaim our faith: "What can wash away my sins, nothing but the blood of Jesus! What can make me whole again, nothing but the blood of Jesus!" Our faith is in the efficacy, the effectiveness, of the blood to bring salvation. Our faith is in the power of the blood:

I know it was the blood, I know it was the blood,  
I know it was the blood,  
I know it was the blood that saved me!  
One day when I was lost, He died on the Cross,  
I know it was the blood that saved.

It was my Savior's blood, it was my Savior's blood,  
It was my Savior's blood that saved me!!!

The key aspects of this postulate center on the belief that the "only" means of salvation is through "repentance" and "faith in the precious Blood

**REpentance** **Christ**. The word repentance is the English rendering of the Greek word “Metanoia” (metanoia), which means a change of heart, mind and direction. The word further suggests remorsefulness, and an expression of sorrow on the part of the person who repents of sin. In some situations there are present outward and visible indicators (Matthew 3:8) that one has, or is repenting. Based upon the Holy Scripture, we believe repentance to be an absolute necessity for one who desires to receive cleanness from sin. This affirmation further emphasizes the element of faith in the blood of Jesus Christ which is the ultimate and final divine agent that cleanses and absolves one of sin. Sin is the English rendering of the Greek words harmartia, sin, and harmartiology, the study of sin. Sin is disobedience to the will of God. Sin is violation of the divine Law. Sin is transgression, missing the mark, and it is a reflection of our sinful nature transmitted to all the family of Adam, (Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:12).

Modern psychology, spirituality, and self-help philosophies can indeed foster human self-improvement. Any human being can do things that will help to make him or her a better person, a more responsible, more conscientious, and loving person. But we reject the notion or implication that any of these efforts can or will change the most fundamental of biblical facts, i.e. the sinfulness of human beings. This is one dimension of the human experience that no human being can change or correct. This is a matter that requires divine intervention. It is in the light of this truth that one should understand this affirmation and the following related thoughts. Books such as Rhonda Byrne’s “*The Secret*”, belie the biblical truths about human sinfulness by embracing the notion of human goodness and progress based on humanistic notions. We reject these ideas because they run counter to what we know to be the biblical truths about human beings. These truths are easily described in the following statements:

1. That all human beings are sinners by birth and nature and as such are separated from God. (Romans 3:23; 6:23)
2. That separation from God, is ultimately defined as death, is the ultimate penalty for sin. (Romans 6:23)
3. That salvation is as Martin Luther proclaimed, **Sola Scriptura, Sola fide, Sola Gratia, and Sola Christus**. This is to say that we can only be saved by following the truths of Scripture; by having faith, experiencing grace, and through Christ alone. We neither deny the existence of other faiths nor their claims regarding their deities. What we do is follow the mandates of Scripture, which affirm that there is no salvation outside of Christ. (Mark 16:16; John 14:6)

4. The efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ is predicated on the fact that Jesus Christ was God's physical representative among us. As Paul says: 2 Corinthians 5:19: **"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."**
5. The faith that is required for salvation is "saving" faith. This is faith in who God, in the purpose of Jesus' death and the power of His sacrifice.
6. That "Metanoia," brokenness, and active repentance are necessary elements to the salvation process.

#### **he Fifth Affirmation: Our Affirmation of what we Believe about Regeneration.**

We believe that regeneration by the Holy Ghost is absolutely essential for personal salvation.

In this postulate, we affirm our answer to the question: what is conversion? The scriptures declare that "sin" separates us from God (Isa. 59:2) and it brings about death; Romans 5:12 **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."** Sin places human beings into a condition of spiritual death. This is a condition that we cannot change without God's help. Self-help programs, personal development philosophies, positive thinking, and the principles of popular psychology can change our self-image and make us more likeable as persons. However, as human beings, we are spirits, we have souls, and we live in bodies. Self-help activities can only change our soulish realms (our emotions, thoughts, and will) and they can help us to change our bodies. But they cannot alter the part of us that is most like God, our spirit. Thus, this postulate of our Statement of Faith accents the necessity of the progressive, regenerating power of the Holy Spirit in promoting human salvation. While human beings are responsible for initiating the repentant process by becoming sorrowful for their personal sins, the Holy Ghost, who is the third Person of the Trinity, initiates the regenerative process. We believe that the Holy Spirit takes an active role in convincing the sinner of the need for regeneration and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who empowers, undergirds the repentant and regenerated sinner for godly living and spiritual service.

The act of regeneration is the act of actually being born again. Jesus' message to Nicodemus communicates how the regeneration process works:

#### **John 3:3-7**

**3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith**

*time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

This birth of which he speaks here is the process of regeneration that is done by the Holy Spirit in the life of every person who has been born again.

The Church Of God In Christ's doctrinal statement as it relates to regeneration defines the process of regeneration as "That act of God by which the principle of the new life is implanted in man, and the governing disposition of soul is made holy and the first holy exercise of this new disposition served..." Regeneration, or the new birth, is a true act of the Christian life apart from which there is no Christianity. Regeneration is an act of God by which the fallen sinner is created anew and is brought from death to life in Jesus Christ. The doctrine, or teaching of regeneration, is first taught by Jesus during His encounter with Nicodemus who was told by Jesus that "Ye must be born again (John 3:7)," a teaching which places Nicodemus along with every other sinner who needs the regenerative experience. The regenerative process is initiated by the Holy Spirit as the operator (the user), while the Word is the instrument (that which is used to perform the operation) to execute the process (James 1:18; I Peter 1:23).

### **The Sixth Affirmation: OUR CONFESSION ABOUT DIVINE HEALING**

We Believe that the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross provides healing for the human body in answer to believing prayer.

The question in this postulate is: What is the scope of our redemption? As noted in the introduction in the discussion of the first postulate of the Statement of Faith. Bishop Mason's spiritual journey as a young man and as a young minister and pastor was driven by a concern to see God's power manifested in the church today, just as it was demonstrated in the Bible. He wanted to experience the fullness of God's power to save the lost, deliver the bound, set the captives free and heal the sick. Even in his earliest days, he knew that divine healing and deliverance were components of the biblical message and central to God's will for His people. It is no accident that divine healings and miracles were so dominant in the early history of our church. Bishop Mason saw healings and miracles as the evidence of true biblical faith. As he would later testify of the manifestation of healings in his meetings:

**... Another who was suffering with toothache came up. My soul went in**

ayer for her. The tooth came out of her mouth and she showed it to all who were present. Tumors have been removed from the bodies of women who have been suffering for years, only through faith in God. I met with an Elder who had hemorrhages of the lung. He was a sight to behold. The physicians said that it was impossible for him to live. God, through the prayer, rebuked the bleeding, and today he is blessed of the Lord and is preaching the gospel and saving souls. Also through prayer of faith to the Lord, the lame have been able to put down their crutches and walk, and the blind have been made to see; the seemingly dead have been restored to life again. - C. H. Mason

The Church Of God In Christ follows its founder in affirming the doctrine of divine healing. We say and sing with fervor: "I am healed by the wound in His side. I am healed by the wound in his side, I am healed by the wound in my Savior's side, I am healed by the wound in His side."

Among other things, this postulate brings us to the following theological conclusions.

That the death of Christ provides healing for the human body, deliverance from bondages, and diseases, as well as forgiveness of sin. The Divine healing was made possible by His death and suffering on the Cross. As Isaiah prophesies in his messianic prophecy: Isaiah 53:4-5

*4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

That God's will is to heal those who ask by faith for healing. Mark 16:17-18  
*7 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

We disagree with those leaders, however, who state implicitly and explicitly in their work that divine healing can be guaranteed if a person follows certain "spiritual laws," such as the "laws of faith." We preach and live James 5 and we know that God can, does, and will heal when we pray in faith. James 5:13-16

*13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. 14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord*

*...and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. 16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*

God honors this promise. But this is not, nor do other “healing” scriptures provide guarantee that God’s healing promises would be applied to every person in every situation, and according to the “timing” of the individual’s faith. Such calculation may be comforting to our faith, but they bind God’s providence and timing to a pseudo-scientific, philosophical and psychologically based theory that violates the spirit and letter of Scripture.

5. We affirm that any believer who is filled with the Holy Spirit can pray for the sick and expect God to heal. James has told us that the *“effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” (James 5:16)* And Mark has told us that healing the sick is a mark of true discipleship, Mark 16:18.

6. We believe that some believers, like Bishop Mason, have a divine gift of healing. God anoints and uses such persons to bring healing to others. Paul describes it as one of the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:9-11:

*9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: 11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.*

### **The Seventh Affirmation: Our Confession About the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**

We Believe that the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, according to Acts 2:4, is given to believers who ask for it.

This affirmation answers the question, Who is the Holy Spirit? In postulate two (2), we have identified the Holy Spirit as the 3rd Person of the Trinity. His authority is to actualize God’s will and continue Christ’s ministry in the earth. In postulate five, we attested to His role in “regenerating” sinners. Here we confess that the experience that is recorded in Acts 2:4, ‘and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues,’ is available to believers today. Being Saved, Sanctified, and Filled with the Holy Ghost represents God’s ideal for the life of the believer. Justification and conversion make us “right” with God, the old “sin” account was settled for us when we were justified and converted. The work of sanctification allows



to be transformed daily into the “image of God,” under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit. The Baptism in the Holy Ghost, however, is a capstone moment in the life of a believer. It is the point at which we fully surrender to the Holy Spirit’s work in our lives and allow Him to fully submerge us under His influence. As Paul says to the Ephesians, believers must desire to be “filled with the Spirit.” Ephesians 5:18 ***Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.*** The language here is passive, “be filled” suggests that it is something that one must allow to happen to him/her. It is an experience that one must desire and submit to.

Again, a look at the life and testimony of our founder is instructive for understanding the importance of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost in our theology and piety. Early in his ministry in the Baptist church and for more than a decade after having started their separate, holiness, association, Bishop Mason felt like something was woefully missing from his ministry. Many other Christians during this period were beginning to experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Mason, C. P. Jones and many of their colleagues began to believe that they, though pastors and leaders, had not indeed experienced the Baptism of the Holy Ghost in the way that the Bible describes in the Book of Acts. By 1906 a great shift had taken place on the American religious landscape with the beginning of the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles. National attention was being focused on a revival among growing group of believers, led by the humble, Spirit-filled, Southern-born, African American preacher, William Joseph Seymour. News soon got to Memphis about people being filled with the Holy Spirit and Speaking in Tongues. Upon hearing of this, Mason sought the approval of their leader, Elder C. P. Jones, to go to Los Angeles and see if this revival was indeed a truly biblical-based movement. And if so, he too wanted to receive the Baptism in the Holy Ghost.

With this, he went to Los Angeles with Elders D. J. Young and J. A. Jeter. While there, he was filled with the Holy Ghost, the capstone of his spiritual journey. His experience speaks both to the mandate that we place on the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the “method” that is associated with the experience, tarrying. When Bishop Mason went to the Azusa Street Revival, he joined the crowd of persons who were tarrying, waiting to be filled with the Spirit.

My soul cried and soon I began to die. It seemed that I heard the groanings of Christ on the Cross dying for me. . . . My soul cried, ‘Oh, God, finish your work in me.’ Then the sound broke out in me again. Then I felt something raising me out of my seat without any effort of my own. . . . when I opened my mouth to say glory, a flame touched my tongue which ran down in me.

was filled with the glory of the Lord. My soul was then satisfied. I rejoiced in Jesus my Savior, whom I love so dearly. And from that day until now there has been an overflowing joy of the glory of the Lord in my heart.

With this, Bishop Mason was filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke in unknown tongues. Some time later, he would receive the gift of interpretation, interpreting the tongues that flowed from his lips. Receiving the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, evidenced by Speaking in Tongues, was the fulfillment of Bishop Mason's lifelong quest to experience the fullness of God's promised power. But this experience would cause him to split from his friend and mentor, C. P. Jones. Jones indeed believed that the Baptism in the Holy Ghost was a necessary gift to the life of a believer and was indeed in keeping with New Testament teachings. But he differed radically with Mason over whether or not Speaking in Tongues was something that believers should experience today. Mason believed that Speaking in Tongues was the primary "sign" of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, Jones denied this. The history of the Church of God over the past 100 years testifies to the truth of Mason's claims.

One of the most memorable phrases that one learns in COGIC is connected with the experience of being Baptized in the Holy Ghost. As a lead-in or postscript to our testimonies, you hear: "I thank God for being saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Ghost." Moreover, we sing and testify about the need to be filled with the Holy Ghost: It says: "Fill Me Now, Fill Me Now, Come On Jesus and Fill Me Now, Fill Me With Your Holy Spirit, Come On Jesus And Fill Me Now!"

The COGIC understanding of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost draws upon Bishop Mason's testimony and it is shaped by the manifestations of the Holy Ghost that are witnessed in the Book of Acts. In the Book of Acts, there are at least nine (9) different manifestations of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit that we follow:

### **The Fullness And Work Of The Holy Spirit In The Book Of Acts**

Throughout the Book of Acts, there are nine different terms that are used in order to describe the process through which the Holy Spirit empowers believers to do the work that God has assigned them to do.

### **Manifestations Of The Presence Of The Holy Spirit Among Believers.**

The following are references to what happened when people experienced the Holy Spirit's presence.

Received: 2:38; 8:15; 8:17; 8:19; 10:47; 19:2;

ptized: 1:5; 11:16

ll Upon: 8:16; 10:44; 11:15

me Upon: 1:8; 19:6

ured Out 2:17-18; 2:33; 10:45

npowered: 6:10; 8:39; 20:28

ointed: 4:27; 10:38

ven: 5:32; 8:18-20; 11:17; 15:8

lled: The dominant reference in Acts is to persons being filled with the spirit.

ie COGIC affirmation about who the Holy Spirit is in the life of the church and the believer, leads us to several concluding affirmations that guide our teachings on this subject.

rst, the Holy Spirit's greatest work in the life of a believer is manifested at conversion, when a spiritually dead individual is "born again" through the generating work of the Spirit. In this sense, it is appropriate to say, as some traditions teach, that the Holy Spirit begins to dwell in the believer at the moment of conversion. We have never had a problem with this basic assumption. We go beyond this though, in looking at the full witness of Scripture. The Holy Spirit does indeed baptize a believer into the Body of Christ at conversion. But the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, the filling, the empowering, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, the experiences referenced above, point to another type of "baptism," one in which the believer submits to the Spirit's complete control, authority and empowerment. Paul's comments about our "Baptism into Christ" could be understood as the Holy Spirit's "baptizing" the believer into the Body of Christ: Galatians 3: ***7 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*** But this baptism is only an introduction to the new birth. The Baptism in the Holy Ghost of which Bishop Mason spoke, as the cases that we mention in the Book of Acts, is a separate experience that the believer needs to have with the Holy Spirit. In this sense we say:

We do not believe nor teach that we are baptized with the spirit to be saved and become the sons of God, but that we are baptized with the Spirit because we are saved, and are the sons of God. The scripture does not teach that we are baptized with the spirit in order to be saved [as Apostolics teach] but to be born of the Spirit.

Secondly, we affirm that Speaking in Tongues is one of the gifts, the principal gift that comes upon a believer who is filled with the Holy Spirit:

We do not presume to teach that no one has the Spirit that does not speak with tongues, yet we believe that a full baptism of the Holy Ghost as was poured

...on the day of Pentecost is accompanied by speaking with other tongue. Since the new birth has the same effect on believers as it did in the days of the Apostles, we believe that the baptism of the Holy Ghost has the same effect on believers today as it did in the days of the Apostles.

In this statement from the Articles of Religion, we the doctrinal basis for or of our longest-standing beliefs, the idea that a **“full baptism of the Holy Ghost”** will be accompanied by Speaking in Tongues. This has become known as our doctrine of **initial evidence** of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. It must be said, however, that our doctrine has never stated that Tongues are the “only” evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost; it is the one that is noted most frequently in the Book of Acts. This said, even in our earliest documents and in the documents from the Azusa Street Revival, we see clearly that the saints understood that the Fruit of the Spirit were also clear evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. (Galatians 5:22):

***But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.***

Tongues are among the Nine Supernatural Gifts of the Spirit that Paul references in

1 Corinthians 12:8-11:

***8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: 11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.***

These gifts are deemed “supernatural” because their bestowal and proper operation can only be put into place by an act and unction of the Holy Spirit.

Among the many other references that we see in the New Testament that give references to the various signs of having been filled with or baptized in the Holy Ghost, we reference the following in support of our affirmation:

How do I know when I have been “filled with the Spirit?”

In the New Testament, we see many different actions and manifestations that occur as a result of persons being filled with the Holy Spirit and living under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

In Acts 2:4 they “spoke in other tongues.”

they preached, prayed and worshipped with new a new sense of authority (Acts 2:14f).

They attracted large crowds of curious individuals who were influenced by their worship and witness (Acts 2:37-38).

They witnessed miracles and other supernatural, spiritual manifestations (Acts 2:43).

They were filled with a spirit of generosity and gave more liberally to the ministry (Acts 2:44-45).

Old prejudices and racial divisions were destroyed (Acts 10).

They spoke in tongues and prophesied (Acts 19).

They were prompted to speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, (Eph. 5:19).

They were to put off the influences of their sinful flesh and live by the virtues of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:19-22).

They manifested spiritual gifts (I Corinthians 12-14).

Thirdly, we affirm that believers are Baptized in the Holy Ghost when they "ask for it." This is an experience that one must desire and "wait" for. Historically, this belief has undergirded our practice of tarrying. Just as Bishop Mason went to the Azusa Revival and prayed for days on-end while waiting for the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, we believe that there is still a place for waiting on the experience. However, in waiting, we have never believed that the Holy Spirit was not present or not "available," thus requiring the believer to "wait" until the Spirit comes. Rather, we believe that the believer must prepare him/herself, yield, and allow the Spirit to fill them. The Spirit will come upon a prepared vessel.

### **The Eighth Affirmation: Our Confession about how the Holy Spirit helps us to live the Christian life in this Present World.**

We believe in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling, the Christian is enabled to live a Holy and separated life in this present world. Amen.

This postulate addresses the question: How does the Holy Spirit help us godly lives in this present world. Living a holy life is not an optional theological ideal; rather, it is a biblical mandate. Early on in the scriptures, we learn that God taught His people to reverence holy things, to keep them holy and to live holy.

Deuteronomy 7:6 *For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.*

Leviticus 20:7 *Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the*

I Cor. 7:1: *“Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God;”*

The biblical call to “sanctified living” was at the heart of God’s special election of the Jewish people and was the focal point of His special covenant with them. This covenant defined the rituals, theology, ethical standards, and **the centric** political system that God put into place in order to make clear how He expected His holy people to live. The Law or the Books of Moses, and indeed the entire Old Testament tells the story of what the call unto holy living meant for God’s chosen people. The COGIC affirmations regarding holy living, draws upon this Old Testament foundation, which was also the basis of New Testament teachings on the principles of holiness and sanctification.

The Hebrew words for holiness and sanctification focus on the idea that complete holiness and sanctification are qualities that can only be found in God. However, the people, things, rituals and process that belonged to God and were associated with worshipping Him were deemed holy by virtue of their “association” with God. In this sense, it is possible to say that this concept of holiness had more to do with “ritual” or ceremonial holiness, rather than moral, ethical and spiritual holiness. In the New Testament usages, holiness and sanctification also referred to ritual and ceremonial standards but also included much more emphasis on spiritual cleansing, consecration, and morality as core components of the holiness experience. This latter sense is what we gather from the writings of Apostle Paul and other New Testament writers.

#### **Ephesians 5:26-27:**

*26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

New Testament sanctification entails the total transformation of a believer, body, soul, and spirit. Drawing on the words of Scripture, our affirmation about holy living begins with the understanding that the capacity to live a holy life is a work of the Holy Spirit. The believer is called upon to live a holy life, but cannot accomplish this task without the influence of the Holy Spirit. Our doctrine of sanctification entails the following key elements:

1. It is a process that is made possible and completed by the work of the Holy Spirit within us. It is in this sense that the Apostle Paul describes the entirety of the life of the believer as a “walk in the Spirit,” Galatians 5:16-26. Walking in the Spirit in this sense is a “walk of sanctification,” entailing the

believer being continuously cleansed from the control of the flesh and brought under the influence of the Fruit of the Holy Spirit. The most evident result of walking in the Spirit is the impact of love on the life of the believer. Love is the most important component of the believers walk of sanctification. The believer must cooperate with the Holy Spirit's work of sanctification through willing obedience to the Spirit's pull and work. This is why Paul admonishes the saints at Ephesus not to "grieve" the Holy Spirit by acting in bitterness, wrath, and or anger towards each other (Ephesians 4:30). Instead, they were called upon to manifest the fruit of the Spirit, principally, "goodness," (Eph. 5:9; II Thessalonians 2:13)

2. Aside from being a work of the Holy Spirit, sanctification and holy living for New Testament believers are also the benefits of the atoning work of Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. [John 1:7: *"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."* (NIV)

3. The sanctification process entails a complete work of transformation in the individually, we are to be "wholly" transformed by God. Sanctification has to encompass what we do with our bodies, the condition of our spirit, and our souls (mind, will, emotions). 1 Thessalonians 5:23

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 12:1: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Sanctification is not a one-time, once and for always kind of experience, it takes place over a period of time and involves a continual process renewal, requiring believers to "present (willingly offer) their bodies" as "living" sacrifices; and be not "conformed to this world."

4. Sanctification for the believers is perfected through the principles of God's Word:

**John 17:17-19**

*17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent*

*their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*

5. The sanctified life also calls upon us to pursue paths of love and peace among all people.

### **Hebrews 12:14**

*Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.*

Peace is one of the “fruit” of the Spirit that is discussed in Galatians 5. Here we are reminded that the entire life of the believer is to be anchored in a spirit of peacefulness, which is to extend to all of their relationships with other persons.

6. No discussion of holiness and sanctification in our church would be complete without an emphasis on the **“holiness codes”** that have been associated with our denomination. These codes were our doctrinal and behavioral standards. We have always believed that holiness was more than a doctrine, it was a lifestyle. Our critics called us, derisively speaking, holy rollers, sanctified, white sheet people, and other names. All of these terms refer to aspects of our doctrines and practices that reflect what we believe about how saints should behave, dress, live, and what we should believe. In the early days, we were very strict in our teachings on how people should dress, especially women. It is not uncommon to visit many of our churches today and not have any women in them who wear slacks, even outside of the church. Women did not wear jewelry, lipstick, and shoes with opened toes, and they did not dress too flashy, attracting too much attention to themselves. This is a reflection of the holiness codes that we lived by. Men did not wear neck ties or wear rings in some circles because they were deemed to be too worldly. We did not drink alcohol, smoke, attend theaters, dances, and, in some instances, play sports.

While the codes have never been universally accepted in our church and have varied according to the region of the country, cultures, and the preferences of each congregation, they have been dominant in our history. The codes and many of the accompanying beliefs are in decline today, but their foundation remains and the scriptures on which they are based are emphatic.

5 “A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman’s garment, for all who do so are an abomination to the LORD your God.

### **1 Timothy 2:9**

*9 in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel,*



*with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing,*

1 Peter 3:3

*Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel.*

## GLOSSARY

### Key Terms

**1. Statement of Faith:** a core set of doctrinal claims that summarize the basic beliefs of a religious organization. Statements of faith and creeds are designed to provide an intelligent definition of what people believe and practice. Moreover, like creeds, statements of faith are recognized as the “official” beliefs of a particular body of believers.

**2. Creed:** see statement of faith.

**3. Apostles’ Creed:** the earliest known and one of the most widely used creeds in the history of Christianity. It is called the Apostles’ Creed because its roots have been traced back to the first century, the period when the New Testament was written by the Apostles.

**4. Nicene Creed:** the creed that was created in 325 A.D. when the Roman Emperor, Constantine, called the church leaders together to clarify their doctrines and avoid causing more political crises in the Empire.

**5. Ordinances:** common church practices that can be traced back to the ministry of Jesus, which were subsequently passed on to the Apostles. The ones practiced in COGIC are: the Lord’s Supper, Baptism, and Foot Washing.

**6. The Articles of Religion:** A set of doctrines, practices, and governing principles that have been the cornerstone of COGIC theology since 1907. The Articles of Religion have evolved over time, with greater attention being given to such subjects as the Trinity and the Second Coming of Christ. The topics that are covered in the Articles of Religion have also expanded over the years.

**7. Heresy:** a movement that is based on doctrinal claims and practices that have been condemned and rejected by a particular religious organization. The people who follow such movements are known as heretics. In the centuries following the death of Christ, people who were accused of being heretics were brought to trial and often put to death for their beliefs.

**8. Orthodox:** the doctrinal claims which are said to be the official beliefs of a religious body and represent the standard by which all other beliefs are

**9. Judiazers:** the believers who were the subject of Paul's critique in the Book of Galatians. They believed that Gentile Christians would have to keep the Jewish Law, in addition to following the teachings of Christ, if they are to be saved.

**10. Apologetics:** an approach to theology that is designed to defend the church's beliefs to an unbelieving world. The goal of apologetic theology is to speak to the "culture," the outside world, in order to make the Gospel understandable.

**11. Early Church:** a reference to the church during the time of the shaping of the New Testament and immediately following, into the 2nd Century.

**12. Roman Emperor:** The leader of the Holy Roman Empire, which ruled the known world for centuries before and after birth of Christ.

**13. Seven Ecumenical Councils:** the summits which were convened during the Middle Ages by church leaders, politicians, and officials of every level of civic and church life. These meeting were called in order to shape the doctrines of the church and distinguish between true and false doctrines. Some of the major creeds of the the church were shaped by these councils.

**14. Deity:** a reference to a divine being, God.

**15. Chalcedon:** one of the Seven Ecumenical Councils, which produced the most widely used statements on the "nature" of Christ and defined Mary as Theotokos, the Mother of God.

**16. Read-On Preaching:** a folk preaching tradition in the COGIC that is actually a forerunner of the "Word" style of preaching and teaching today. In this style of preaching, the minister uses persons to read texts of Scripture as he expounds upon them, word-by-word, line-by-line, and verse-by-verse.

**17. Word Church:** churches that have been directly or indirectly influenced by the Word of Faith Movement and shaped by the theologies of leaders such as Oral Roberts and Kenneth Hagin.

**18. Biblical Infallibility:** the notion that the Bible alone is a sufficient guide and contains all of the information necessary in order to secure human salvation.

**19. Biblical Inerrancy:** the notion that the Bible, in its original form, was free of error of any sort.

**20. Normative Authority:** the belief that a belief or practice should be a definitive guide for what we should believe and how we should live.

- 1. Rapture:** the belief that the church will be “caught up” and removed from the world at the 2nd Coming of Christ.
- 2. Tribulation Period:** the seven years of suffering that is foretold in the Book of Revelation.
- 3. Millennial Reign of Christ:** the 1000 year rule of Christ on Earth that is described in the Book of Revelation.
- 4. Doctrine of Soteriology:** the Christian teaching on what it means to be saved.
- 5. Sola Fides:** the notion that salvation comes by “faith alone.” It was popularized by Martin Luther, the Great Reformer.
- 6. Sola Christus:** Salvation comes through Christ.
- 7. Sola Gratia:** Salvation is an act of grace that human beings must willingly accept and experience.
- 8. Sola Scriptura:** Salvation can only come as humans accept the truths of scripture.
- 9. Initial Evidence:** the notion that Speaking in Tongues is the first known sign that a person has been filled with the Holy Ghost.
- 10. Holiness Codes:** the dress and behavioral codes that were followed by people in the Holiness-Pentecostal movement during the early years.
- 11. New Age Spirituality:** a phrase that is used to describe a wide range of theological views that blend some of the basic tenets of Eastern Religions, e.g. Hinduism and Buddhism, with elements of Christian faith, other religions and secular humanism. Ideas ranging from belief in reincarnation, the infinite progress of the human soul, universal revelation, the universal salvation for all souls, are only a few of the related themes in this movement.
- 12. Mysticism:** the belief that the human spirit can, through the exercise of spiritual disciplines such as meditation, prayer, solitude fasting, and study, achieve oneness with God or some ultimate source of being.
- 13. Prosperity Preaching:** see Word Church. The emphasis in prosperity preaching is on the objective power of faith. See Hank Hanegraaff’s book for a critical analysis of this movement, it is entitled, “Christianity in Crisis: 21st Century.”
- 34. Revelation:** God’s act of divine self-disclosure, wherein divine insights are communicated to human beings either through the Word or through direct knowledge.

**35. Ecclesiastical Ministry:** the belief that the order of ministry for the church is established on the foundation of Ephesians 4:12, with apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers being the primary gifts upon which the church is built.

**36. Prophetic Anointing:** A spiritual gift that is bestowed upon individual to speak and understand prophetic utterances.

**37. The Office of a Prophet:** is occupied by a person who is called to be prophetic and functions continuously in this gift.

**38. Verbal Inspiration:** the belief that the Holy Spirit so influenced the biblical writers that the original words of Scripture, in the original languages and in the original manuscripts, were directly spoken and revealed by God. As such they have absolute authority.

**40. Plenary Inspiration:** the belief that everything in the Bible is written so as to communicate God's infallible plan for the world; despite the fact that God used human beings to communicate His truths. As such the Bible is the Word of God.

**41. Literal Infallibility:** the belief that the Bible is to be read literally and that it communicates God's thoughts to us in words that are literally true. And in cases where the Bible, its stories, history, science, spirituality, etc., conflict with our modern ideas, one should believe the Bible as it is God's Word.

**42. Historical Criticism:** an approach to the study of the Bible that relies on modern, secular historical data and methodologies in order to determine the accuracy and believability of Scripture.

**43. Redaction Criticism:** the scholarly method that studies the way that the Bible evolved into its current form through editorializing.

**44. Literary Criticism:** an examination of the Bible that focuses on its various literary formations.

**45. Pre-Tribulation Rapture:** belief that Jesus will rapture the church before the Tribulation. And will come again after the Tribulation to gather those who went through it.

**46. Mid-Tribulation Rapture:** the belief that the rapture will take place during the Tribulation.

**47. Post-Tribulation Rapture:** the belief that the rapture will take place after the Tribulation.

# FINAL EXAMINATION

Questions and Answers (**The Answers are in BOLD CAPPED LETTERS**)

**Multiple Choice:** (Circle the Correct Answer (s) )

The Church Of God In Christ was founded by:

- 1) Bishop C. P Jones (2) Bishop Charles Pleas (3) Bishop Charles H. Mason  
4) W. J. Seymour      **ANSWER 3**

The Church Of God In Christ Statement of Faith was written by  
which Presiding Bishop?

- 1) Charles E. Blake (2) Gilbert E. Patterson (3) Chandler D. Owens  
4) Louis H. Ford (5) All of the Above (6) None of the Above      **ANSWER 6**

A creed is similar to the COGIC Statement of Faith because both seek to  
present?

- 1) basic elements of doctrine that express the tenets of our faith (2) provide  
an introduction to the study of the Bible (3) the theology of Bishop Mason  
4) the Mission and Vision of COGIC (5) None of the above      **ANSWER 1**

John Wesley of Methodism taught that there were two works of grace:  
Conversion and Sanctification; the Church Of God In Christ teaches that  
there is a third work of grace, what is it?

- 1) Speaking in tongues, (2) water baptism, or (3) the baptism in the Holy  
Ghost? (Circle one.)      **ANSWER 3**

When the Church Of God In Christ speaks of the Trinity, the Godhead,  
we speak of

- (1) three Gods in one, (2) one God in three, or (3) the Son who manifests  
Himself as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (4) neither of the three?  
**ANSWER 2**

Many of the early creeds of the Christian Church were developed during  
large meetings of theologians, pastors, laypersons and sometimes by po-  
litical leaders like the Roman Emperor. These gatherings of church officials  
were known as?

- (1) Ecumenical Councils (2) General Assemblies (3) Holy Convocations

7. During these great gathering, the grouse whose beliefs were        accepted by the mass majority of participants, and could be best defended as “sound doctrine” were eventually called the \_\_\_\_\_ believers?

- (1) Roman Catholic (2) Apostolic (3) Orthodox (4) Fundamentalist  
**ANSWER 3**

8. The groups that lost the debates during the gatherings, whose views were rejected, were called?

- (1) Loyalists (2) Conservative (3) Liberal (4) heretics (5) None of the other  
**ANSWER 4**

9. One of the first creed in the history of the Christian Church, extending back to the New Testament era, was known as the

- (1) Pauline Creed (2) Apostles’ Creed (3) Chalcedonian Creed (4) Roman Creed  
**ANSWER 2**

10. In this creed, the church answered the following questions: Do we believe in the oneness of God? Do we believe that Jesus is equal to or subordinate to God? In what sense is Jesus the “Son of God?”

- (1) Nicene Creed (2) Apostles’ Creed (3) Roman Creed (4) The Statement of Faith  
**ANSWER 1**

## **PART II: Fill in the Blanks with Names and Words that Match**

11. The Church of God in Christ believes that the formula for water baptism is in the name of the \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. **ANSWER: FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST**

12. The first affirmation of the COGIC Statement of Faith is: “We believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible written Word of God.” Identify one scripture that supports this belief \_\_\_\_\_.

**ANSWER: SEVERAL SCRIPTURES ARE ACCEPTABLE: VERIFY EACH ANSWER**

13. In the early years of COGIC, a preaching style developed among us that is distinctive to our culture, in which preachers would use members of the congregation to read selected passages of scripture as he interpreted the

messages, using line-by-line, word-for-word, exegesis. This is known as \_\_\_\_\_ preaching. **ANSWER: READ-ON**

4. The COGIC belief in the “infallibility of the Bible” means that we believe at the Bible as it is currently comprised is an absolutely sufficient guide and teaches all that God requires for human beings to live \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ . **ANSWER: SAVED, DOCTRINES, PRACTICES (POLITY)**

5. How many times is the word Trinity used in the Bible \_\_\_\_\_ . **ANSWER: ZERO**

6. The doctrine of the Trinity can be strongly supported by what four scriptures? \_\_\_\_\_ . **ANSWER: MANY ACCEPTABLE SCRIPTURES: VERIFY**

7. \_\_\_\_\_ head is another word that we use for the Trinity. **ANSWER: GOD**

18. What Scriptures in the New Testament support the idea that Jesus was divine? \_\_\_\_\_ . **ANSWER: MANY ACCEPTABLE SCRIPTURES: VERIFY**

19. The New Testament saints, including the Apostle Paul, thought and wrote quite a bit about the “end times”, these writings often spoke of the immediate return of Christ. Their thinking is, for this reason, called \_\_\_\_\_. **ANSWER: APOCALYPTIC**

20. Upon which biblical verses does COGIC base its doctrine of the Rapture? \_\_\_\_\_ . **ANSWER: MANY ACCEPTABLE SCRIPTURES: VERIFY**

### III. SHORT ANSWERS

21. The doctrine of Initial Evidence says what about being Filled with the Holy Ghost?

**ANSWER: THAT SPEAKING IN TONGUES IS THE FIRST SIGN OF BEING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

... the major theological difference between the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit is what? **ANSWER: THERE ARE NO DIFFERENCES**

23. How are the Gifts of the Spirit in Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4 related? **ANSWER: YOU WANT TO KNOW THAT THE STUDENT UNDERSTANDS THAT ALL OF THESE REFERENCES ARE TO THE GIFTS THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT BESTOWS UPON INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE CALLED AND EMPOWERED TO DO MINISTRY.**

24. How do the Gifts of the Spirit relate to the Fruit of the Spirit? How are the two related to being filled with the Spirit? **ANSWER: BE SURE THAT THE STUDENTS UNDERSTAND THAT IN OUR TRADITION, THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT ARE ALSO INDICATIONS OF THE FULLNESS OF THE SPIRIT, JUST AS THE GIFTS. WE HAVE NEVER EXCLUSIVELY RELIED ON TONGUES AS THE ONLY INDICATION OF THE BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT.**

25. What is the relationship between the COGIC Statement of Faith, The Articles of Religion, and the Bible Doctrines that COGIC affirms? **ANSWER: THE KEY HERE IS THAT THE STATEMENT OF FAITH SUMMARIZES THE KEY DOCTRINAL CLAIMS OF THE ARTICLES AND THE BIBLE DOCTRINES, AS THESE HAVE EVOLVED THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF OUR HISTORY.**

**V. ESSAY: Explain each Affirmation in the COGIC Statement of Faith**  
***THESE ANSWERS SHOULD CORRESPOND WITH THE INTERPRETATION THAT IS OUTLINED ABOVE.***

We Believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible written Word of God.

We Believe that there is One God, eternally existent in three Persons; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

We Believe in the Blessed Hope, which is the rapture of the Church of God, which is in Christ at His return.



We Believe that the only means of being cleansed from sin, is through repentance and faith in the precious Blood of Jesus Christ.

We Believe that regeneration by the Holy Ghost is absolutely essential for personal salvation.

We Believe that the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross provides healing for the human body in answer to believing prayer.

We Believe that the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, according to Acts 2:4, is given to believers who ask for it.

We Believe in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling, the Christian is enabled to live a Holy and separated life in this present world.  
Amen.

This version of the SOF dates back to 1972. While it was never voted on by the General Assembly, it has become the unofficial statement of Faith for the Church Of God In Christ. Its popularity and widespread usage in the church is linked to the fact that it was included in the Yes Lord! Hymnal of 1982 and it was subsequently inserted in the back of other COGIC Publishing House material. It was likewise included on the programs of National worship services, funerals, installation services, etc.

This statement has likewise not been adopted by the General Assembly but has in recent years been used in stead of the earlier document. It now appears on many official national church sites and documents, but it has not replaced the earlier statement. John Leith, Editor, *Creeds of the Churches* John Knox Press: Atlanta, GA: 1977, p.24)

ibid. p. 30-31.

O. T. Jones & J. E. Bryant, Editors, *Manual of the Church Of God In Christ*, Revised 1940, p. 10.

C. F. Range, Jr, Clyde Young, German Ross, Editors. *Official Manual with the Doctrines and Discipline of the Church Of God In Christ*. (Memphis, TN: Church Of God In Christ Publishing House, 1991 Edition, p. 40)

Elthiel C. Clemmons, Bishop Charles Harrison Mason and the Roots Church Of God In Christ. Centennial Edition. (Bakersfield, CA.: Pneuma Life Publishing, 1996). P.

O. T. Jones & J. E. Bryant, Editors, *Manual of the Church Of God In Christ*, Revised 1940, p. 24.

German R. Ross and Julia Mason, *History and Formative Years of the Church of God in Christ*. (Memphis, TN: Church of God in Christ Publishing House, 1969). PP. 22-23.

Ibid. p. 19.

O. T. Jones Editor, *Manual of the Church Of God In Christ*, Revised 1957, p. .

Range, *Official Manual*. P. 61.

## I. Insight into Key Terms:

- a. **autograph:** a manuscript, which is written in the handwriting of its author.
- b. **The Books of Law:** the first five books in the Old Testament. These books are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. This section of books also is called the Pentateuch.
- c. **The Books of History:** the second section or subgroup of books in the Old Testament. These books are Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. They tell the story of biblical Israel from its entrance into the land of Canaan up to the reconstruction of the Judean community after the return of the exiles from Babylon.
- d. **The Books of Poetry:** the third section or sub group of books in the Old Testament. These books are Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.
- e. **The Books of Prophecy:** the fourth section or sub group of books in the Old Testament. These books are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentation, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.
- f. **Canon:** the official, authoritative collection of writings or book of writings, which identifies what one should believe and how one should act. It provides the standard for identifying acceptable faith and determining proper moral action.
- g. **Covenant:** An agreement between at least two entities. These entities could be individuals or groups. In the Old Testament, covenant pertains to an agreement between God and individuals in the biblical community and between God and biblical Israel herself. The *Abrahamic*, *Mosaic*, and *Davidic* covenants will receive treatment in the following Lesson.

- h. **Exile:** That period in the history of ancient Israel between 587-539 BC. This was when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and deported many of its inhabitants to places elsewhere in the Babylonian Empire.
- i. **Genre:** a *type* or a *class* of some item. In this case, we are talking about a kind or category of writing that appears in the Old Testament, e.g., hymn, wisdom saying, genealogy, law, or lament.
- j. **Judge:** Local tribal heroes who arose to positions of leadership and power and helped Israel to gain freedom from her enemies during the Tribal Period in ancient Israelite history.
- k. **Primeval History:** phrase biblical scholars use to refer to Genesis Chapters 1-11.
- l. **Septuagint:** is the Old Testament in Greek. It appeared around the third century BC. The Roman Number "LXX" is the abbreviation for the Septuagint.
- m. **theocracy:** a type of government where God is the head. Usually priests are the major officials and leaders in this type of governmental structure.
- n. **United Kingdom:** That political entity over which David ruled in the Old Testament. Jerusalem was its capital.
- o. **Vulgate:** The Bible in Latin. It contains the OT, and it appeared around the fourth century AD.
- p. **Yahweh:** The name of the God of Israel in the Old Testament. In English Bibles it is often translated as The *LORD*.

## II. Teaching Tips

A list of terms is at the beginning of the Lesson. Each student should learn these terms. Prior to teaching the lesson, look over these words and concepts, so that you will be familiar with them when they appear in the text.

At the end of the session, review these

the terms. It would be good if you would ask the students to use at least two complete sentences in their attempt to define these terms.

### III. Learning Outcomes

The Old Testament piece in the Standardized Ordination Curriculum will do the following:

- a. Identify the individual books and sections of books, which comprise the Old Testament;
- b. Define basic concepts for understanding the Old Testament
- c. Describe the general themes of the books, which comprise the Old Testament;
- d. Identify prominent individuals and events in the history of ancient Israel;
- e. Cast light on the work of the Holy Ghost in the Old Testament;
- f. Show ways in which select themes/concepts in the Old Testament are important for understanding beliefs about Jesus Christ.

### IV. Outcome Indicators

After completing the section on the Old Testament in the Standardized Ordination Curriculum, the student should be able to do the following items:

- a. List in order the books that comprise the Old Testament;
- b. Identify which books comprise the Books of Law, History, Poetry, and Prophecy in the Old Testament;
- c. Define the terms that are listed at the beginning of the Lesson and that are emboldened in the Lesson;
- d. Articulate the basic storyline of each book in the Old Testament;
- e. Discuss the work of the Holy Ghost in the Old Testament;
- f. State why *judges*, *the Davidic covenant*, *Messiah*, and *Servant Songs* are important themes/concepts for understanding beliefs about Jesus in the New Testament.

### V. The Old Testament

A **canon** is the official book or list of books, which serves as the authorita-

ive basis for faith and ethics for a religious community. The Old Testament is the first major section in the Bible, the official book that we accept as authoritative for formulating doctrine and beliefs about right and wrong. The Old Testament contains thirty-nine books. It, therefore, can be said that the Old Testament is a mini library, for it includes books that deal with different subjects and events, which come from different periods in the history of ancient Israel.

The Holy Ghost used Moses, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and a host of unknown writers to bring the Old Testament to us. Before the Old Testament appeared in English, it was written mostly in Hebrew, with parts of it being written in Aramaic. The Aramaic sections are Dan 2:4-7:28; Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26; and Jer 10:11. It appeared in Greek (*The Septuagint*) and in Latin in the *Vulgate* before it was translated into English.

The rest of this Chapter casts light on the Old Testament. The approach will be the following: (a) delineate the larger blocks or sections of books in the Old Testament; and (b) summarize the contents of the book, casting light on important individuals, themes, and events to which texts in the specific books point. At points in the discussion, the Lesson will identify the dates that have been traditionally assigned to particular books. The Lesson will also identify key concepts and themes in the Old Testament that help to understand the work of the Holy Ghost and the person and work of Jesus the Christ.

## THE OLD TESTAMENT: ITS STRUCTURE AND THEMES

### The Books of Law/Pentateuch

The first major section or subsection in the Old Testament is the *Books of the Law*. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy comprise this section of the Old Testament, and these books are sometimes called the Books of Moses. Each book tells us something different about the Israelite experience of faith:

- (1) Genesis deals with “origins.” Genesis 1-11, on the one hand, is called the *Primeval History*. The Primeval History focuses on issues that are universal: these items are of importance for all of creation. This part of the book of Genesis explains or accounts for the origins of the world, humans, mortality, evil, work, human clothing, languages, fratricide, pain, rainbows, the Sabbath, and other perennial features of the human conditions that were of concern to the biblical community.

... on the other hand, shifts the focus from explaining issues that are of concern to people everywhere to a focus on one person, Abraham, and the story about his sons. Included in these accounts about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph and the patriarchs of ancient Israel is information about Sarah, Hagar, Rebekah, Rachel, Leah, Asenath and other women who play key roles in the history of ancient Israel. Genesis 12-50 casts light on the **Abrahamic Covenant**, God's promise to Abraham where He promises to give land to Abraham and to make his descendants a mighty and a prosperous people. Genesis 12-50 tells the story of Abram's name being changed to Abraham, the establishment of circumcision as a sign of being in covenant with God, and the journeys and struggles of Abraham's descendants. Genesis 12-50 ends with Joseph and his family, who are descendants of Abraham, settled in Egypt and experiencing prosperity.

- (2) The book of Exodus tells us what happened to the descendants of Joseph when there was a change in the political climate in Egypt. After the death of Joseph, the leader who ascended the throne was not very friendly to Joseph and his people. Supposing that at some point these descendants of Abraham would attack him, the Pharaoh decides to enslave them. Moses, a Hebrew, arose and responded to this crisis. After a demonstration of the power of God at the Sea, the Lord delivers the people and gives them a set of guidelines by which to form a holy community. The book of Exodus identifies the **Mosaic Covenant**. Whereas the Abrahamic Covenant promised blessings to the descendants of Abraham without stating the specific guidelines for their moral action, the Mosaic Covenant indicate that receiving the blessings of God is based upon a set of conditions. These stipulations got spelled-out in laws that Moses received at Sinai. After Moses delivers these stipulations to the people about the tabernacle and its accouterments, the people begin their journey through the wilderness and head towards the land that God promised to give Abraham and his descendants.
- (3) The book of Leviticus contains those regulations that God gave Moses to govern sacrifices, the priesthood, the tabernacle, diet, sexual relations, cleanliness, holiness, the Day of Atonement, tithes, festivals, and a host of other moral issues, which required attention in the community of slaves that was recently delivered from bondage in Egypt.

- 4) The book of Numbers gives us a census of those in the biblical community, and it recounts events in the life of Israel as she made her trek to the Promised Land. Complaints and rebellion are widespread in this book: from Moses' brother and sister (Aaron and Miriam) to Korah, a member of the priestly tribe of Levi, the books of Numbers reminds us of the constant bickering of the people of God while they were in the wilderness.
- 5) The book of Deuteronomy is the valedictory address of Moses to the biblical community. In this book, Moses reminds the biblical community about what God has done for them, and he reiterates the stipulations that governed the covenant between the Lord and Israel. In his farewell speech, Moses emphasizes that the relationship between God and Israel is based on Israel being obedient to the stipulations that God gave them. Deuteronomy indicates that these regulations mandated the worship of one God. This is the message of the *Shema*: the most important declaration in Israel's faith. It appears in Deut 6:4-9, and it opens with the words: "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might (Deut 6:4-5)." When Deuteronomy closes, the Israelites are poised to enter the Promised Land.

### *Summary*

The Books of Law are very important for Old Testament studies. These books identify key tenets in Old Testament theology. Chief among these tenets is the sole worship of *Yahweh*, Israel's God, and the keeping of the covenant that Yahweh made with Israel. It is the worship of Yahweh and Yahweh alone and obedience to those legal requirements that govern the relationship between Yahweh and Israel that are the focus of many of the books that appear in the Books of History and the Books of Prophecy. It is to the Books of History that we now turn our attention.

### The Books of History

The second major section in the Old Testament is the Books of History. The books that comprise this subsection are Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. The following is a summary of these books:

from Egypt into the Promised Land, i.e. the land of Canaan. Rahab receives special attention in this book due to the assistance she gave to Joshua and to the men that Joshua sent to investigate Jericho. Under the leadership of Yahweh, and His lieutenant, Joshua, the Israelites begin their piecemeal conquest of the land of Canaan. Yahweh shows His power through performing miracles in the Israelite victories at Jericho and Gibeon. After a series of skirmishes, other cities and the rest of the Promised Land falls into the hands of the Israelites. Israel divides the land amongst the Tribes, and the book of Joshua closes with a covenant renewal ceremony at Shechem (Joshua 24).

- (2) Judges: this book tells us the story of local heroes in the *Tribal Period of Israelite history*. **Judges** arose in response to local crises, and brought deliverance to the people. The Spirit of the Lord moved the judges to action. Chief amongst these champions were Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, Shamgar, Tola, and Abdon. The book of Judges indicates that a very interesting pattern of behavior was present amongst the people of Israel. The people would sin by violating the covenant God made with them in Sinai. Because of their disobedience, the people would end up in bondage. God would raise a deliverer and send him/her to rescue the people. After the people had been delivered, they would over time, commit treason against God. This cycle of violating the covenant, ending up in bondage, crying-out to God for help, God sending a deliverer, and the people return to disobeying God is the routine of the people of Israel during the Tribal Period in Israelite History.
- (3) Ruth: this book tells us the story about Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz. Naomi is Ruth's mother-in-law. Both Naomi and Ruth become widows. Instead of Ruth returning home after the death of her husband to seek another husband, she decides to remain with Naomi. These women go to Bethlehem and go into the fields to glean corn. It is noteworthy that Boaz, a relative of Naomi, owns the cornfield where Ruth is attempting to gather corn. Through the providence of the Lord, Boaz marries Ruth, and Ruth becomes an ancestor to David and to Jesus. It also is important to mention that Jews often read the book of Ruth at the festival of Pentecost.



- 4) 1-2 Samuel: these books describe that period in Israelite history when the biblical community transitions from the Tribal Period to the Monarchy. Samuel, Saul, David, Nathan, and Bathsheba play major roles in this transition. It is important to note that these books mention the Ark of the Covenant, and the *Davidic Covenant* (2 Samuel, Chapter 7). The Davidic Covenant was the promise God made to David that his descendants would rule Israel forever.
- 5) 1-2 Kings: these books deal specifically with the *United Kingdom* and the persons and factors that led to the disintegration of this polity entity. After 915 BC, what was the Davidic Empire continued to exist as two distinct political realms. These entities were *the Northern Kingdom* and *the Southern Kingdom*. The ten northern tribes of Israel comprised the Northern Kingdom. Benjamin and Judah were southern tribes, and they comprised the Southern Kingdom. First Kings describes the roles that prophets like Elijah, Elisha, and Ahijah played in the religious life of the people and in the domestic policies of the monarchs in the biblical communities. Second Kings gives detailed attention to the destruction of both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms (2 Kings Chapters 17, and 24-25). The Assyrians destroyed the Northern Kingdom in 722 BC, and the Babylonians destroyed the Southern Kingdom and took groups of Judeans to Babylon in 587 BC.
- (6) 1-2 Chronicles: these books retell the history in 2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings. It covers familiar terrain, in that it re-writes the stories of David and Solomon. The books of Chronicles, however, give special attention to the Temple and to the religious life of the Southern Kingdom.
- (7) Ezra: this book deals with the restoration of the Southern Kingdom after the Edit of Cyrus the Great in 539/8 BC. Ezra and groups of Jews, with the backing of the Persian government return to their homeland, begin a systematic process of rebuilding the Temple, and reinstating the sacrifices and systems of worship and the administration of justice that is in the laws of Moses. Ezra, Sheshbazzar, and Zerubbabel help to rebuild and re-establish Jerusalem and the Judean community, which had been in exile in Babylon. The book of Ezra gives special attention to the requirement of holiness for the people of God and to the importance of the people of God remaining faithful to the Law of Moses and to their being an identifiable, distinct group in the world in which they

NEHEMIAH AND EZRA also deals with the restoration of the Southern Kingdom after the Edit of Cyrus the Great in 539/8 BC. Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem with the mission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem which had been razed by the Babylonians. Nehemiah endeavors to reestablish faithfulness to the Law of Moses, by pointing out to Jews the dangers of disobeying legal stipulations that appear in the Law of Moses. Nehemiah acts to purify Jerusalem and rid Jerusalem of all dangers to her relationship with God. In fact, both Nehemiah and Ezra act to establish a *theocracy*.

- (9) Esther: this book is about a Jewish woman who is in exile in the Persian Empire. Esther or Hadassah as she also is called (Esther 2:7), and her cousin Mordecai, deal with the hatred directed against Jews by Haman. Esther and Mordecai formulate a plan to save the mass execution of Jews who were in Persia. Hadassah is a part of the providence of God. She was in Persia for “such a time like this.”

### *Summary*

The Books of History describe several important experiences in the history of the biblical community. These events include the entrance into the Promised Land and life during the Tribal Period (1200-1000 BC); the United Monarchy or Davidic Empire (1000-915 BC); the Divided Monarchy (915-587 BC); and the Babylonian Exile (587 BC-539 BC). Chief amongst those events during the Divided Monarchy are the fall of the Northern Kingdom (722 BC) and the fall of the Southern Kingdom (587 BC). The next section in the study reviews the Books of Poetry.

### The Books of Poetry

The third major section in the Old Testament is the Books of Poetry. These books are Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

- (1) Job is a book that explores *theodicy*, e.g., the problem of undeserved suffering in this world. That is to say, theodicy is the quest to answer the following question: Why do the righteous or innocent suffer? The book of Job depicts Job as a God fearing and virtuous person. After a series of catastrophes, namely the lost of his children, livestock, and health, Job is faced with the challenge of whether he will remain faithful to God. Later in the story, Job’s friends attempt to explain why Job

is experiencing these tragedies. Job wants to question God about his predicament. Job's request is granted, and he gets a chance to talk with God. At the end of the book, Job gets vindicated.

- 2) Psalms is an anthology of poems. It is important to mention that the Psalms are people speaking mainly to God, not God speaking to people. These songs express a range of human emotions. There, on the one hand, are Psalms that express remorse for committing specific sins. There, on the other hand, are Psalms that express joy and excitement. There are Psalms that express disappointment at being betrayed by ones friend. Several types/genres of songs comprise the Psalms. Some of these types are Hymns, Laments, Songs of Thanksgiving, and Royal Psalms. The book of Psalms is organized into five sections, and David, Asaph, and the sons of Korah are among those persons given credit for writing the Psalms.
- 3) Proverbs is a collection of short sayings and dialogues that praises instruction and wisdom. In doing so, the book of Proverbs criticizes ignorance and folly. Proverbs contrast two types of persons: the wise person and the fool. The person who embraces instruction and learning is the wise person, and he will prosper. The person who snubs instruction is the fool, and he is earmarked for disaster. Solomon, Agur, and King Lemuel are given credit for writing the Proverbs.
- (4) Ecclesiastes is a book that ponders life. The author of the book is Solomon, and he spends considerable time wrestling with some of the perennial issues in the human condition. These issues are the meaning of life, happiness, pleasure, and death. Solomon appears skeptical by claiming that no one can know for sure what is going on in life in regards to the human condition (Ecclesiastes 8:16-17). While the book of Ecclesiastes indicates that death is the final state for everyone, it indicates also that every deed will be brought into judgment.
- (5) The Song of Solomon is a collection of poems that celebrates the love between a man and a woman. In the Song of Solomon, the lover and his beloved are in dialogue about the way they feel about each other. They express openly their longing for one another, and they look forward to future meetings in their courtship. This love affair in the Song of Songs is often read as an allegory, in which the lover and the beloved

in the Song of Solomon are symbolic for someone or something else. The love affair in the Song of Solomon, on the one hand, has been equated with God and his wooing of biblical Israel. The courtship in the Song of Solomon, on the other hand, has been likened to Christ and his reaching out to the Church. Solomon is given credit for writing the Song of Solomon.

### *Summary*

The Books of Poetry contain different books. These books are Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. Each book focuses attention on a different aspect of the human condition. One section of Books remains unexplored in the Old Testament. It is the Books of Prophecy. It is to this section that we now turn our attention. For the sake of convenience, these books will be discussed chronologically, not in the order in which they appear in the Old Testament.

### The Books of Prophecy

The fourth major section in the Old Testament is the Books of Prophecy. With the appearance of Amos, a new era in prophecy emerged in ancient Israel. Prophets were persons who spoke on behalf of God. Because of the length of the books, some of these books are identified as either Major or Minor prophets. Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, and perhaps Jonah prophesied during the eighth century BC, so these prophets are also called the eighth century prophets.

#### *A. The Eighth Century BC Prophets*

- (1) Amos: The book of Amos is listed amongst the Minor Prophets. Amos is prophesying to the Northern Kingdom. He preached during the time of Jeroboam II (788-747 BC). Amos preaches about social justice and the Day of the Lord. He admonishes people in the Northern Kingdom to practice a concern for the most vulnerable in society. Scholars generally date Amos around 760-750 BC.
- (2) Hosea: The book of Hosea is listed amongst the Minor Prophets. Hosea also prophesied in the Northern Kingdom. He preached during the time of Jeroboam II. Hosea preached about Israel's unfaithfulness to the covenant she had with God. Hosea often compared Israel's relationship to God to the relationship of a husband and a wife. Thus Ho-

sea saw the Northern Kingdom's rejection of God as spiritual adultery. Scholars date Hosea to around 750 BC.

- (3) Isaiah: The fact that this book contains sixty-six chapters is the reason for this book being listed among the Major Prophets. Isaiah prophesied mainly to the Southern Kingdom, and the book of Isaiah is set during the time when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah reigned in the Southern Kingdom. Several important ideas and themes appear in the book of the prophet Isaiah. Prophecies about *the Holy One of Israel, Immanuel, the royal ruler from the lineage of David, and a suffering servant* are prominent. These prophecies are the backdrop against which to understand ideas about God and the Messiah in the New Testament. It is believed that Isaiah began his ministry around 743 BC.
- (4) Jonah: Jonah is a Minor Prophet. This book is about a prophet who prophesied to Jeroboam II. Second Kings 14:25 indicates that Jonah, the son of Amittai, prophesied to Jeroboam II. The book of Jonah, however, tells the story about how Jonah decides to disobey the command of God to preach to a foreign people, and that Jonah ends up in the belly of a great fish. One purpose of the book of Jonah is to convey the message that the people of God have a responsibility to share the news about God with everybody. Since Jonah prophesied to Jeroboam II, it is believed that Jonah prophesied in the latter half of the eighth century.
- (5) Micah: Micah is listed amongst the Minor Prophets. He prophesied to the Southern Kingdom, during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Micah reached moral accountability and ethical righteousness. He also talked about the absence of social justice in Judah. The book of Micah contains a prophecy about the place where the Messiah, the royal king from the lineage of David, would be born. It is believed that Micah prophesied during the second half of the eighth century BC.

#### B. The Seventh Century BC Prophets

- (1) Zephaniah: Zephaniah is listed amongst the Minor Prophets. He prophesied in the South during the reign of Josiah. At the center of

...the coming, and that the Day of the Lord was going to be a time when God destroyed wickedness from the face of the Earth. Zephaniah, however, believed that a remnant would be saved. It is believed that he prophesied around 640 BC.

- (2) **Jeremiah:** Jeremiah is listed amongst the Major Prophets. Fifty-two Chapters comprise the book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah prophesied in the Southern Kingdom, and began his ministry during the reign of Josiah. Jeremiah preached during the last days of Jerusalem, for he was still at work when the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem. Jeremiah preached that because the people had violated their covenant with God, God was going to send the Babylonians to punish them. Jeremiah, however, preached that the people could return to God if they wanted. He also preached that God would save a remnant, and that God was making a new covenant with the biblical community. Scholars usually date Jeremiah's ministry from 627 BC to some time after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC.
- (3) **Lamentations:** Although this book contains only five Chapters, it is one of the Major Prophets. This book contains series of short poems that mourn the destruction of Jerusalem. The expression of grief is widespread in this book, for the dirges in this book are reactions to the events that befell Jerusalem and Judah in 587 BC. Jeremiah is believed to be the author of Lamentations.
- (4) **Habakkuk:** Habakkuk is a Minor Prophet. He preached in the South and he bewailed the wrongs done to the righteous in the biblical communities. Habakkuk prophesies that God is a Divine Warrior. While Habakkuk seems to raise a host of questions with God about when He was going to act, Habakkuk looks forward to the day that God will triumph over evil. It is believed that Habakkuk prophesied during the years before Babylon attacked Jerusalem.
- (5) **Nahum:** Nahum is a Minor Prophet. In short, Nineveh, the capital of Assyria is a cursed and doomed city. Prophecies in the book of Nahum describe the carnage that will accompany the fall of Nineveh. It is possible to argue that this poem might have been of comfort to people from the Northern Kingdom in light of what Assyria did to

them. Nineveh fell in 612 BC. Scholars, therefore, date the prophecies in the book of Nahum to 663-612 BC.

### *C. The Sixth Century BC Prophets*

- (1) Daniel: Daniel is listed as a Major Prophet. He prophesied about those empires that would appear on the scene, and about the Great Abomination of Desolation. Daniel preached about faithfulness to God regardless of the consequences, and it is believed that his prophecies took place during the time when he was a member of the royal court in Babylon.
- (2) Ezekiel: Ezekiel is listed as a Major Prophet. Ezekiel was carried away to Babylon, and he prophesied while he was in Exile. Central to Ezekiel's preaching was the belief that God still loved those Jews who had been carried away to Babylon, and that God wanted His people to remember that at some point they would be restored, and that they would live vibrant lives. It is believed that Ezekiel prophesied around 592 BC.
- (3) Obadiah: Obadiah is in the Minor Prophets. Only twenty-one verses are in this book. Obadiah talks about the Day of the Lord coming, and that this would be the time when God would deal with Edom for her not coming to the aid of Judah when she was ravaged by the Babylonians. Because the book of Obadiah prophesies about a time when Jerusalem will be restored, scholars date the book somewhere between 587-539 BC, i.e. to a time after the fall of Jerusalem but before the return of the exiles from Babylon.
- (4) Haggai & Zechariah: These books are in the Minor Prophets. These books appeared around 520 BC. These books share a common message. The message is: It is God's will that the Temple in Jerusalem be rebuilt, and that worship in that sacred place is reinstated, and that Zerubbabel, a descendant of David, presides over the restored community in Jerusalem.

### *D. The Fifth Century BC Prophets*

- (1) Malachi: This book is in the Minor Prophets. While Malachi proph-

...sues against corrupt priests for offering flawed sacrifices, he prophesies against the people for withholding their tithes. Malachi indicted the people because they were unfaithful to the covenant, and he closed the book with a prophecy about the coming of a messenger to prepare the way before the Lord comes. It is believed that Malachi preached around 400 BC.

- (2) Joel: This book is one of the Minor Prophets. Joel talks about the coming of locust, and he prophesies that the coming of the locust is a sign of the coming of the judgment of the Lord. Malachi looks forward to an expected time when God will pour out His Spirit. The Spirit of the Lord will fall on people regardless of their age, gender, or nationality and this will be a time of spiritual prosperity. It is believed that Joel preached around 400 BC.

### ***WRAP-UP***

The Books of Prophecy Prophets are broken down into two sections: The Major Prophets and the Minor Prophets. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel are Major Prophets. Hosea, Joel, Amos, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Obadiah, Habakkuk, Zechariah, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Malachi comprise the Minor Prophets.

The Old Testament contains thirty-nine books. While these thirty-nine books appeared at different moments in the history of ancient Israel, they all had appeared by 200 BC. The Old Testament appeared first in Hebrew and Aramaic before it was translated into Greek and Latin. It is commonly believed by scholars that much of the material in the Old Testament circulated orally in the ancient biblical community. That is to say, much of the information that now appears in the Old Testament was passed on first by word of mouth from generation to generation before it was written down by Moses, Ezra, and a host of anonymous authors. The Holy Ghost directed a very important process: the bringing to us of the Bible in English, and the Spirit of the Lord used different languages, people, and events to bring to us the Old Testament, part of His Word in written form.



## Sample Test Questions

### Short Answer

- a. What is a canon?
- b. What books appear in the Books of Law?
- c. Which books appear in the Books of Prophecy?
- d. Which books appear in the Books of Poetry?
- e. Which books appear in the Books of History?

### f. Multiple Choice

- f. What is the date associated with the Israelite Exodus from Egypt?
  1. 1200 BC-1250 BC
  2. 1000 BC-915 BC
  3. 915 BC-722 BC
  4. 915 BC-587 BC
  5. 587 BC-539 BC
- g. What is the date associated with the United Monarchy?
  1. 1200 BC-1250 BC
  2. 1000 BC-915 BC
  3. 915 BC-722 BC
  4. 915 BC-587 BC
  5. 587 BC-539 BC
- h. What is the date associated with the Babylonian Captivity?
  1. 1200 BC-1250 BC
  2. 1000 BC-915 BC
  3. 915 BC-722 BC
  4. 915 BC-587 BC
  5. 587 BC-539 BC
- i. What is the date associated with the Southern Kingdom?
  1. 1200 BC-1250 BC
  2. 1000 BC-915 BC
  3. 915 BC-722 BC
  4. 915 BC-587 BC
  5. 587 BC-539 BC

- (j) Daniel is a Minor Prophet (F)
- (k) Moses is the author of 2 Samuel (F)
- (l) Jeremiah wrote some of the Psalms (F)
- (m) Hosea prophesied during the 5th Century BC (F)
- (n) Isaiah prophesied during the time of Jeroboam II (T)

#### **IV. Essay:**

- (1) What is the Primeval History?
- (2) Discuss the Davidic covenant and its importance for understanding the person and work of Jesus.
- (3) Who were the “judges?” In which time period do these persons appear in the history of biblical Israel?
- (4) Discuss the fall of Jerusalem.
- (5) Who was Cyrus the Great?

#### **VII. Answers to the Sample Test Questions**

##### **A. Short Answer**

- a. A list of books, which is authoritative for faith and action.
- b. What books appear in the Books of Law?  
Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy
- c. Which books appear in the Major Prophets?  
Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Lamentations
- d. Which books appear in the Books of Poetry?  
Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job, Song of Solomon
- e. Which books appear in the Books of History?  
Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Esther, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah

##### **B. Multiple Choice**

- (f) Israelite Exodus from Egypt-1250 BC-1200 BC
- (g) The United Monarchy 1000 BC-915 BC
- (h) The Babylonian Captivity (587-539 BC)
- (i) The Northern Kingdom (915 BC-587 BC)

**9. True/False**

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| (j) | F |
| (k) | F |
| (l) | F |
| (m) | F |
| (n) | T |

**10. Essay**

Check the student's answers against what is in the Lesson.

***Teacher's Notes:***

*Students should be required to read the New Testament in its entirety.*

*Require that students memorize the books of the New Testament in order. In addition, they should be able to spell the names of the books correctly.*

*Encourage students to learn the following introductory information for each book of the New Testament: author (Who wrote the book?), recipients (To whom was the book addressed?), provenance (Where was the author when the book was written?), date (What was the approximate date that the book was written?), content (Summarize the argument of the book or give a general out-line of the work), purpose (Why was the book written? What is its aim?).*

*Teachers should highlight the various genres (types of literature) that are found throughout the New Testament. Examples include gospels, parables, letters, homilies (or sermons), hymns, and apocalypses. Special attention should be given to how each of these is properly interpreted.*

*Students should be able to give a general timeline of events in the New Testament. For example, students should know that Paul wrote his epistles before the Gospels were written.*

*Since it is important that there be a joining of head and heart, students should consider memorizing at least twenty-five (25) verses from the New Testament.*

*Students should be encouraged to use a modern translation of the Bible when studying. There are many excellent Study Bibles available that will provide useful information and further clarification of the topics discussed in this guide. The NIV Study Bible and the ESV Study Bible are among the best. These Bibles provide charts, maps, outlines, and notes on interpreting the Old and New Testaments.*

*All good teaching must be relevant. Therefore, at strategic moments during the teaching of the class, the professor should make efforts to illustrate points of applying the text to the life of the church and the believer.*

# **SURVEY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**

## **Introduction**

All the New Testament writings are occasional documents. In other words, they are written to address specific needs of the audience. None of the writers of these works were writing theology for its own sake. Rather, they wrote in order to address the questions or problems of individual or local congregations.

In order to properly interpret the New Testament Book, it is imperative to learn the history of the writing, to ask what is going on in this congregation, and what is the author's response. Good exegesis mandates that we ask the historical and literary questions of authorship, date, provenance, content, and purpose for each book of the Bible.

The New Testament can be divided into the following four segments: (1) the Gospels; (2) the Acts of the Apostles; (3) the Epistles; and (4) the Apocalypse. The Gospels can be further subdivided into the Synoptic Gospels and the Fourth Gospel. The Epistles can be subdivided into the Early Epistles of Paul, the Major Epistles of Paul, the Prison Epistles, the Pastor Epistles, the Book of Hebrews, the Epistle of James, the Petrine Epistles, the Johannine Epistles, and the Epistles of Jude.

## **The Gospels**

**The Synoptic Gospels** are Matthew, Mark, and Luke. They are called synoptic because they "see with one eye." In other words, they present a very similar portrait of the life, ministry, teaching, and passion of Jesus.

**Matthew's Gospel** is written to Jews in order to demonstrate that Jesus is the promised Messiah of the Old Testament. It is characterized by the five large blocks of Jesus' teaching (the righteousness of the kingdom [chs. 5-7]; the proclamation of the kingdom [ch. 10]; the mystery of the kingdom [ch. 13]; the people of the kingdom [ch. 18]; and the future of the kingdom [chs. 24-25]) and his emphasis on the presence of God with His people.

**Mark's Gospel** is written to persecuted Romans to encourage them to maintain faithfulness to God. Jesus is portrayed as a model for Christian discipleship who suffers at the hands of the Romans, but still fulfills the commands of God.

**Luke's Gospel** is the first of a two-part work addressed to Theophilus (1:1-4; cf. Acts 1:1). The author presents Jesus as Savior of the world. Jesus' mission

which include the poor, the widows and orphans, women, and sinners.

**The fourth Gospel**, also known as the Gospel according to John, begins by presenting Jesus as the incarnate Word of God made flesh (1:1, 14). The author records seven of Jesus' signs or miracles: (1) the turning of water into wine at Cana; (2) the healing of the nobleman's son; (3) the healing of the lame man by the pool of Bethesda; (4) the feeding of the five thousand (the only miracle found in all four gospels); (5) the walking on the water; (6) the healing of the man born blind; and (7) the raising of Lazarus from the dead. These signs are written so that we might "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing [we] might have [eternal] life in his name" (20:30-31). Throughout this gospel, these miracles give Jesus an opportunity to talk about Himself and His mission. This is seen especially in his repeated use of "I am" sayings: (1) I am the bread of life (6:35); (2) I am the light of the world (8:12); (3) I am the door of the sheep (10:7); (4) I am the good shepherd (10:11); (5) I am the resurrection, and the life (11:25); (6) I am the way, the truth, and the life (14:6); and (7) I am the true vine (15:1).

### **The Book Of Acts**

**The Book of Acts** (also known as the Acts of the Apostles) is the second of a two-part work addressed to Theophilus. Luke states that his purpose is to continue the narrative that he began in the Gospel that bears his name. Specifically, he implies that his aim is to narrate some of the things that Jesus is continuing to do in the world through the Spirit-empowered church. An outline can be discerned from Acts 1:8 where Jesus promises that after the disciples have received the Holy Spirit, they will be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. The fulfillment of this mission is demonstrated through the evangelism of Peter, Steven, Philip, and Paul. The Apostle Paul is given special prominence in this work. For Luke recounts his three Missionary Journeys (13:1-14:28; 15:30-18:22; and 18:23-21:16) which serve as the historical background for interpreting the letters of Paul.

One of the most important events is the so-called Jerusalem Council at which the issue of how people are saved is discussed. According to Acts 15, the Judaizers were arguing that in order for Gentiles to be saved, they first had to become Jewish and become circumcised. Paul vehemently denies this and states that people are saved only by grace through faith. No works of the law can save. This incident serves as the foil for understanding Paul's arguments in his letter to the Galatians.

## The Epistles

An *epistle* is another term for a letter. The most prolific letter-writer in the New Testament is Paul. He follows the standard format of ancient letter writing that includes the identification of the writer(s), the identification of the recipients, a greeting, the thanksgiving, the body of the letter, and the closing which may include final exhortations and more greetings. All of Paul's letters can be examined in this way. For example, the writers of 1 Corinthians are Paul and Sosthenes (1:1); the recipient is the church of God which is at Corinth (1:2); the greeting is found in verse 3 and the thanksgiving is verses 4-9. The body begins in 1:10 and runs through 16:9 before the closing.

### **The Early Epistles Of Paul (Galatians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians)**

**Galatians** is Paul's letter to a group of churches who have fallen prey to the *Judaizers*. These Jews (probably from Jerusalem) are telling *Gentiles* that in order to be saved, in addition to accepting Jesus, they must also become Jewish by becoming circumcised and observing the Jewish laws. Citing Abraham as the prime example, Paul vehemently disagrees and tells them that keeping the law cannot save. He reassures them that faith in Jesus is sufficient for genuine salvation.

**1 Thessalonians** was written to encourage these believers to exemplify moral purity and good works as they await the *Parousia* of Jesus. Paul also consoles those who have lost believing loved ones that they are not disadvantaged. He gives a brief overview of what will happen at the end of the age and cautions the Thessalonians against attempting to establish a specific time for the Second Coming.

**2 Thessalonians** was written in response to letters that were supposedly written by Paul and stating that the end of the world had already Come. Paul reassures these believers that the end of the age has not yet arrived because there are certain events that must first take place, and then redirects them to good works until the Second Coming of Jesus.

### **The Major Epistles Of Paul (1 & 2 Corinthians, Romans)**

**1 Corinthians** was written by Paul to the church at Corinth in response to oral reports that he had received about divisions (1:10-11), sexual immorality and lawsuits among the believers (ch. 6). In addition, he responds to a letter that the Corinthians has sent to him (7:1) asking questions about sex in marriage (ch. 7), food that has been offered to idols (chs. 8-10),

proper worship (ch. 11), spiritual gifts (chs. 12-14), the resurrection of the dead (ch. 15), and the offering for the saints in Jerusalem (ch. 16).

**2 Corinthians** was written by Paul as a defense of his apostleship before those who would argue the contrary.

**Romans** was written by Paul to the church at Rome in order to encourage unity among the believers. In order to bring this about, he outlines the plan of God to bring about salvation from sin for all people, Jews and Gentile alike. Salvation comes by God's grace through faith and it is not something humans can accomplish or earn.

**The Pastoral Epistles.** These letters were written by Paul to pastors. Specifically, they are addressed to Timothy, Paul's protégé who is pastoring in Ephesus, and Titus, another protégé who is pasturing in Crete.

**1 Timothy** addresses such issues as public worship, qualifications for church leaders, and how to confront the false teachers in Ephesus.

**Titus** was written by the Apostle Paul to one, Titus, whom he had left to pastor a church on the island of Crete.

**2 Timothy** is chronologically last in order of the three Pastoral Epistles. It records Paul's last words before his death at the hands of Nero in AD 64. Paul encourages his protégé to fulfill his ministry.

**The General Epistles.** With the exception of 2 and 3 John, these epistles are not addressed to any specific individual or local church. For this reason they are also called general, or catholic epistles (not catholic as in Roman Catholic, but catholic with a small "c" meaning universal). The General Epistles are James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1-3 John, and Jude. These epistles are titled according to the purported author as opposed to the epistles of Paul that are titled according to the addressees.

According to the testimony of the early church, the **Epistle of James** was written by James, the son of Joseph and Mary, and the step-brother of Jesus. He writes to persecuted Jewish Christians in order to encourage them to have "pure religion" (1:27) which is tested by trial and temptation in the faith. The underlying theme throughout the epistle is the encouragement to be doers of the word and not hearers only (1:22). Accordingly, there are continued exhortations to good deeds, control of the tongue, and proper use of wealth.

**The Petrine Epistles.** These letters were written by Peter, one of Jesus'



disciples, sometime between A.D. 64 and 68.

**1 Peter** was written to believers in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. The purpose was to encourage these Christians who were being persecuted simply because they were Christians. They also lived under the threat of hostilities aimed at them by Emperor Nero. Therefore, Peter writes to exhort them to maintain faithfulness to Jesus. Such suffering is to be expected because they follow in the footsteps of their Shepherd, Jesus, who likewise was persecuted yet remained faithful to God.

**The Johannine Epistles.** These are letters that were written by John, the son of Zebedee and one of the apostles of Jesus, somewhere between AD 80 and 95. According to early church tradition, in addition to the three letters and the Gospel, he also wrote the Apocalypse.

**1 John** is a treatise in which the author underscores fellowship and the importance of believers loving God and other believers.

**2 John** is an epistle to an unidentified lady and her children (perhaps a metaphor for the church). The author warns against the antichrists who deny the doctrine of Christ, namely that Jesus Christ was truly human.

**3 John** is a letter of encouragement to Gaius. In it he commends Demetrius and warns against Diotrephes.

**Jude**, the brother of Jesus (Matthew 13:55) writes this epistle as a warning against certain nominal Christians who threatened to undermine and destroy the fellowship of believers by their immoral character and conduct. Just as sure as God brought judgment upon sin, those who follow in their path can be certain of God's judgment. In contrast to the destructive and world attitude of the false teachers, believers are to show a constructive and spiritual love. Remembering the mercy of Christ towards them, they are also to show mercy towards those engulfed in these evils.

### **The Apocalypse (Revelation)**

This epistle is written by John while he was a prisoner on the island of Patmos (about AD 95 during the reign of Domitian), where he had been exiled because of his Christian faith (Revelation 1:4, 9; 22:8). The purpose is to encourage persecuted believers living in Asia Minor to maintain faithfulness to Jesus. This is accomplished by the extensive use of vivid symbolic language.

**Revelation** is addressed to the seven churches of Asia Minor (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea). It be-

A Timeline of The New Testament

Approximate Dates:	6 B.C.-A.D. 28	A.D. 29-63	A.D. 63-67	A.D. 67-95
New Testament Event:	Life of Jesus	Spread of Christianity	Death of Peter and Paul	
Described in:	Matthew Mark Luke John	Acts Galatians 1 & 2 Thessalonians 1 & 2 Corinthians Romans Ephesians Philippians Colossians/ Philemon	1 Timothy Titus 2 Timothy 1 Peter 2 Peter/ Jude	Hebrews 1, 2, 3, John Revelation

*The books are listed in the order of their approximate writing.*

## GLOSSARY

**Amhaaretz:** A Hebrew term meaning “people of the land.” These are the common, uneducated people with whom Jesus spent most of His time.

**Apocalypse:** Literally “to unveil,” “to uncover,” or “to reveal” it is an unveiling of things, people, or events that was previously hidden. According to Revelation 1:1, the last book of the Bible is an unveiling of Jesus Himself and a description of events past, present, and future.

**Apostle:** A term meaning “one who is sent” on a mission. It is applied to the twelve disciples (Mark 3:13-19; John 20:24; 1 Corinthians 15:5), and a few others, including Paul (1 Corinthians 9:1), who met the qualifications (Acts 1:13-14) to preach the message of the Gospel and to act on the behalf of Jesus.

**Beatitudes:** The teachings of Jesus in Matthew 5:1-12 and Luke 6:17-26 that begin with the phrase “Blessed are ....” Luke adds a series of woes that contrast with the blessings.

**Canon:** Means rule or standard. It refers to that body of literature which is considered by a religious group as the rule or standard and therefore authoritative for beliefs and practice. For Christians the canon is made up of the 66 Books of the Bible and is closed to any further additions.

**Epistle:** A letter.

**Eschatology:** The study of “last things” or the end time.

**Essenes:** A Jewish sect that lived as a small monastic community, like that at Qumran, which produced the Dead Sea Scrolls.

**Exegesis:** Literally means “to draw out.” This term refers to the practice of close analysis of a biblical text in order to determine the intended meaning of the author.

**Fourth Gospel:** The Gospel according to John.

**Gentiles:** Any person who is not Jewish (Romans 9:24).

**God-Fearers:** Gentiles who were willing to honor certain aspects of Judaism (for example, the worship of one God), but did not want to become circumcised or observe other Jewish laws and rituals.

**Gospel:** Literally means “good news.” It can refer to the preaching of Jesus (Mark 1:14-15), the message about the life and sacrificial death of Jesus that brings salvation to all (Romans 1:1-5), or the first four books of the New Testament which are written about Jesus.

must become Jewish by getting circumcised, keeping kosher food laws, etc

**Kerygma:** The Greek word for “preaching.” New Testament scholars use this term to refer to the content of early Christian preaching that included the proclamation that: (1) the new age, promised in scripture, has now dawned (2) this dawning of the new age has taken place through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; (3) Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God as the leader of a new people of God; (4) the Holy Spirit present in the church is the sign that Jesus is still alive and present with His followers; (5) Jesus will come again to consummate the Kingdom of God; (6) therefore people should repent.

**Kingdom of God/heaven:** The reign or the rule of God. Jesus uses the term to refer to both the present rule of God (Mark 1:15 and something that will come in the future (Matthew 6:10; 7:21).

**Messiah:** Literally means the “Anointed One” (Matthew 16:16; John 1:41). Coming from the Hebrew, the term refers to the ruling king or coming savior.

**Parable:** An earthly story used by Jesus in order to illustrate some spiritual truth. They usually have one main point and challenge the hearers to make a decision in response.

**Parousia:** A Greek term meaning “presence” or “coming.” It is used to refer to the Second Coming of Jesus. According to the New Testament, visible return of Jesus to the earth (Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Peter 3:3-13; Revelation 11:15; 19:11-16) will bring the present age to an end and begin the new age.

**Passion:** The suffering of Jesus; it can also refer to those sections of the gospels which focus on the suffering and death of Jesus.

**Pastoral Epistles:** Those letters written by the Apostle Paul to pastors – 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus.

**Pericope:** The technical term for any individual unit or section of the Gospels. It literally means to “cut around,” so it is that which you can cut around in the Gospel and it can stand by itself. For example, the story of Jesus healing the blind man or Jesus’ teaching of a parable.

**Pharisees:** The largest Jewish group during the time of Jesus. They taught strict observance of the Mosaic laws and the various oral interpretations of them. In addition, they believed in angels and demons, predestination, and the resurrection of the body at the end of the age.

**Prison Epistles:** Those letters written by the Apostle Paul while he was in prison – Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians.

**Proselyte:** One who converts to a religion.

**Publicans:** Tax or toll collectors; Among Jews, publicans were much hated because they handled currency with pagan inscriptions and cooperated with the Romans.

**Sadducees:** A group of religious leaders with whom Jesus had repeated contact throughout the Gospels. Unlike the Pharisees, they regarded only the first five books of the Old Testament as full authoritative and denied the oral interpretation of these books. They also did not believe in predestination, angels and demons, or the resurrection of the dead (Matthew 22:23; Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27).

**Synagogue:** A place of worship for Jews living outside Israel that arose after the destruction of the temple in 586 BC. Here they could meet together, study the Torah, and worship God. They are significant because the early Christians patterned their worship on that which took place in the synagogues. These services typically consisted of reciting the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-5), prayers, scripture readings from the Old Testament, a sermon, and the benediction.

**Synoptic Problem:** The theological term used to refer to the problem of identifying the relationship between the first three Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). It is an attempt to answer the question why are these gospels similar to and different from one another.

**Temple:** The central place of Jewish worship in Jerusalem where sacrifices were offered.

**Word:** In John 1:1-14 and Revelation 19:13, Jesus is referred to as the Word. The Greek term is Logos.

**Zealots:** A Jewish party during the time of Jesus that advocated armed rebellion against the Romans. It was hoped that doing this would bring about the kingdom of God. According to Mark 3:18 and Acts 1:13, Simon was a former Zealot.

1. Identify the Synoptic Gospels.

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

2. Why are they called Synoptic Gospels? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. What does the term Gospel mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4. What are the Prison Epistles?

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

5. Why are they called Prison Epistles? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

6. What are the Pastoral Epistles?

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

7. Why are they called Pastoral Epistles? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Identify any four (4) of the General/Catholic Epistles?

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

Why are they called Catholic Epistles? \_\_\_\_\_

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0. What books constitute the Johannine literature (i.e., written by John)?

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

1. List Jesus' seven (7) "I am" sayings in John's Gospel.

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

12. List Jesus' seven (7) "signs"/miracles in John's Gospel.

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

healings, exorcisms, nature miracles, and resuscitations.

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

## ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Why are the first three Gospels called synoptic? What is the Synoptic Problem? What is the best explanation for solving it?
2. Discuss the similarities and differences between John and the Synoptic Gospels.
3. Discuss any **three** (3) of Jesus' parables and identify the main point of each one.
4. Outline the major events of the life of Jesus.
5. Discuss the following introductory issues for any New Testament book:
  - *Authorship*. Who wrote the book? How do you know?
  - *Date*. What is the approximate date of the work?
  - *Addressees*. To whom is the work addressed? Provide as much detail as possible concerning the identity of the original readers.
  - *Occasion*. What circumstances gave rise to the writing of this document? How does the author respond to the identified circumstance(s)?
  - *Purpose*. What is the goal of the work?
6. Compare and contrast the genre of any **two** (2) New Testament books. Discuss the significance of your observations for interpreting these texts.
7. Discuss the role of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts.
8. Explain Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom of God in the Gospels.
9. Discuss the importance of the Apostle Paul's ministry and writing for the development of the early church.



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## **ORDINATION EXAM:**

# **THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST HISTORY SECTION**

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Dr. David D. Daniels, PhD

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This unit focuses on the history of the Church Of God In Christ (COGIC). It will cover the origins in southern United States, emergence as a denomination, and its development as a major Christian presence in the United States and various countries around the world, basically during the Mason administration. The goals of the unit is for the ordination candidates to be able to identify the major events that shaped COGIC history, identify the key people who influenced the historical development of COGIC, and identify the places where COGIC was involved, related to global missions, social ministry, civil rights, and ecumenism basically during the Mason administration.

*The Teacher's Guide includes a longer historical sketch than the Student Edition along with the exam questions and a list of key people. The Student Edition has a set of study questions. Both editions include a glossary of key terms.*

### **KEY TERMS**

Denomination  
Non- Denominational  
Congregational Polity  
Presbyterial Polity  
Jurisdictional Overseer  
General Overseer  
Bishop  
General Assembly  
Azusa Street Revival  
Ecumenism  
Charles Harrison Mason

Charles Price Jones  
Robert E. Hart  
David J. Young  
E.R. Driver  
Lizzie Woods Robinson  
L. P. Adams  
Lillian Brooks Coffey  
Arenia C. Mallory  
William B. Holt  
Ozro Thurston Jones, Sr.  
Robert Searcy  
F. W. McGee

### **A Historical Sketch of the Church Of God In Christ**

The Church Of God In Christ is a global denomination with congregations in nearly 60 countries around the world. As a leader within the global Pentecostalism, the Church Of God In Christ has made great strides in global missions. In the southern United States, the Church Of God In Christ has

...growth presence in the United States and various countries: the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, and Europe.

## The Beginnings

The Church Of God In Christ arose as a holiness fellowship among black Baptist churches in Mississippi, Arkansas, and Tennessee in 1897, led by Charles Price Jones, Charles Harrison Mason, Walter S. Pleasant, and other Baptist clergy. These leaders first met in 1895; they forged an alliance based on their common aspiration to introduce the doctrine of sanctification and teachings about the holy life into the Baptist church. In 1896, Jones began the publication of the religious newspaper Truth. In 1897, Jones and the others sponsored their first holiness convocation at Jones' pastorate, the Mt. Helmi Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi. The convocation attracted people from states throughout the region.

The teaching about sanctification was coupled with the ministry of healing and the preaching of non-denominationalism, advocating the substitution of biblically-based names for congregations such as Church of God or Church of Christ instead of the term "Baptist." During early 1897, the first church started that was associated with this holiness fellowship of Baptist churches was organized by Mason near Lexington, Mississippi: St. Paul Church of God. Later in 1897, Mason received a revelation about the Church Of God In Christ, based on I Thessalonians 2:14, as a biblical name for a congregation.

In 1899, Baptist leaders objected to non-denominational, even anti-denominational, messages of the holiness fellowship. These leaders mounted a campaign that led to Jones and Mason being disfellowshipped from their respective Baptist State Conventions. The holiness fellowship of Baptist churches reorganized as non-denominational holiness congregations. From 1899 to 1906, the fellowship grew throughout the Mid-South and surrounding states. Jones was elected in 1906 as the General Overseer of the Church Of God In Christ, a non-denominational holiness fellowship of over 110 congregations within the Mid-South. With the majority of the congregations being located in Mississippi, Mason became the Overseer of Tennessee. In August of 1907, Mason would be dismissed from the Jones' fellowship because of his embrace of Pentecostalism. While both Jones and Mason agreed that speaking in tongues was a sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Jones argued that it had to be a known language such as Arabic, Akan, or Chinese rather than unknown language that could be dismissed as gibberish. Mason preached that

th unknown languages along with a unknown languages could be signs of  
e baptism of the Holy Spirit.

### **irth as a Pentecostal Body**

ason along with John A. Jeter and David J. Young embraced the Pentecos-  
l message and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the International  
zusa Street Revival led by William J. Seymour in Los Angeles, California  
1 February of 1907. While Jeter would later recant, Mason and Young re-  
ained firm in their testimony. In September of 1907, ten congregations  
ocated in Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Oklahoma were represented  
t the organizing meeting of the Church Of God In Christ as a Pentecostal  
ody that was held in Memphis, Tennessee; Mason was elected the General  
Overseer. In late November and early December of 1907, Mason convened  
he first convocation and general assembly of the Church Of God In Christ  
as a Pentecostal organization. This first General Assembly included a cross-  
section of leaders, including Charles Harrison Mason and college educated  
clergy such as Robert E. Hart, Eddie R. Driver, and David J. Young; the Hart  
and Driver were lawyers and Young was a journalist.

List of Key Attendees to the General Assembly (September of 1907):

Charles Harrison Mason, H. M. Bell, A. A. Blackwell, John H. Boone, R. R.  
Booker, Justus Bowe, James Brewer, R.H.I. Clark, N. H. DeBerry, Eddie R.  
Driver, Robert E. Hart, E. M. Page, William M. Roberts, S. T. Samuel, M. L.  
Sanders, E. D. Smith, Daniel Spearman, G. W. Taylor, J. H. Waddell, D. W.  
Welch, and David J. Young

Charles Harrison Mason, a native of Bartlett, TN, a suburb of Memphis, Ten-  
nessee, was born to Jerry and Eliza Mason on September 8, 1863, according  
to the 1870 census. Some documents list his birth year as 1866. After the  
death of his father, his mother remarried and the family moved to Arkansas.  
After receiving his Baptist minister's license in 1893, Mason enrolled in Ar-  
kansas Baptist College three months prior to transferring to the Minister's  
Institute at the College. In 1895, he graduated from the Institute and was  
ordained as a Baptist minister.

Mason, first named as General Overseer and later renamed as Senior Bishop,  
led the Church Of God In Christ from 1907 to 1961. Mason appointed over-  
seers to preside over jurisdictions that often followed state boundaries, but  
occasionally some early jurisdictions crossed state lines such as Eastern Mis-  
sissippi. Among the first Jurisdictional Overseers were C. H.

Overseer of Mississippi. D. J. Young was the overseer in Arkansas then Texas. Justus Bowe succeeded Young in Arkansas and E. M. Page succeeded Young in Texas. Other overseers included Robert E. Hart in Tennessee, and Daniel Bostick in Missouri and Illinois, Mack Jonas in Georgia, and E. R. Driver in California. The Church Of God In Christ formed a governance structure in which the Elders' Council constituted the General Assembly, serving as the legislative, judicial, doctrine-making body of the Church; (eventually the Elders' Council and General Assembly would become separate entities). Various offices of the general church would be created by the pioneer generation: the office of the Overseer of Women's Work, the General Secretary, the National Financial Secretary, and the National Trustees. Mason's successors as Chief Apostle, later called Presiding Bishop, would include Bishops: O. T. Jones, Sr. (1961-1968), J. O. Patterson, Sr. (1968-1989), Louis Henry Ford (1990-1995), David Chandler Owens (1995-2000), G. E. Patterson (2000-2007), and Charles Edward Blake (2007- present).

## **The General Assembly**

Since 1907, the General Assembly has been the law-making and doctrine-expressing body of the Church Of God In Christ. For more than fifty years, the Elders' Council constituted the General Assembly. By the early 1920s, a board of Jurisdictional Overseers was formed; the Jurisdictional Overseers and other ordained elders constituted the General Assembly during the first decades of the Church. In 1922, the General Assembly approved a new charter for the Church which adopted as the denomination's corporate name, "The General Board of the Church Of God In Christ of America," and shifted from a congregational polity wherein all property purchased by congregations was owned by them, to a presbyterial polity wherein all property purchased by congregations or jurisdictions is held in trust by each ecclesial entity "for the use and benefit of the members of the Church Of God In Christ." In 1926, the first constitution of the Church was adopted. During this General Assembly, they voted to officially shorten the corporate name of the denomination to Church Of God In Christ. At the 1926 Assembly, they defined the General Assembly as "the only doctrine-expressing and law-making authority of the Church" and to be "composed of the ordained Elders, the Senior Bishop, the [General] Secretary, the [National] Treasurer and such other sisters and brothers as the General Assembly shall prescribe." Among the early General Secretaries of the Church was J. E. Williams. Among the first chairman of the General Assembly was E. R. Driver.

In 1933, Mason introduced the General Assembly and the Office of Bishops as a layer of authority between the Senior Bishop and the Jurisdictional Overseers; the Church Of God In Christ was divided into five episcopal regions in order to better oversee the work of the denomination. The first bishops ordained by Mason were Ozro Thurston Jones, E. M. Page, William M. Roberts, Isaac S. Stafford, and Riley F. Williams. Between 1933 and 1951, eleven other Jurisdictional Overseers were added to the Bishop's staff, including the overseers of Canada and Jamaica. In 1951, five other overseers were consecrated; four other overseers were consecrated in 1952. In 1954, all the remaining overseers were consecrated. Thus by 1954, COGIC had completely changed the structure conflating the Office of Bishop and Overseer, basically renaming all Overseers as Bishops.

The Church Of God In Christ published three key doctrinal statements. By 1909, a brief theological statement on God was published. This statement discussed the Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. By 1918, the brief theological statement from around 1909 was expanded to include such topics as Fallen Nature, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Water Baptism, the Second Coming of Christ, Sabbath, General Church Officers, Church Property, and Political Government. In 1928, the General Assembly included the expanded doctrinal statement within the constitution. In the 1930s, the first edition of the Church Of God In Christ manual was published with a set of Articles of Religion which focused on the doctrines of the Trinity, Scripture, Creation, the Church, Justification, Sanctification, the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, the Second Coming, and other topics.

## **The Growth of the Church**

From ten congregations in 1907 to 1932, the Church Of God In Christ grew to over 1,000 congregations, reaching every region of the United States within one generation and becoming a national denomination. This was achieved through the saintly leadership of Bishop Mason and the dedicated efforts of leaders such as David J. Young in Kansas, Daniel and Lucinda Bostick in Missouri, Lizzie Woods Robinson in Nebraska, E. M. Page in Texas and Oklahoma, E. R. Driver in California, O. T. Jones of Pennsylvania, and Lillian Brooks Coffey in Illinois and Michigan. The growth and stature of COGIC as a national denomination became a major factor in the restructuring of the black church, being an overwhelmingly Baptist and Methodist movement into basically a family of Baptist, Pentecostal, and Methodist churches. The Church Of God In Christ was pivotal in making Pentecostalism the second

Within its first generation, the Church Of God In Christ could be characterized as a network of networks. Mason led the central network of predominantly black congregations and permitted two white-led networks of white congregations to become apart of the Church Of God In Christ between 1909 and 1910. These networks, led by E. N. Bell, Howard Adams and Leonard P. Adams of Memphis, basically governed themselves. At this time, the Church Of God In Christ was an interracial network of black and white networks. In 1914, the network led by Goss withdrew from the Church Of God In Christ and joined with other white groups at a meeting in Hot Springs, Arkansas to form the Assemblies of God; Mason attended the meeting and blessed the new fellowship. Interestingly, the network of white congregations led by Adams continued its affiliation with the Church Of God In Christ until the 1920s. Around 1917, William Holt of Los Angeles, who would later become the first General Secretary of the Church Of God In Christ, as well as the head of the Spanish-speaking ministries, brought the west coast-based network of white congregations into the Church Of God In Christ. In 1925, August Feick of Indianapolis would bring in another group of white congregations. At this juncture, Feick became the Overseer (or bishop) of the white congregations within the Church Of God In Christ. This arrangement would continue until the early 1930s when white congregations would be required to join the jurisdiction in which they are geographically located; most of the congregations would withdraw from the denomination.

In 1911, Mason appointed Lizzie Woods (later Robinson) as the Overseer of the Women's Work. Folding the Sisters' Auxiliary into the Office of the Women's Work, she would be instrumental in converting the women-led ministries of Prayer Bands, Bible Bands, and Sewing Circles into a robust women's auxiliary. She would also be central into creating a structure for the women who were in ministry, who were licensed as missionaries and evangelists. Under Robinson's leadership, the Office of Women's Work would be transformed into the Women's Department, an entity within the denomination that would serve both as a laywomen's auxiliary and a council of women evangelists and missionaries as credential holders or "women in ministry." For laywomen, Robinson encouraged the formation of a variety of women auxiliaries, ranging from Prayer and Bible Bands, Sunshine Bands (for children), Sewing Circles to Home and Foreign Mission Bands, within local congregations. For women evangelists and missionaries, Robinson established a system of women overseers, later called Jurisdictional Supervisors, to organize the work of

women evangelists and missionaries, as well as activity of the women's auxiliaries. Among the first jurisdictional supervisors were: Lucinda Bostick for Missouri and Illinois; Hannah Chandler for Texas, Katherine Hutson for Tennessee, Margianna Kelly for Georgia, Eliza Hollins for Louisiana, and Lillie Early for Kansas. Robinson would serve as the Overseer of Women's Work, later renamed the General Supervisor of Women, until her death in 1945. Her successors would include Mothers Lillian Brooks Coffey (1945-1964), the founder of the Women's Convention; Annie L. Bailey (1964- 1975); Mattie C. McGlothen (1975-1994); Emma Frances Crouch (1994-1997); and Willie Mae Rivers (1997-present).

The Youth, Sunday School, Evangelism, Music, and Missions departments played a critical role in the denomination's development. Elder M. C. Green of Arkansas received an appointment as the First National YPWW Leader with responsibilities for the youth services at the Convocation in 1914. In 1917, O. T. Jones, Sr. of Ft. Smith, Arkansas, later of Philadelphia (PA), was appointed as Green's successor. Jones initiated the organization of YPWW nationally throughout the jurisdictions. The First National Convention was held in 1929. Jones began authoring and editing YPWW topics in 1914. Bishop Mason appointed Elder F. C. Christmas of St. Louis, Missouri as the National Superintendent of Sunday Schools in 1924. His task was to organize Sunday Schools in jurisdictions. He did this by traveling to jurisdictions to set up a structure for the jurisdictions to promote the establishing of Sunday Schools within their congregations. The National Sunday School joined with the National YPWW Congress in 1946; they held national conventions together until 1950. The leading evangelists of the Church spread the Holiness-Pentecostal message throughout the United States; evangelists such as F. W. McGee, Utah Smith, Nancy Gamble, Riley F. Williams, F. D. Washington, E. E. Cleveland, Emily Bram Bibby, S. E. Mitchell, and others. The first two Presidents of the Evangelism Department were S. T. Samuel and L. C. Page. The musicians and singers of the Church played a vital role in the emergence and development of the gospel music movement. As some scholars have noted, "If the Baptist pianist and composer Thomas Dorsey is the Father of Gospel Music, then the COGIC pianist and singer Arizona Dranes should be considered the Mother of Gospel Music. Dranes also was influential in crafting a "sanctified church sound" within gospel music; a sound that would find its choral expression in the compositions and choral arrangements of Mattie Moss Clark, one of the first Presidents of the Music Department. The first two Presidents of the Music Department were Anna Crockett Ford and Mattie Moss Clark. The first COGIC recording artists were Arizona Dranes, F. W.

MOORE, and CHARLES BROWN. The Church of God in Christ would be instrumental in the development of gospel music in other countries such as Canada, Great Britain, South Africa, and Japan.

During the late 1910s, the denomination began to expand beyond the United States and established congregations in the Caribbean, specifically Jamaica. By the mid-1920s, there were congregations affiliated with COGIC in Jamaica, Panama, the Turk Islands, Trinidad, Mexico, and Costa Rica; (later Cuba during the mid-1950s). In 1929, COGIC established the first Pentecostal congregation in Haiti and the first black Pentecostal congregation in Canada. By 1930, COGIC entered Africa, making Liberia one of the denomination's major mission sites. By the 1940s, the denomination included congregations in South Africa. COGIC entered Europe in 1948 through a COGIC Jamaican family, establishing the first black Pentecostal congregation in Great Britain. Also during the 1940s, a COGIC missionary began 25 years of service in Thailand. Afterwards, COGIC began to organize congregations in Japan, the Philippines, India, South Korea, and other Asian countries. By the early 1970s, COGIC expanded to Columbia, Brazil, Chile and other South American countries. From these various countries on different continents, the Church Of God In Christ became present in nearly 60 nations. The Home and Foreign Missions Board was organized around 1923. The first two Presidents were Robert Searcy of Portland, Oregon, and C. G. Brown of Kansas City, Missouri.

Education has always played an important role within the development of the Church Of God In Christ denomination. During the first generation, COGIC's primary and secondary schools were sponsored in Lexington, Mississippi; Geridge, Arkansas; Hearne, Texas; Memphis, Tennessee; and Abbeville, Alabama. The most legendary of these schools was Saints Academy of Lexington which opened as The Saints Home School for Negro Boys and Girls and later renamed The Saints Literary and Industrial School. First organized and headed by Pinkie

Duncan around 1914, the first principals of Saints were James Courts and Arenia C. Mallory. During Mallory's tenure, Saints expanded into a Junior College during the 1950s and a four-year college during the 1960s; for a while during the mid-20th century, Mallory was one of two African-American women to serve as President of an undergraduate institution. In 1970, the C. H. Mason Theological Seminary was established as a member of the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia becoming the first Pentecostal graduate level seminary in the United States. In Great Britain,



Calvary Theological College was founded as a seminary of the Church Of God In Christ. During the 1970s, the C. H. Mason System of Bible Colleges (renamed Jurisdictional Institutes) developed Bible schools across the United States. In 2001, All Saints Bible College was opened in Memphis, Tennessee.

### **The Church as a Major Denomination**

A Jubilee Celebration of the Church Of God In Christ occurred in 1945 commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the ordination of Mason as a minister and of the initial gatherings of the holiness Baptist ministers Charles Harrison Mason, Charles Price Jones, and others. At the Jubilee Celebration, Mason Temple, the denominational edifice and headquarters' facility of the Church of God in Christ, was dedicated in Memphis, Tennessee. At that time, the approximately 5,000-seat Mason Temple was the largest auditorium owned by an African-American religious body. With the building of this edifice and office facility as its headquarters, the Church Of God In Christ registered its prominence as a national denomination. In the following decades, the Church Of God In Christ would erect other cathedrals that would grace the urban landscapes from New York to Los Angeles. These cathedrals, along with sanctuaries from storefronts to edifices of vary sizes, participated in evangelizing communities across the United States and the world. In many at-risk communities, these congregations served as sanctuaries for urban life to retreats from the chaos of many inner-city neighborhoods. The after-school tutoring programs, Christian academies, and youth ministries of these congregations served as a life-line to a real future for many adolescents. The advocacy of these congregations for mixed income housing, quality public schools, better public safety, and life wages makes a positive difference in the lives of the working poor and middle class. During the first decades, the Church collected money for the Poor Saints' Fund in order to provide benevolence for people in financial need. The Women's Department, both National and Jurisdictional, sponsored retirement homes for elderly missionaries such as The Lillian Coffey Rest Home in Detroit, Michigan; The Mary Davis Rest Home in Chicago; The Lula Cox Home in New York; Travelers Rest Home in Florida; The Executive Cottage Rest Home in Lexington, Mississippi; The Susie Cypress Rest Home in Virginia; and The Moore's Rest Home in Ottawa, Illinois. For retired clergy, there was the William Roberts Superannuated Welfare Fund which functioned for some decades.

Within the civic and political arenas COGIC leaders and lay people have

as the National Fraternal Council of Negro Churches, they have participated in shaping the civic life within the United States. COGIC women such as Arenia C. Mallory were influential in the founding and early development of organizations such as the National Council of Negro Women, being among the charter members and serving as a national officer. Politically, COGIC members were among the first group of elected government officials in various states during the mid-20th century.

Throughout much of the 20th century, the participation of COGIC leaders and lay people in the public arena occurred on local, rather than national level. As a pacifist denomination, COGIC has preached against war and advocate conscientious objector status for its draft-age members. During World War I, C. H. Mason and other COGIC leaders were arrested for protesting the war effort. The story of COGIC's involvement within the Civil Rights Movement intersected with the grassroots Civil Rights Movement in California, Tennessee, Mississippi, Illinois, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and other places.

Among the first activist clergy was E. R. Driver of Los Angeles who immersed himself in the political life of that city. Other early activist COGIC leaders included Emma Cotton of Los Angeles and William Roberts of Chicago. Charles Beck and James Logan Delk attended the founding of the United Nations in 1945; Arenia C. Mallory participated in the 10th Anniversary of the founding of the United Nations in 1955. During the mid-20th century, activist COGIC leaders included Arenia C. Mallory of Lexington (MS), Charles Brewer, Sr. of New Haven (CT), Louis Henry Ford of Chicago, J. O. Patterson, Sr. of Memphis, F. D. Washington and Ithiel Clemmons of New York City, and Talbert Swan, Sr. of Springfield (MA). Among the participants to events related to the 1965 Selma March was Charles Edward Blake. Mason Temple served as a major site for civil rights rallies in Memphis during the 1950s and 1960s.

The Church Of God In Christ has participated in various ecumenical activities on the local, state, national, and international levels. Locally, pastors have participated in interdenominational ministerial associations since the 1910s. Nationally, the Church Of God In Christ joined the National Fraternal Council of Negro Churches during the 1930s and were charter members of the Congress of National Black Churches founded in 1978 as well as the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America founded in 1994. The denomination has also participated in the Faith and Order Commission of the National

Council of Churches of Christ since 1988. Internationally, the Church Of God In Christ has been a member of Pentecostal World Conference since 1950 or so, and has periodically participated in the general assemblies convened by the World Council of Churches (WCC): the Evanston Assembly (1954), the Harare Assembly (1998), and Porte Alegre Assembly (2006). COGIC has also been represented at the Global Christian Forum, a ecumenical conversation between Pentecostals, Evangelicals, Mainline Protestants, Orthodox, and Roman Catholics. COGIC leaders have participated in various ecumenical dialogues and consultations such as dialogues between Pentecostals and the World Council of Churches, the international bilateral dialogue between Pentecostal and Reformed (Presbyterian) leaders, and the international bilateral dialogue between Pentecostal and Baptist leaders. During the mid-1990s, the denomination opened an office of Ecumenical Affairs and the first director was Martin Luther Johnson.

As the Church Of God In Christ enters its second century as a Pentecostal body, it has a major role to play in evangelizing the world for Christ, proclaiming the Gospel faithfully, serving the poor wholeheartedly, advocating for justice uncompromisingly, supporting world missions unabashedly, becoming a theological leader in the church and academy, advancing the unity of the Church, and being a renewal movement in world Christianity. The denomination can fulfill its calling as a vital Church by building upon the best of its century and expanding into new areas of excellence in congregational and global ministry.

### **Sample: National Ordination Examination (Cogic History) Multiple Choice Section**

#### **Section 1: Circle The Correct Answer.**

1. The Church Of God In Christ identifies its founding dates as:
  - a. 1866
  - b. 1875 and 1877
  - c. 1895 and 1897
  - d. 1903 and 1905
  
2. The first congregation organized as part of the new movement called the Church Of God In Christ was located in:
  - a. Memphis, Tennessee
  - b. Lexington, Mississippi

- d. Little Rock, Arkansas
3. The Church Of God In Christ began during the 1890s under the leadership of two pivotal pioneers:
- a. Charles Harrison Mason and William Joseph Seymour
  - b. Charles Price Jones and Charles H. Pleas
  - c. Charles Price Jones and Charles Harrison Mason
  - d. Charles Harrison Mason and William Roberts
4. The majority of the early leaders of the Church Of God In Christ belonged to the following denomination:
- a. Methodist
  - b. Baptist
  - c. Pentecostal
  - d. Roman Catholic
5. When Bishop Mason withdrew from Arkansas Baptist College, he:
- a. enrolled in the Minister's Institute at the College.
  - b. rejected education as ungodly.
  - c. organized Saints Academy.
  - d. established a scholarship fund.
6. The major leader of the Azusa Street Revival and early Pentecostalism was:
- a. Charles Price Jones
  - b. Charles Parham
  - c. Aimee Semple McPherson
  - d. William Joseph Seymour
7. A faction led by C. H. Mason within the Church Of God In Christ embraced Pentecostalism in:
- a. 1897
  - b. 1907
  - c. 1917
  - d. 1927
8. During the first decade of the Church Of God In Christ as a Pentecostal

body, there were:

- a. black and white clergy within COGIC.
- b. COGIC congregations in Africa.
- c. a home and foreign missions department.
- d. two headquarters, one in the North and one in the South.

9. The first Supervisor of Women's Work was:

- a. Amanda Berry Smith.
- b. Lillian Brooks Coffey.
- c. Joanna Patterson Moore.
- d. Lizzie Woods Robinson.

10. The educational background of the first twelve Church Of God In Christ clergy included:

- a. Two lawyers.
- b. Three people with college experiences.
- c. One graduate of a theological seminary.
- d. All the above.

11. The first major COGIC Gospel singer to make records were:

- a. Utah Smith and Ernestine Washington
- b. Arizona Dranes and F. W. McGee
- c. Charles Beck and Rosetta Tharpe
- d. Mattie Moss Clark and Samuel Kelsey

12. The first COGIC school was founded by:

- a. Pinkie Duncan
- b. E. M. Page
- c. Arenia C. Mallory
- d. C. H. Mason

### **Fill In The Blank**

**Section 2: Answer The Question Or Fill In The Correct Word(S) Or Name(S).**

- 1. The first COGIC Constitution was ratified during Bishop Mason's life time. What was the year? \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2. Besides the school in Lexington (Mississippi), COGIC sponsored schools

- 
- 
3. The first foreign country in which COGIC established congregations was \_\_\_\_\_.
- 
4. The first country in Africa that COGIC missionaries served was \_\_\_\_\_.
- 
5. The Women's Department (first called the Office of Women's Work) was established in what year? \_\_\_\_\_.
- 
6. After the Howard Goss group of white clergy separated from COGIC in 1914 to form the Assemblies of God, one white clergy group remained and another one joined around 1916. Name their leaders. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 
7. The legislative body for COGIC is called the \_\_\_\_\_.
- 
8. The first five bishops in addition to the Senior Bishop were consecrated in which year? \_\_\_\_\_.
- 
9. Mason Temple in Memphis was dedicated in what year? \_\_\_\_\_.
- 
10. The person from COGIC who attended the founding of the United Nations was \_\_\_\_\_.
- 
11. An early name for the benevolence fund in COGIC was \_\_\_\_\_.
-

12. At the Tenth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations, which COGIC leader was a delegate?

\_\_\_\_\_.

13. In what year did Mother Lillian Coffey and two other COGIC leaders attend the World Council of Churches Assembly in Evanston, Illinois?

\_\_\_\_\_.

14. COGIC joined which African American Ecumenical agency during the 1930s?

\_\_\_\_\_.

15. The Senior Bishop who succeeded Bishop Mason was

\_\_\_\_\_.

16. The first country in Asia that COGIC had congregations was

\_\_\_\_\_.

17. The first country in Europe that COGIC had congregations was

\_\_\_\_\_.

18. The C. H. Mason Theological Seminary was established in which year?

\_\_\_\_\_.

19. List in order the names of the first two Senior Bishops and the five Presiding Bishops:

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

20. List in order the names of the six General Supervisors of Women:

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

### Section 3: Answer Each Question With At Least 200 Words.

1. Discuss how the 1920s were a major turning point in the early history of the Church Of God In Christ in regards polity and global missions.
2. Discuss how COGIC functioned as a major denomination in regards to ecumenism, education, and civil rights during Bishop Mason's administration.

## GLOSSARY

**Denomination:** A religious body formed by congregations that often operates under the same name, rules, and leadership. The group erects ecclesial structures that foster accountability and a common identity.

**Non-Denominational:** Congregations adopting for congregational autonomy and opting not to connect formal with ecclesial structures to which the congregation would be held accountable in regards to doctrine, finances, or leadership.

**Congregational Polity:** A form of governance that lodges ultimate authority within the congregation.

**Presbyterial Polity:** A form of governance that shares authority between the congregation and other governing bodies such as a General Assembly and a College of Bishops.

**Jurisdictional Overseer:** The early name for the chief, spiritual and temporal leader of a jurisdiction.

**General Overseer:** The early name for the chief spiritual and temporal leader of the denomination.

**Bishop:** Initially the term was associated with the General Overseer and called Senior Bishop; next the term was reserved for the chief regional leaders over the five regions with each region constituted by multiple jurisdictions; later the term became exchangeable with Jurisdictional Overseer.



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# GENERAL THEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

Elder Frederick L. Ware, Ph.D.

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## Teacher's Notes

### *Preparing to Teach Theology*

*After successful completion of this course in Theology, ordination candidates should be able to state correctly Christian doctrines upheld by the Church Of God In Christ. In order to help ordination candidates succeed in reaching this goal, there are several things that you, as the Instructor, may do. First, you must know "The Articles of Religion" (found in Part II) and the "Doctrines Disapproved" (found in Part III) of the Official Manual of the Church Of God In Christ. This information found in the Official Manual forms the basis and standard for this course in Theology. Use your best judgment when choosing to add other books for this course. Make sure that these books are in agreement with the Official Manual. Secondly, speak only where the Official Manual speaks. Remain silent where the Official Manual is silent. At any given time, there are a number of theological issues being discussed and debated in Christian communities. Refrain from expressing your personal opinions as well as asking for personal opinions from the ordination candidates. Maintain your focus on the Church Of God In Christ's teachings. At the end of the course, you will be testing the candidates' knowledge of Christian doctrines taught in the Church Of God In Christ. Thirdly, before each session, read thoroughly all materials that ordination candidates are required to read. Your careful and complete reading of the course materials is absolutely necessary for your being prepared to teach these ordination candidates.*

### Purpose

The candidate for ordination must "rightfully divide" between that which is Christian and that which is not Christian. Also, the candidate must be aware of those teachings within Christian communities that depart from the standard of the Bible as the Word of God. In the Bible, there are numerous stories and principles for understanding what God has done and is doing in nature and in the life of humankind. In our world today, many beliefs, ideas, opinions, and lifestyles compete for persons' attention and loyalty. Some ways of thinking and behaving in the world are in agreement with Christianity. However, several are not. The candidate for ordination must be able to show how

Christianity provides answers and solutions where other remedies for human problems have failed. The candidate can do this with a solid foundation in general theological knowledge that represents accurately Christian doctrines upheld by the Church Of God In Christ.

**Teaching Theological Vocabulary**

*Like many fields of study, theology has a unique vocabulary. Thus, one important part of studying theology is learning definitions of special words. Key Terms are listed below. A glossary of key terms is found at the end of this book. In the glossary, the key terms are defined according to how these words are used in this book. A good English Dictionary, such as Webster's Dictionary, will not have complete definitions of theological terms. You must use a Dictionary of Theology or Handbook of Theological Terms. Choose the theological dictionary or theological handbook which you feel most comfortable working with and which supplies you with the background information that you need.*

KEY TERMS	
Apologetics/ apologists	Incarnation ( <i>Virgin Birth</i> )
Apostles' Creed	Justification
Atonement	Marks of the church
Attributes of God	Ordinances
Baptism in the Holy Spirit	Orthodoxy
( <i>Spirit baptism</i> )	Providence
Biblical Inerrancy ( <i>Inerrancy of Scripture</i> )	Resurrection
Conversion	Revelation
Correlation	Salvation
Creation	Sanctification (Holiness)
Creed	Second Coming of Jesus Christ
Doctrine	Sin, Original and Actual
Dogma	Theology/ theologian
Grace	Trinity
Heresy	Two Natures of Jesus Christ

## *Explaining the Nature and Tasks of Theology*

*In the Introduction, your goal is to guide the ordination candidates to an understanding of what theology is. The Introduction places emphasis on (1) the definition of theology, (2) the origins of theology, (3) the interest of theology in accuracy and persuasion, and (4) the traditional method of doing theology. The Introduction shows that theology is an important function of the church. Theology is very useful in the church's explanation of its beliefs and practices.*

### **Introduction**

The word **theology** comes from the Greek words *theos* and *logos*. *Theos* means god. *Logos* means word or study. Theology is the study of God. Theology examines human life through a focus on belief in God. Someone who does theology is called a **theologian**. The theologian's most important work is to explain the nature of Christian faith for the church.

Christian theology began with the writings of persons known as **apologists**. These Christian writers, who lived and wrote between the years 120 A.D. and 220 A.D., spoke out against critics that were misrepresenting or making false statements about Christianity. In an effort to win the support of the general public as well as to attract new converts, these writers pointed out the positive features of Christianity. This group of early Christian apologists included notable individuals such as Justin Martyr, Tatian, Irenaeus, and Tertullian. **Apologetics** is a term that refers to their writings and the writings of other Christian authors who defend Christianity. From the beginning of Christian theology unto its present form of today, theology's primary goal has been to ensure accuracy and to persuade.

The first seven ecumenical councils, held over the period from 325 A.D. to 787 A.D., are another important stage in the development in Christian theology. During this time, the church fathers (mostly bishops) wrote instructional manuals, treatises, and letters, to explain and clarify Christian faith and worship. They also condemned unauthorized teachings and practices. Included among the church fathers are: Tertullian, Clement, Origen, Augustine, Jerome, and Cyril of Alexandria.

An outcome of the historic ecumenical councils was the formation of **creeds**, which are concise statements summarizing Christian beliefs. Though short in length, the creeds represent a meeting of minds between the leaders of the church. These church leaders reached consensus usually after long and very intense debate. The Apostles' Creed is the oldest known creed in Christianity.

THE APOSTLES' CREED SUMMARIZES FAITH STATEMENTS FOUND IN THE VARIOUS CREEDS issued through the later ecumenical councils. The Apostles' Creed may have begun circulating among Christian churches during the second century A.D.

The creeds and writings by the church fathers draw the line between orthodoxy and heresy. **Orthodoxy** is right belief, teachings that represent accurately Christian faith and practice. Orthodoxy is also those teachings endorsed officially by the church. **Heresy** is those teachings that are errors and distortions of Christianity and are therefore rejected by the church.

When **doctrine**, a rule of faith, is recognized as orthodoxy and essential to Christianity; it becomes **dogma**. Dogmas are those doctrines which are fundamental to Christianity; without them, Christianity would not be what it is. Christians therefore have a duty to obey them.

In Christian theology, there are a number of words and phrases in Greek and Latin. The apologists and church fathers wrote in either Greek or Latin. So, important terms in Christian theology may be written in English in ways that preserve their pronunciation in the original language. For example, the phrase "doctrine of salvation" may be called "soteriology" based on the Greek words *soterios* and *logos*.

The principal method of theology is **correlation**, which is the practice of applying the gospel to contemporary situations and doing so in a language that persons of today will understand. In every period in the history of Christianity, Christians engaged in this practice of correlation. Thus, correlation is the customary way of doing theology. This method of doing theology is observed by the Church Of God In Christ. The Church Of God In Christ interprets the gospel from its perspective as a holiness-pentecostal denomination. The Church Of God In Christ's theology is influenced by its primary goal. The Church Of God In Christ's goal is to spread the gospel, uphold godly moral standards, restore Christianity to its biblical and creedal foundations, and to liberate peoples from the bondage of personal and social sin.

### *Explaining the Role of Authority in Theology*

*In the section on Doctrines of Revelation and Biblical Authority as well as in the other following sections, you should emphasis the Bible as a primary and authoritative source for doing theology. You must emphasize also that proper reading, respect for duly established church leadership, and righteous living are essential for Christians' achieving understanding of the Bible. When teaching this course in Theology, consult as often as possible the Bible for justification of Christian doctrines upheld by the Church Of*

*God In Christ. Whenever appropriate, read aloud with the ordination candidates the scriptural references to statements about these doctrines.*

## **Doctrines of Revelation and Biblical Authority**

When theologians explain Christian faith, they use several sources. They use the Bible. Sometimes the Bible is called “Scripture.” Other sources used by theologians include tradition, experience and history, reason, and common ideas in society and culture. The selection of sources and how these sources are arranged is determined by the theologian’s values and interests. In other words, the theologian has a standard that guides his thinking. In Church Of God In Christ doctrine, the Bible is the chief source and standard for theology. The church acknowledges that all scripture is given by God and is profitable for doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16).

The Bible is the authoritative record of God’s revelation. **Revelation** translates the Greek word *apocalypsis* which means “to uncover.” The word revelation also means “to reveal”, “to lay bare”, “to unveil”, or “to expose” something that was previously hidden. Revelation is truth given by God.

An important feature of the Bible is its inerrancy. The term **biblical inerrancy** means that the Bible is without error in communicating God’s will and plan of salvation. The plan of salvation is unaffected by any errors in spelling, translation, names of persons, or recollection of past events.

God’s revelation is passed to the believer when the Bible is read and interpreted in the proper way. The church discerns the meaning of scripture through prayer, obedience, and love. After three months at Arkansas Baptist College, Bishop C.H. Mason left, as he said, “with the Bible as my sacred guide.” Though he prayed for God’s guidance for an understanding of the Bible, he recognized that the practice of love and respect for leadership confirms whether someone truly understands the Bible. As Bishop Mason taught, “We cannot have the Spirit of God with our own way.” The Spirit is grieved by our selfishness. The Spirit does not provoke believers to disorder but rather to unity and cooperation. The Spirit leads in the settlement of differences and disputes in compliance with God’s will as revealed in the Bible. In Bishop Mason’s statement on “Apostleship in the Church Of God In Christ,” he says, “The Church is built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets.” Though voting is allowed for members to express their concerns and to work towards consensus, voting does not regulate every aspect of the church’s life. The church is not governed only by majority rule. The church is founded on biblical principles of faith and led by individuals who are invested with au-

Bible or disregard the duly exercised authority of its leadership.

## Doctrine of God

God exists and is sovereign. God exercises power and control over the universe. God's power is manifest in **creation** and **providence**. God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1 – 2:4). Through providence, God maintains an ongoing relationship of caring for, sustaining, and guiding the world.

**God's attributes**, that is, those characteristics of God that distinguish God from all other beings, are: omnipotence (all-powerful), omniscience (all-knowing), and omnibenevolence (all-good, perfectly good). God is loving, just, holy, gracious, and merciful. God is spirit. As spirit, God is not a physical creature. God cannot be represented by physical objects or by idols (Exodus 20: 4-5; Acts 17: 29). God is not subject to the limitations of time and space. God is eternal.

God is one. Belief that God is one is expressed in the doctrine of Trinity (Genesis 1:26; Matthew 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 John. 5:7). Within the being of the one eternal God, there are three persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. Here “persons” does not mean three separate individuals but rather distinctions within the one God. God the Father, the Creator, is the first person in the Trinity. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ taught that God, the Creator, is personal and loving. Though God is above our world, God is still intimately involved in our world and in our lives. Our closeness to God is expressed when we call God “our heavenly father” (Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2).

In addition to creation and providence, God's power is further demonstrated through miracles, healing, and signs. Miracles are extraordinary events that show God's power and enable human beings to realize that God is present. Healings are miracles but sometimes they are discussed separately for special emphasis on how God makes us whole in body, mind, and soul. Miracles prove that evil and sin are not the supreme power in the universe. God is the supreme power. Fundamental to the universe is life, not death, good and not evil. Signs are objects and events that God uses to reveal something about God's character and will to humankind. Signs and wonders attest to God's glory and are indications of Jesus Christ's second coming.

In God's realm of existence, all things glorify God. Angels are creatures in God's realm. Angels worship and obey God (Isaiah 6:1-3; Revelation 7:11). They carry out God's will. The Bible contains many references to God's

work through angels. In the Bible, there is no indication that humans are to worship angels or utilize them or “spirits” as mediums for communicating to God or exercising powers of any kind (Revelation 19:10). There is but one mediator between God and humanity, who is Jesus Christ, and he promises the Holy Spirit to guide and empower believers for the work of God.

## Doctrine of Christ

“Christ” comes from the Greek word *christos* and the Hebrew word *mashiah* (messiah) both of which mean “Anointed One.” Anointing with oil was a ritual that was used to show that a person was selected or authorized to perform a special task. For example, when a priest or king assumed office, he was anointed (Exodus 40: 12-16; 1 Samuel 16: 1-4, 11-13; 2 Samuel 5: 1-5). Oil was poured on his head. Christians profess that Jesus of Nazareth is Christ, the hoped-for descendant of David who is chosen and empowered by God to deliver us from sin and lead us into the kingdom of God.

The Church Of God In Christ affirms that Jesus Christ is the second person in the Trinity. God’s work of salvation is accomplished through Jesus Christ (John 3:16-17). Jesus Christ prayed, asking the Father to give the Holy Spirit to his disciples (John 14:16). The Holy Spirit speaks of and glorifies Jesus Christ (John 16:13-15). Jesus Christ is Savior, Reconciler, Healer, and Lord (Luke 4:18; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 8:6).

Jesus Christ has **two natures**; he is both fully human and fully divine. His humanity is demonstrated in his incarnation, which is called the Virgin Birth. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born into human flesh (John 1: 1, 14; Philippians 2: 5-8). His incarnation was a natural but miraculous birth from a human female, a virgin named Mary. Before the start of his ministry, he lived most of his years in Nazareth, a city in northern Israel. Another indication of his humanity is Jesus Christ’s experiences of suffering and death by a form of execution called crucifixion. During his life on earth, he also suffered other things, such as insult, poverty, hunger, sorrow, and pain. Jesus of Nazareth was an actual historical person, a human being who lived at a certain time, in a given place, and under a unique set of circumstances. Though fully human, Jesus remained sinless (1 Peter 2:22).

Jesus Christ is fully divine and, as the Son in the Trinity, of the same essence of the Father and the Holy Spirit. He reveals perfectly the Father (John 1:14; 12:45; 14: 9-10; Hebrews 1: 1-4). As the Son of God, Jesus Christ mediates between humanity and the Father. Jesus Christ and the Father are one. He invites believers to join him in this oneness and eternal life with the Father

John 1:12, 13; 1:17). Jesus Christ's resurrection, the triumph of life, once and for all, enables persons to overcome sin and its consequences (Romans 5:11; Hebrews 10: 12-18). He brings humanity into right relationship with God. His **resurrection** is God's decisive defeat of sin, evil, and death in the universe (Revelation 1:18).

## Doctrines of Sin and Human Being

According to the story of creation, humanity is created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26). However, the first humans, Adam and Eve, fell from the original state of harmonious relationship with God, their environment, and each other (Genesis 3). They sinned.

Sin originates from three sources: (1) Satan and demons, (2) the sin of Adam, and (3) human will. Satan and demons are a supernatural explanation of sin. Here sin is a rebellion that is vanquished from the divine realm and enters the human realm to destroy human life and to lure human beings away from God's will. Humans are not to worship demons or unclean and evil spirits. Satan and demons are defeated foes of God (Revelation 12:7-12; 20:10). All persons deceived by Satan and demons will share their fate in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15).

In Genesis 3, the sin of Adam is imputed to all later generations (Romans 5:12). This is called **original sin**. It is the condition of humanity resulting from the sin of Adam, the first man. The sin committed was Adam's act but his descendents bear the consequences, as he himself also did, that followed from that act of disobedience. Adam's fall is the beginning of humanity's estrangement from God.

**Actual sin** is the act for which an individual himself or herself is responsible. Humans have freewill. This capacity of freedom is the ability to select a course of action from among one or more options. Actual sin results from the individual's poor choices that he makes with his freedom. Willful disregard or violation of just law, whether it is basic civil law, universally recognized moral codes, or the commandments of God, is sin. Here sin is transgression. Sin also occurs when humans desire anything other than the good or right. The problem is not that a person has desire. Instead, the problem is that the person wants or enjoys something that is not the good.

In God, there is no sin. God's nature contains no sin. God is not the direct cause of sin. God condemns sin, opposes it, and exercises a power far greater than sin.



Sin results in shame, guilt, injury, and death. Sin alienates and estranges us not only from God but also from one another. Acts of sin bring about regret and embarrassment for the persons who commit them as well as the persons victimized by these acts. When individuals feel no shame or remorse for their actions, other persons may impute guilt to them on the basis of opinion or law. The ultimate consequence of sin is death (Proverbs 10: 16; 14:12; 16:25; Romans 6: 21, 23). When immediate physical death does not occur, sin may result in a diminished quality of life. Persons can experience injury and loss in many ways. Sin leads to the deterioration of human society. Sin causes us to “miss the mark” and “fall short” of the life that God intends for us to live. The consequences of sin touch many persons and groups. However, this terrible spread of sin is overcome by Jesus Christ.

### **Doctrine of Salvation**

**Salvation** is the act or condition of being saved. In the Bible, salvation is described as the experience of forgiveness, liberation, redemption, reconciliation, deliverance, restoration, or healing. Each description emphasizes a unique set of features of salvation. Each description suggests certain ways by which a person's or group of persons' condition is changed by God. Common to each of these experiences of salvation is relief from suffering followed by a better life.

The Church Of God In Christ emphasizes that God's offer of salvation is for everyone. The power of Christ's atonement is available to all persons (1 John 2:2). By faith, exercising faith, putting faith in Jesus Christ, a person can affect his or her own situation. The individual is not helpless and hopeless against sin, evil, and sickness. He or she can act, through faith, to change his or her condition.

Salvation from sin involves several processes. The order of salvation begins with justification, an act of God's **grace**, and moves from there on to other stages of experience such as repentance, faith, conversion, regeneration (re-birth), sanctification (holiness), and baptism in the Holy Spirit. On the basis of the life and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the sinner is forgiven and accepted by God, and thus enters “right relationship.” He is now justified, something that he alone could have never done or even persuaded God to do. **Justification** is God's free act, in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, by which God declares the person forgiven and in right relationship. Because justification is something that God does to help the sinner, the sinner is assured of salvation. Justification is an external act and does not change the person's inner life. The

change of the inner life begins with repentance, the feeling of regret for sin and desire to turn away from sin. After repentance, the person looks, in faith, to Christ for deliverance. **Conversion** means that a change has occurred in the life of the individual. The convert is absolved of (released from) the guilt of sin and his life is reordered. He is regenerated (reborn). Once freed from the sins about which he has come to understand are wrong, the person must sanctify himself, refrain from those sins committed in the past as well as avoid new sins which can again bring him into bondage. “Sanctify” means to separate or set aside for special use. **Sanctification** means to live separate and apart from sin, away from its control and consequences. Another word for sanctification is “holiness.” In sanctification, the believer’s life is devoted to God and the work of God. This is not optional. Holiness is an essential part of life in Christ (Romans 12: 1-3; 1 Corinthians 6: 9-11; Galatians 5: 19-20). Humanity’s original state, at the time of creation, was characterized by the absence of sin and a harmonious relationship with God. God calls humanity back to holiness and offers, through Jesus Christ in the Spirit, help in living a sanctified life (Ephesians 2:10). Through **baptism in the Holy Spirit**, the Holy Spirit becomes the believer’s “Comforter” and “Advocate” to assist him or her in living and working for God. Life in the Spirit is a dynamic relationship with God that the believer enjoys now and later in eternity. In the Church Of God In Christ, the order of salvation is often summarized in the saints’ confession: “I’m saved, sanctified, baptized and filled with the Holy Ghost.”

## Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is third person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is of the same essence, holiness, and power as the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus Christ, equips and guides believers in righteous living, and seals (preserves) believers until the return of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is the power of regeneration and resurrection (John 3:5-8; Romans 8:11). The Holy Spirit was given to the church on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4).

From the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for spirit is *ruach*. From the New Testament, the Greek word for spirit is *pneuma*. Both words have similar meanings. They mean “wind” or “breath.” These meanings suggest that God, like the wind, is invisible to the human eye but very real in the effects that He produces. We cannot see the air, but we need it in order to survive. The breath in us is vital for life. We must breathe in order to live. A sign that a person is alive is his or her breathing. In order for believers to thrive in Christian living, they need the Holy Spirit.

The terms “Holy Spirit” and “Holy Ghost” are one and the same. In the Church Of God In Christ, the preferred term for Spirit is “Holy Ghost.” Among English-speaking peoples, the term “Holy Ghost” is common. The term “Holy Ghost” is found in the King James Version, which is the most widely circulated English translation of the Bible. In the King James Version, “ghost” is a word for spirit. When the Church Of God In Christ began, there were no rival English translations of the Bible. The testimonies and teachings of Bishop C. H. Mason and other pioneers of the Church Of God In Christ are based on their reading of the King James Version.

The Holy Ghost is the Divine Helper upon which believers depend in order to live a life of righteousness. The Holy Ghost enables believers to resist temptation (Romans 7: 15 – 8:11; Galatians 5:16-22). The Holy Ghost is power to act on the conviction to do right rather than surrender to the temptation to do wrong. When the Holy Ghost is obeyed, the person grows and matures in righteous living, exhibiting the virtues of love, patience, temperance, and self-control (Galatians 5:22).

The Holy Ghost bears witness that Jesus is Christ (John 15:26-27; 16:12-15; Acts 1:4-8; 5:27-42; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 1 John 4:2-3; 5:6-8). The Holy Ghost moves persons to the conviction that Jesus is the Christ (1 Corinthians 12:3). The Holy Ghost speaks not of Himself but of Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost glorifies Christ. When we worship, we do so in the Holy Ghost (John 4:24).

The Holy Ghost brings prophecy to the people of God (Luke 3:21-22; 4:1-2, 14-21; Acts 1:1-5; 2:1-11; Revelation 1:9-19). God speaks to His people by the Holy Ghost. During the **Inter-Testamental** period, about four hundred years between the Old Testament and New Testament writings, a great number of Jews believed that God had withdrawn from His people and was no longer sending prophets to speak to them. The presence of the Spirit in Jesus’ ministry and in the Church is a return of prophecy to the people of God.

The Holy Ghost bestows gifts that enable believers to do the work of God. These gifts include: courage, tongue-speaking, knowledge, wisdom, miracle-working, leadership, and ministerial orders (Acts 5:40-42; 13:1-3; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, 28-31; Ephesians 4:11-12). In the Old Testament, God’s gift of the Spirit resulted in special abilities that persons would not have had without the outpouring of the Spirit of God (Exodus 31: 1-11; Numbers 11:16-17, 24-25; Judges 14: 5-6).

**Baptism in the Holy Spirit** is an experience for an individual. Baptism literally means “to wash” or “to dip” in water so that whatever is placed in the water is changed after contact with the water. The biblical promise to believers is: “You shall be baptized in the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1: 5).

During worship and other designated times, the Church Of God In Christ conducts “tarry service.” The word “tarry” literally means “to wait.” Jesus Christ told his disciples to tarry until they received “power from on high” (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4). In the Church Of God In Christ, tarrying is a practice of consecration and prayer that positions believers for receipt of baptism in the Holy Ghost. The Biblical sign and initial physical evidence of baptism in the Holy Ghost is speaking in tongues (Mark 16:17; Acts 2:4; 10:44-48; 19:6). When the Holy Ghost baptizes the believer, the Holy Ghost will speak. So that the believer knows that the Holy Ghost is speaking, this tongue-speaking is not a language that the believer has been taught. Tongue-speaking is by the power of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:4).

After baptism in the Holy Ghost, the believer’s life is changed in order to show the gift of divine power in his or her life. After sanctification, the believer may experience this endowment of power. Spirit baptism is an act of grace that God bestows upon the believer. The Holy Ghost does not come to sanctify the believer but it is because the believer is already sanctified (living free from sin) that the Holy Spirit comes upon the believer to enable him to perform the work of God. The Holy Ghost is a Keeper. The Holy Ghost is a Guide and Teacher. The Holy Ghost is power for victorious Christian living. Baptism in the Holy Ghost is an anointing, a sign that God has chosen and empowered the believer to do a special work.

## Doctrine of the Church

**Church** comes from the Greek word *ekklesia*, sometimes also spelled *ecclesia*, which means “those called out.” The church is unique because of the purposes for which it gathers and the activities that it performs. The church bears “marks,” sometimes called “notes,” that make it different and stand out from other human groups.

The church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. Stated in another way, the traditional **marks of the church** are: unity, holiness, universality, and apostolicity. The church is one (Ephesians 4: 4-6). For a gathering of people to constitute a church, they must therefore be unified and function as one body. The members must live holy; they must live by God’s standard of righteousness.

The word catholic means universal, which refers to the reach of the church over time, space, and the many social barriers that divide humankind. The Word proclaimed and faith professed must be relevant and applicable to all persons. As the gospel is universal, so too is the membership of the church. The church includes all Christian believers from around the world and from every period in history. Apostolicity refers to the origin of the doctrines of the church in the teachings of the apostles as well as the church's faithfulness to these teachings. In Protestant denominations, the preaching of the Word and administering of sacraments are also regarded as additional distinguishing features of the church.

**Ordinances**, the rituals that Christ commanded the church to observe, are water baptism, the Lord's Supper, and feet washing. The Church Of God In Christ recognizes the importance and deep spiritual meanings of rituals for ordination, solemnizing marriage, and anointing with oil. However, the Church Of God In Christ emphasizes the rule of Christ's command. Because Jesus Christ gave commands for water baptism, the Lord's Supper, and feet washing, there is no doubt that these rituals hold a prominent position in the worship of the church. The term ordinance emphasizes a feature of the church's rituals that the term sacrament overlooks. The term sacrament emphasizes the symbolism and grace conveyed by the ritual. The term ordinance emphasizes the authorization of the ritual in the word of Jesus Christ. The Official Manual contains instructions for administering ordinances. Also within the Official Manual are orders for special services (ceremonies) for licensing, ordination, installation, marriages, and dedications.

For the Church Of God In Christ, the nature of the church is further defined through the model of the "holy convocation" given by our founder, Bishop C. H. Mason. Often quoting Psalms 50:5; Bishop Mason taught that the "gathering of the saints" is necessary for worship, thanksgiving, and the renewal of their commitment to holiness. The holy convocation is a call for God's people to come together for the purpose of fulfilling their sacred functions. The gathering of saints is marked by various activities, such as establishing an environment where believers live out God's call to holiness, participate in teaching and training, engage in worship, and conduct business and raise finances for the material support of the church's ministries. The gathering also provides persons with moments of fellowship and belonging, the affirmation of individual self-worth, and a sense of connectedness to each other, history and tradition. Additional Church Of God In Christ interpretations of the nature of the church and its role in society is found in Part III and Part IV of the Official Manual.

The doctrine of last things or, as it is called **eschatology**, addresses questions about the destiny of humankind and the fate of the universe. Eschatology places hope over against uncertainty. Eschatology shows that all barriers to God's plan of salvation are overcome. In eschatology, Christians talk about a future where good conquers evil, the righteous enter eternal life, and the kingdom of God is established on earth as it is in heaven.

Jesus preached, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:15). The kingdom of God is a future hope but also a present reality, in so far as believers live by its principles in the here-and-now. Since the beginning of Christianity, Christians have believed that the kingdom of God would be realized on earth at the second coming of Christ.

Early Christians used the term *parousia* to describe the nature of the **Second Coming of Jesus Christ**. In the ancient world, the return of the governor to his province was called a *parousia*. It was not uncommon for governors to be absent for long periods of time during their reign over a territory. The governor's coming was marked with celebration. All matters were settled at his coming. His decisions were ultimate. Those deserving punishment received sentencing. Those deserving reward were compensated. The second coming of Christ is ultimate. It is his last coming. All matters will be settled. All issues will be resolved when the kingdom of God is established. Ultimate issues about death, immortality, punishment, and reward are answered at the Second Coming.

The Church Of God In Christ believes in the bodily return of Jesus Christ before the millennium, the thousand year period which is described in Revelation 20. The time of His return will be preceded by certain signs and events. However, the exact moment of Christ's return cannot be predicted (Matthew 24:36). The promise of Christ is that he will come quickly and have rewards with him (1 Corinthians 15: 51-52; Revelation 22: 12). The believer must therefore live in a constant state of readiness.

Signs indicating the end are the works and gifts of the Holy Ghost. The outpouring of the Holy Ghost is an event of the latter days. The church's evangelistic activity of spreading the word of God, winning souls for Christ, instructing them in the way of holiness, manifestation of God's reality and power in healing, miracles, and deliverance are signs of the end. Also, the acts of God in nature, such as storms, plagues, earthquakes, and "strange works," as Bishop Mason called them, are signs of the end. Worsening conditions, increasing

evil, greater demonic attack are also signs that the end is near. Two important biblical passages for signs of the end are Matthew 24 and Revelation 20.

## Sample Examination Questions

### *Developing Theology Tests for Ordination Candidates*

*The multiple-choice test is a popular format for examinations in various fields of study. Below are sample multiple-choice questions. These questions are designed to measure candidates' knowledge of basic information covered in this Theology course. Also, the sample questions may be used to prepare candidates for the actual test. An Answer Key is provided at the end of the list of sample questions.*

*The multiple-choice test may be enhanced by adding essay questions. Essay questions are direct questions that require the candidate to write a one-sentence or one-paragraph answer. Examples of essay type questions are found in the candidate's book. The study questions listed in the candidate's book are direct questions that require a short written response.*

*When developing a test, keep in mind the following. First, in consultation with members of the Ordination Board, determine the format of the test. Which topics will the test cover? How many questions will there be on the test? Will the test consists of all multiple-choice questions? Will the test consists of all essay questions? If the test will be a combination of multiple-choice questions and essay questions, how many questions will be multiple-choice? How many questions will be essay? Secondly, develop questions that are exact. Each question should have only one correct answer. Avoid the use of any questions that may be misleading or open to multiple interpretations. Thirdly, establish a reasonable but generous time limit for the test. Allow enough time for candidates to finish the test. Lastly, maintain the integrity of the test. While it is permissible to inform candidates about the testing format and time constraints, no candidates should be told which questions will appear on the test. After the exam, candidates should turn in the test (and answer sheet and any pages used to make notes) to the examiner. Candidates should not keep (or make) copies of the test. Also, test scores should be kept confidential.*

1. In Christianity, which of the following is the Trinity?
  - A God, Mary, Jesus
  - B King, Priest, Prophet
  - C Father, Son, Holy Spirit
  - D All of these are true

2. THE WORD CHRIST MEANS

- A Image of God
- B Anointed One
- C Mediator
- D Almighty God

3. What is theology?

- A the academic study of revelation in world religions
- B the study of supernaturalism and spirituality
- C the philosophical study of reality and truth
- D the study of Christian faith, which is rooted in belief in God

4. What is the Apostles' Creed?

- A letter written by the Apostles
- B principles for Christian baptism
- C the oldest known creed in Christianity
- D summary of the New Testament

5. At the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, he will \_\_\_\_\_.

- A judge the wicked and reward the righteous
- B preach to the souls in Purgatory
- C finish the work of Atonement
- D destroy the Earth

6. In the biblical story of creation, what does God do?

- A establishes laws of nature and principles of science
- B brings the world and all living beings into existence
- C abandons the world, leaving it to make it on its own
- D predetermines the future of the world

7. When Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, he was \_\_\_\_\_.

- A fully human and fully divine
- B completely human, but not divine
- C partly human and partly divine
- D completely divine, but not human



8. In the order of salvation, which process occurs immediately before baptism in the Holy Spirit?
- A sanctification
  - B repentance
  - C justification
  - D conversion
9. Which characteristic is a distinguishing mark of the church?
- A compassion
  - B organization
  - C community service
  - D apostolicity
10. Where does sin come from?
- A strong feelings
  - B false doctrine
  - C the human will
  - D intuition
11. In the Church Of God In Christ, which of the following rituals is an ordinance?
- A anointing with oil
  - B feet washing
  - C penance
  - D casting out devils
12. When does doctrine become dogma?
- A when the unity of the church is jeopardized by disobedience
  - B when the doctrine is foundational to Christianity
  - C when ecumenical councils make declarations of faith
  - D when a majority of Christians believe that the doctrine is true
13. What is providence?
- A God's control and care of the world
  - B chance happenings in the world
  - C God's wrath against sin in the world
  - D the anticipated destiny of the world

- A God recognizes that the sinner, as a creature with dignity, deserved salvation
- B God responds to the sinner's heartfelt prayer and cries for deliverance
- C God reckons the feeble works of the sinner as good enough for righteousness
- D God performs, without compulsion, an act that assures the sinner of salvation

15. In what regard is the Bible absolutely reliable?

- A It contains no errors in spelling and translation
- B It contains everything persons need to know about life
- C It contains no errors in communicating God's plan of salvation
- D It contains numerous promises for blessings of wealth and health

**Answer Key:** 1:C, 2:B, 3:D, 4:C, 5:A, 6:B, 7:A, 8:A, 9:D, 10:C, 11:B, 12:B, 13:A, 14:D, 15:C.

## GLOSSARY

**Apologetics/ Apologists:** defense of Christian beliefs and practices; an apologist is someone who seeks to present accurately Christianity and persuade others to accept the truths of Christianity.

**Apostles' Creed:** an ancient (the oldest known) creed that summarizes the various declarations made in later historic Christian ecumenical councils.

**Atonement:** the reconciliation between God and humans that Jesus Christ accomplished through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ.

**Attributes of God:** characteristics unique to God and which set God apart from other beings and things.

**Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Spirit baptism):** often, in the Church Of God In Christ, called baptism in the Holy Ghost, it is the gift of power that occurs after the believer is sanctified; the Holy Ghost becomes the believer's "Comforter" and "Advocate" to assist him or her in living and working for God.

**Biblical inerrancy (Inerrancy of Scripture):** absence of error in the Bible's communication of God's word and plan of salvation.

**Conversion:** the change in the mind and lifestyle of a person as a result his or her choosing to believe in and accept Jesus Christ.

**Correlation:** a way of doing theology, where the gospel is applied to contemporary situations and in a language that persons of today will understand.

**Creation:** God's bringing the world into existence.

**Creed:** a short, concise statement that summarizes Christian beliefs.

**Doctrine:** a rule of faith and practice.

**Dogma:** those doctrines that are regarded and taught as valid, authoritative, and binding.

**Grace:** God's interventions and help, which God gives freely, to sustain humankind and to assure our salvation.

**Heresy:** teachings that are errors and distortions of Christianity, contrary to the Bible, and are rejected by the church.

**Incarnation (Virgin Birth):** God's coming in human form, as in the Virgin Birth. The Virgin Birth was the natural birth of Jesus Christ but by the miracle of conception without any sexual activity between Mary, a virgin, and a male.

**Justification:** an act of God's grace by which He declares the person forgiven and in right relationship.

**Marks of the church:** features that distinguish Christians from other groups. The four traditional marks are: unity, holiness, universality, and apostolicity. That is, the church is: one, holy, universal, and faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ as given by the apostles. Other distinguishing marks of the church are its preaching of the Word of God and administration of sacraments.

**Ordinances:** Rituals that Jesus Christ commands his disciples to observe. These rituals are water baptism, the Lord's Supper, and feet washing.

**Orthodoxy:** right belief and worship; teachings that represent accurately Christian faith and practice and as well are endorsed by the church.

**Providence:** God's care, governance, guidance, and sustenance of the world.

**Resurrection:** Jesus Christ's rising from the dead. Resurrection is a demonstration of God's power over physical death, showing death to be an event in the life of humans rather than the final intended state of humanity. This power of renewed life is promised to all believers who follow Jesus Christ.

**Revelation:** from the Greek word apokalypsis, meaning an uncovering. Revelation is the truth that God provides to humankind. The truth provided through nature and reason is called general revelation. The truth revealed through the prophets, the Bible, and Jesus Christ is called special revelation.

**Salvation:** God's plan of restoring humankind through Jesus Christ. In the Bible, salvation is described using the themes of liberation, redemption, reconciliation, restoration, deliverance, and healing. The order of salvation includes the processes of justification, repentance, faith, conversion, regeneration, sanctification, and baptism in the Holy Spirit.

**Sanctification (Holiness):** to live separate and apart from sin and devoted to God's work. Holiness is the standard for defining sanctification as well as the goal that believers strive to reach.

**Second Coming of Jesus Christ:** the return of Jesus Christ to the earth.

**Sin, Original and Actual:** Original Sin is the disobedience of Adam, the first man, which resulted in humankind being estranged from God. Actual Sin is the acts that persons commit and for which each may be held accountable. These committed sins may be violations of just law, universally recognized moral codes, or the commandments of God.

**Theology/ theologian:** the study of all matters from the perspective of belief in God. A person who does this is called a theologian. The theologian's most important work is to explain the nature of Christian faith for the church.

**Trinity:** one God having three eternal distinctions, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**Two Natures of Jesus Christ:** the affirmation that Jesus Christ is both fully human and fully divine.

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## INTRODUCTION: STANDARD KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE POLITY

Bishop David Allen Hall, Sr.

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### THE POLITY

#### *Teacher's Notes:*

#### *Explaining Polity*

*To effectively teach candidates for ordination, one must know the well-defined structure of the Church. Each candidate must understand that he is one of a long line of persons called of God to our ecclesiastical order. The Ordination Board or the teacher of an ordination class must understand and teach the student about the system and government that controls the Church: Polity.*

A candidate for ordination should study to gain the knowledge of the standardized curriculum to allow him to function successfully in the office of Ordained Elder. The discipline of the Church must be studied and interpreted as it will provide the ordained clergy a guide in performance of ministry at every level. The receiving of holy orders certifies the clergyman as knowledgeable and equipped to administer the duties of his office and establishes his credibility in the operations and functions of the Church Of God In Christ. Knowledge of the governance, procedures and structure of the organization are vital to a successful ministry. Article 4 Section J describes the role of a pastor. The Church's polity has a clear and meaningful statement on the subject concerning the pastor's role. Review that section from the Official Manual

The Church's polity has a clear and meaningful statement on the subject concerning the pastor's role in developing the Elder. Article III Part II Section D Subsections 13,14,15, describes the qualifying steps of an Elder. The position of Ordained Elder is a vital role in the context of COGIC ministry. Review that section from the Official Manual.

This chapter on polity is offered to inform and strengthen the ability and confidence of the candidate working toward ordination in the organized Church Of God In Christ. An informed clergy realizes his journey to ordination is well designed and filled with purpose. After ordination the clergy will have a distinct and significant role to play in the operation of the church's governance and ministry.

## Key Terms

Auxiliary Bishop

Board of Bishops

Chairman of General Assembly

Collegialism

Congregational Structure

District Superintendent

Ecclesiastical

Ecclesiastical Function

Episcopacy

Episcopal Structure

General Assembly

General Board of Bishops

General Council of Pastor and

Elders

General Financial secretary

General Secretary

General Treasurer

General Trustee Board

Judiciary Board

Jurisdiction

Jurisdictional Assemblies

Jurisdictional Bishops

Licensed Minister

Local Board of Trustees

Ordained Elder

Pastor

Polity

Presbyterian Structure

Presiding Bishop

Superintendency

Titular

Unlicensed Minister

The form and process of government in an organization is known as the polity. The term polity comes from the Greek: Politeia, meaning citizenship or government. Stepping into the ranks of ordained clergy makes the candidate fully empowered to serve, and he is bound by the rules and disciplines of the Church Of God In Christ. An ordained clergy is both a citizen of the Church and part of the servant leadership, and his pastor is his immediate supervisor. The Church Of God In Christ established its unique polity to express how the Church Of God In Christ conducts its affairs, both spiritual and practical. The conducting of its affairs is called **superintendency**. In order for a candidate to be ordained in the Church Of God In Christ, the candidate should have a working knowledge of the Church's structure and how the organization is superintended. This chapter on polity will give the candidate a working knowledge of how the Church Of God In Christ's structure and officials superintend. This knowledge and training should increase the candidate's ability to use his acquired ministerial skills while serving God and the Church in a prescribed order.

### *Teacher's Notes:*

#### *Ecclesiastical Responsibilities*

*The Episcopal structure of the Church Of God In Christ can be found in the manual. Your class must understand that the Church Of God In Christ has an episcopacy that controls and guides the ecclesiastical system. As the teacher, it is your job to make sure the students are fully aware of the titles and responsibilities of all credential holders at the various levels in which they function. The superintendency of the church depends upon each titular person knowing how they fit in the system and what they are responsible to do. The general knowledge of polity is something that the Ordination Board and the teacher must know.*

### **Introduction Continued**

The process of government and business operations in the Church Of God In Christ is controlled by bishops and is defined as Episcopal. The clergy are God's chief representatives, and ecclesiastical persons who are in charge and consecrated to serve the Church. Clergy at every level of rank is considered a part of the ecclesiastical body.

Ecclesiastical term literally means preacher. Clergy are responsible for the spiritual welfare of the church, including but not limited to spiritual formation, Bible study, personal prayer, communal worship, visitation, baptism and

...y... the Church Of God In Christ recognizes the leadership of titular/ecclesiastical individuals and include in their ranks: unlicensed ministers, licensed ministers, ordained elders, pastors, district superintendents, auxiliary bishops and jurisdictional bishops.

The Jurisdictional Bishop is responsible for the ecclesiastical order of his jurisdiction. He guides the process that provides the opportunity for the development of clergy. See Art III Part II Section D Subsections 13,14,15

**Teacher's Notes:**

*The Episcopal structure of the Church Of God In Christ can be found in the manual. Your class must understand that the Church Of God In Christ has an episcopacy that controls and guides the ecclesiastical system. Make sure the student is fully aware of the titles and responsibilities and functions of all credential holders. The superintendency of the church depends upon each titular person knowing how they fit in the system and what they are responsible to do. The general knowledge of polity is something that the ordination board and the teacher must know. The student must know the difference between an Episcopal structure, a Congregational structure and a Presbyterian structure. The Church Of God In Christ is a unique blend of all three polities: Episcopal, Congregational and Presbyterian Structures.*

The following defines the various forms of Church government or polity: (1.) **Congregational Structure** is a system that recognizes only the authority of the local church and its officers. An example of this would be the Baptist Church. It is usually controlled and governed by a local board of deacons who hire and fire pastors and control the day to day operations. (2) **Presbyterian Structure** is a system governed by a board of elders (people of experience and rank within the connection or local church structure). These people serve as a court or leadership group. An example is the Presbyterian Church. Their system is made of local Church leaders who comprise local presbyteries, geographical leaders called Synods, and the General Assembly Representative leaders that decide general church matters. (3) **Episcopal Structure** is totally controlled by bishops. Pastors are appointed for brief periods of time and are often rotated from one place to another. Those appointments are not local church controlled, but granted at the District Church Conference level of government.

The strictest form of Episcopal form of government is seen in the hierarchies of the Methodist and Catholic Churches. Episcopal structures are totally controlled by Bishops. The Church Of God In Christ has a unique **Ecclesiastical/**



**Episcopal profile.** (1) Many congregations are often established by local pastors and families, and then joined to the Church Of God In Christ connection. (2) These congregations get no financial support from the parent organization. (3) The Church Of God In Christ has a vast majority of pastors that are not formally theologically educated, however, receive nurture and development from the bishops they are aligned with. (4) The pastor's tenure is considered permanent but maybe ended with cause. The real strength of COGIC affiliation is through the doctrine and superintendency of the Church Of God In Christ headquartered in Memphis, Tennessee. Last, in the Church Of God In Christ the pastor is not subject to systematic reassignment from Episcopal authorities in the hierarchy like Methodist clergy. The pastor is not periodically rotated by the District Conference to another church. The Bishop may allow the pastor to have lifetime tenure at his local congregation.

Due to the fact that church revenues and vision for local churches is largely derived from the pastor and the ardent tithing membership, the organizational connections not as administratively rigorous. As stated before, the Church Of God In Christ pastor is not subject to systematic reassignment from Episcopal authorities in the hierarchy. The pastor is not periodically rotated by the District Conference to another church.

The Church Of God In Christ Manual clearly states the Jurisdictional Bishop appoints the pastor and the Bishop's authority is granted to him from the General Assembly. The Jurisdictional Bishop's appointment authorizes him to appoint or remove a pastor. The authority is continuous and is perpetuated through the organization as an ecclesiastical appointment and rank. The pastor's authority is outlined in the Manual in Part II, Article III Section D Subsections 1,2,5,7. (Please read)

### ***Teaching Tips/Key Terms***

***As you begin to teach this class, make sure the students have read and fully appreciate the titular positions of church leaders. (They need to know the difference between bishops and pastors, etc.) Look at the key terms and check the glossary before you begin to teach. It is imperative that the teacher has a working knowledge of the key terms listed in each chapter.***

The **congregationalist** form posits local control in the hands of local deacons, elected synods or committees. To a degree, the local congregations in the Church Of God In Christ have strong deacons and trustees, however, they have no executive power over the pastor. They cannot remove a pastor or direct the ministry by decree against his will. Yet when a pastoral vacancy

decision making process to appoint the next pastor. Local assemblies have limited sanctioning power.

### **How the Pastor Interfaces with Local Church Trustees**

In the local COGIC congregation the local trustee board is elected by the membership to represent the membership and support the pastor's administration. The Manual outlines how the relationship and function of the pastor and the elected trustees operates. See Article III Part II Section D subsections 8,9,10,12. The trustees operate in conjunction with pastoral authority. Local church members may establish Bylaws, however, those Bylaws cannot be in conflict or repugnant to the constitution, laws, etc. of the Church Of God In Christ.

Bishop C. H. Mason envisioned a polity that embraced elements of all three structures. He selected what he felt were the best qualities and hence the Church Of God In Christ is a unique blend of each.

### ***Teaching Tips/How Church History Played a Role***

***The teacher must have background knowledge of the life and times of Bishop C. H. Mason, the founder. The class will need to know how Bishop Mason structured the Church. One cannot teach church polity without having an understanding of ecclesiastical history, social history, and knowledge of the personal life of the founder. Example: In Bishop Mason's early ministry, he was an ordained Baptist minister. He had problems with two disciplines of the Baptist doctrine. The first was polity. In the Baptist church, there is a congregationalist order that places authority in the hands of the deacons. Bishop Mason had problems preaching the gospel that included the doctrine of sanctification, and was expelled from several of the Baptist congregations by the deacon board. The second act of grace was his sincere interpretation of scripture. Bishop Mason understood the doctrine of sanctification/holiness as a biblical reality to be practiced by believers. This teaching led to most of his problems with those who didn't accept the holiness message.***

***Clergy in the Church Of God In Christ are bound to live and teach Pentecostal- holiness principles and extend the opportunity for the unconverted, especially those who follow them, to believe and participate in our worshipping community. Clergy are solely responsible for the preaching and interpretation of scripture in the Church Of God In Christ.***

### ***Teacher's Notes: Biblical Example***

***In the Pastoral Epistles of Paul, one can study the method he used to organize the Church. The Epistles of Titus is an excellent example of hierarchical authority within the ranks of preachers. Paul identified men who recognized the calling of God upon their lives. Paul was the seasoned veteran who commissioned younger, talented men to serve Church congregations. Once he established them in the ranks of the ecclesiastic personnel, he then demonstrated his power (Episcopal rank as titular leader) and set the order and discipline for them to follow.***

The call was for men to love people and teach them the ways of God. Causing men to be responsible and living holiness was a main part of Paul's teaching. His superintendence over the preachers he appointed was Paul's duty. He encouraged their commitment to sound doctrine and the holiness lifestyle. Paul created polity as he developed the organization. He never departed from the teaching of Jesus and crafted theological examples that are usable today.

## **SUPERINTENDING THE CHURCH**

The Church Of God In Christ is administered and managed by the following constitutionally designed groups: The General Assembly, The General Board, The Board of Bishops, Jurisdictional Bishops, Jurisdictional Assemblies, District Superintendents and local pastors. Through the clergy, credential holders and other members the aforementioned groups carry out their roles. Each group aspires to work in relationship with the other recognizing that titular responsibility at every position is significant for Church operations. The saints respect the superior rank of individual clergy because he is consecrated to serve. The term titular means having a title and possessing the formal responsibility to serve whether the duty is performed or not. Hence, a man may be a retired bishop but maintains his titular position whether he serves or not.

Superintending is how the connectional church is managed. The titular responsible individual has charge over ministries, commissions, collection of revenue, and church programming, and must encourage persons at every level to work within the system for success. The Church consists of local, district, jurisdictional and general church levels. When one superintends, he controls all the processes at every level. The biggest problem in most church organizations is how to get the connection to work properly. Example: Let's consider the collection of credential reports. How does the bishop encourage the district superintendent to persuade the pastors to collect the report money

tion is what superintending is partially about. Working a missional program is another because there are times we must say and do the same thing for the Kingdom's sake.

**The Superintendency of the General Assembly:** The term collegialism describes an ecclesiastical relationship in the organization that places the highest authority of government in the entire membership. In the General Assembly of the Church Of God In Christ all eligible bishops, pastors, elders and certified credentialed women act as members in that deliberative body. The Discipline of the Church Of God In Christ states the General Assembly is the doctrinal expressing body of the Church. The General Assembly must approve and or sanction the activities of the General Board while the General Assembly is not in session. This General Assembly oversight is the Presbyterian element that is unique to the Church Of God In Christ. Conceivably, the Presbyterian element in COGIC polity could allow for our assembly to be headed by any of its members, and this includes Bishops, elders, credential holders and lay members. The General Assembly meets twice a year for its regular sessions.

**The Superintendency of the General Board of Bishops** is as Executive Branch of the Church. This Board superintends the Church when the General Assembly is not in session. The General Board's decisions and executive actions shall be final unless the same are overruled, repealed, or modified by the General Assembly. General Board members are elected to serve for a term of four years. The chief officer and titular head of the General Board is the Presiding Bishop. In secular terms, as in our civil structure, the Presiding Bishop is also the corporation's president. As chief executive officer of the organization, the Presiding Bishop and members of the General Board Of Bishops are in charge of the General Church's day-to-day operation, both national and international.

**The Superintendency of the Judiciary Board** is as the Supreme Court of the Church and the highest appellate court. The Judiciary Board balances the legislative and executive branches if questions of authority, etc., emerge and need final ecclesiastical decisions. The nation's secular courts respect the judgments of the Church's Supreme Court, given those decisions do not violate the law of the land. Same is true where the Church Of God In Christ has congregations in foreign countries.

**The Superintendency of the General Board of Trustees** shall be conducted by elected officials from the ranks of certified delegates to the General Assembly. They are granted responsibility over the possessions and property, both real

and intellectual, and have oversight of the financial and budgetary matters of the General Church.

**Note of Interest:** The government of the Church Of God In Christ has been erroneously compared to that of the United States. Yes, there are three branches of government but beyond that there is little similarity. For instance, the President of the United States is elected for four years, and so, too, is the Presiding Bishop. The President is elected in a general election to serve as a unit of the government. The Presiding Bishop is elected as one of twelve bishops on an executive board over which he presides and they together guide the Church. He has titular control and authority with the support of that board. There are numerous other differences that can be cited. An ordained clergy must appreciate the true nature of our Episcopal leadership. Receiving holy orders places the candidate in the line of authority.

There are other General Church Officers that are elected during the quadrennial elections. These individuals are key administrative persons in the life of the Church. They hold corporate responsibilities for the Church. Their positions are often a part of jurisdictional structure and help maintain processes for doing business for the Church. These positions are General Secretary, General Treasurer, and General Financial Secretary.

The Superintendency of the Board of Bishops is conducted through that collegial entity where consecrated prelates receive collegial fellowship and guidance in the execution of their calling. Both jurisdictional and auxiliary prelates gather to share fellowship, perfect spiritual discipline, promote ecclesiastical performance, and receive orientation in jurisdictional management that will help impact local church effectiveness in the communities served by the Church Of God In Christ. As a college of rank, the Board of Bishops is authorized to safeguard the faith, liturgy, Episcopal order, doctrine and the discipline of the Church. From the ranks of the Board of Bishops comes the elected membership on the General Board.

The Superintendency of the General Council of Pastors and Elders is the constitutionally provided as an appellate tribunal. It is made up of all ordained clergy and enlists the membership of bishops, pastors and elders without charge. The General Council of Pastors and Elders has affiliation with Jurisdictional Assemblies and acts constitutionally when those assemblies are involved in adjudicating and bringing remedy to difficult ecclesiastical or legal situations. The General Council of Pastors and Elders serves as the court structure of the Church.

charge over an established and recognized ecclesiastical area called a jurisdiction. A jurisdiction is a territorial or geographical area designated to be administered by a prelate. The number of local congregations, though not uniform, is determined by the General Church organization, and the governance is administered by the bishop in charge. He must be authorized by the General Board and approved by the General Assembly in that position. The Jurisdictional Bishop is charged with disciplining colleagues, training and development of those over whom the bishop has power and control. The Jurisdictional Bishop has the ability to generate or collect revenues and as a matter of superintendency is obligated to report those revenues for use in the jurisdiction, and/or the ministry of the General Church. The Jurisdictional Bishop is responsible for the fiduciary administration and management of the wealth of the jurisdiction, and this includes bank accounts, investments and any real or intellectual properties. The Jurisdictional Bishop is responsible for the development and ordination of candidates for ministry and has supervision over the local churches that make up his jurisdiction. The Jurisdictional Bishop is responsible for all appointments made within his jurisdiction. All titular jurisdictional persons serve at the will of the Jurisdictional Bishop. All members, department officials, credential holders of the jurisdiction are under the authority of the Jurisdictional Bishop.

The Auxiliary Bishop is a subsidiary person utilized to add harmony to the life of the organization. His titular role is dependent upon the appointment given and the duties performed. He is a fully consecrated colleague on the Board of Bishops but not eligible for election to the General Board. An Auxiliary Bishop may have departmental or ancillary unit responsibility. He is without charge over a designated territory or geographical area.

## **Practical Application**

### **Superintending the Church**

The District Superintendent is appointed by the jurisdictional bishop to serve in a leadership capacity within the jurisdiction. Under his charge are local pastors and their churches. He is responsible for training, development, and collection of funds requested by the Jurisdiction or General Church. He serves as the middle management in the line of superintendency for the church organization at the jurisdictional level, and has the authority to recommend clergy for pastoral appointment. The District Superintendent can recommend appointees for the office of District Missionary, and all associated offices affiliated with the business of the district he serves.

The Jurisdictional Assemblies are composed of all ordained clergy in the jurisdiction. The assembly serves as the tribunal (court) for the jurisdictional membership. The Jurisdictional Assembly is constitutionally required and the chairman of each assembly must be elected by his peers.

The Pastor is an ordained clergy appointed to a local congregation by the Jurisdictional Bishop. The pastor is titular leader of the local assembly and chief interpreter of scripture. The pastor is ex-officio head of every auxiliary and ancillary group of the local congregation. As chief executive officer he is responsible for the vision, spiritual growth and social welfare of the persons he serves.

The Board of Trustees is elected in the local assemblies to represent the membership in matters of trust. Only members of a local congregation may serve as a trustee board member. Their chief responsibility is to provide oversight and support to the pastor in the operations of the local church, both financial and religious.

### EXAM QUESTIONS

1. Polity is the form or process of governing an organization. **T or F**
2. Superintendency is demonstrated best in an organization when the leader uses power, collects revenue, makes official appointments. **T or F**
3. Only Bishops have the authority to superintend the organization. **T or F**
4. Ecclesiastical rank refers to those called of God and appointed by the Church. **T or F**
5. The Episcopal ranking of the Church Of God In Christ clergy consists of unlicensed ministers, licensed ministers, ordained elders, pastors, district superintendents, auxiliary bishops, and jurisdictional bishops. **T or F**
6. Ordained clergy are charged to facilitate the strategies, disciplines and ministries that express the role of the Church in the world. **T or F**
7. Clergy of rank are recognized through episcopal rank and titular description from the lowest rank to the highest. **T or F**
8. The Judiciary Board is the supreme court and highest appellate unit in the Church. **T or F**
9. The Board of Bishops is the collegial entity where consecrated prelates fellowship, receive guidance and training in the execution of their calling.  
**T or F**

**Select one:**

**1. Polity informs the clergy about the following:**

- a. Social and ceremonial responsibility
- b. Principles of church administration and their application
- c. Explains how the organization is superintended by its titular officials
- d. Is a set of biblical rules and customs for clergy

**2. The Church Of God In Christ has what type of governmental setup?**

- a. A unique blend of Episcopal and Congregationalist structure
- b. Resembles a Baptist congregationalist setup
- c. Is more Methodist and Episcopal
- d. Unknown character because it was God inspired

**3. Superintendency is defined as:**

- a. The method used by members to conduct the affairs of the organization
- b. Used to describe the work of the District Superintendent
- c. A theological term with no purpose other than spiritual mysteries

**4. What describes ecclesiastical persons best?**

- a. God's officially called and organizationally certified persons
- b. Any lay member or visitor at church
- c. Government officials and businessmen
- d. Anyone claiming a titular role in an organization

**5. Ordained clergy are bound to the following:**

- a. To live, preach and teach Pentecostal-Holiness
- b. Preach song titles and tell humorous and encouraging stories
- c. Acknowledge current events and scare people into salvation
- d. Demonstrate love and friendship

**6. The highest ranking board in the Church Of God In Christ is:**

- a. Publishing Board
- b. Judiciary Board
- c. General Board of Bishops
- d. Executive Committee of the General Assembly



**7. The election of general officers in the Church happens every:**

- a. 2 years
- b. 4 years
- c. 6 years
- d. 8 years

**8. The titular leader of the Church Of God In Christ is:**

- a. Chairman of the General Assembly
- b. Presiding Bishop
- c. Chairman of the Board of Bishops
- d. Jurisdictional Bishop

**9. The General Council of Pastors and Elders is the following:**

- a. Social and religious fraternity of preachers
- b. An association of independent clergy
- c. Leaders of all jurisdictional assemblies
- d. A large conference of clergy

**10. Jurisdictional Bishops are appointed by:**

- a. Jurisdictional Board of Elders
- b. Jurisdictional and State Officials
- c. General Board of Bishops
- d. General Board of Bishops with approval of the General Assembly

**11. Jurisdictional Bishops are charged with superintending their jurisdictions. Which function does not belong?**

- a. Appointing pastors
- b. Collecting revenues and making reports to the General Church
- c. Maintaining doctrinal discipline
- d. Leading political protest

**12. The members of the General Board of Trustees are elected from:**

- a. Appointees from a General Board Commission
- b. Certified delegates of the General Assembly
- c. Only the ranks of ordained clergy
- d. Any citizen of the United States

**13. The truth about local church trustees.**

- a. Have no real power in local church oversight
- b. Need not to be taken seriously by pastors
- c. Have responsibility to represent local membership they were elected to serve
- d. Are controlled and directed by the pastor

**14. Who is responsible for the training and ordination of candidates for ordination?**

- a. General Board
- b. Local Pastor
- c. Jurisdictional Assemblies
- d. Jurisdictional Bishops

**15. Who is the thirteenth General Officer of the Corporation?**

- a. First Assistant Presiding Bishop
- b. Chairman of the General Assembly
- c. Chairman of the Board of Bishops
- d. General Secretary

**Fill in the Blank.**

**Name the General Officers.**

- 1. General Secretary
- 2. General Treasurer
- 3. General Financial Secretary
- 4. Chairman of the General Assembly
- 5. Chairman of the Board of Bishops
- 6. Chairman of the General Council of Pastors and Elders
- 7. Chairman of the Judiciary Board
- 8. General Supervisor of Women
- 9. Chairman of the General Board of Trustees

**10. List the Ecclesiastical positions in COGIC Episcopacy.**

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_

- f. \_\_\_\_\_
- g. \_\_\_\_\_
- h. \_\_\_\_\_

11. List the members of the General Board ( Place the Presiding Bishop and officers in order of rank).

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_

### Essay Questions

1. Explain why the Church’s organizational structure and government is not like the Federal government of the United States of America.
2. Discuss the term Superintendency and how it is conducted in the Church Of God In Christ.
3. Explain why the Presiding Bishop of the Church Of God In Christ is not like the Pope of the Catholic Church.
4. Define the role of the General Assembly and why delegates are certified from jurisdictions.
5. Discuss Collegialism and how it shapes the understanding of Separation of Church and State in the local church.

### GLOSSARY

**Auxiliary Bishop:** A consecrated clergyman holding the rank of bishop; a bishop without charge over a jurisdiction, but has specifically assigned duties in the Church. His function adds harmony to the Church’s operation.

**Board of Bishops:** The ecclesiastical body that trains and supervises the

**Chairman:** Chairman of the General Assembly. The constitutionally elected officer who presides over the General Assembly of the Church Of God In Christ. He is in charge of all standing committees and ad hoc committees that function in the assembly.

**Collegialism:** The ecclesiastical theory that states the Church is an organization independent of secular law, and equal to the state, with the highest authority resting in its entire membership. This allows bishops, pastors, elders and credentialed women to share in the General Assembly.

**Congregational Structure:** A system that recognizes only the authority of the local church and its officers. An example of this would be the Baptist Church. It is usually controlled and governed by local deacon boards.

**District Superintendent:** In the Episcopal system, the middle management in the episcopacy at the jurisdictional structure; has charge over designated churches and pastors. Appointed at the pleasure of the bishop.

**Ecclesiastical:** The group or assembly pertaining or relating to the organization of the Church or clergy. The ecclesiastic (preachers/ordained clergy) operates through established customs, patterns, rituals and principles, i.e.: order.

**Ecclesiastical Function:** Pertains to how preachers function and include spiritual formation Bible study, personal prayer, communal worship, visitation, baptism and Holy Communion.

**Episcopacy:** Pertains to the organizational structure that is controlled by the bishops of a church organization.

**Episcopal Structure:** Totally controlled by bishops. Pastors are appointed for brief periods of time and are often rotated from one place to another. Those appointments are not local church controlled, but granted at the district Church Conference level of government.

**General Assembly:** The only doctrinal, expressing body in the Church Of God In Christ. It is made up of certified delegates from jurisdictional assemblies in the Church Of God In Christ.

**General Board of Bishops:** The executive branch of the Church's government, (consists of twelve elected jurisdictional prelates). The board has the power to conduct the affairs of the Church when the General Assembly is not in session. The presiding bishop is the chief executive officer over the general board.

**General Council of Pastors and Elders:** The body of ordained clergy, made

up of jurisdictional assemblies. It is the appellate tribunal for the general Church.

**General Financial Secretary:** Duly elected general officer of the Church who is responsible for the recording, review and oversight of all financial statements in the Church Of God In Christ. He is responsible for the investments and financial instruments held by the general Church Of God In Christ.

**General Secretary:** Duly elected secretary of the corporation, responsible for maintaining the office of secretary which records all records, seals and contracts and the listing of all certified credential holders in the Church Of God In Christ.

**General Treasurer:** Duly elected general officer entrusted the receipt of monies. Has responsibility over collection and depositing of revenue and disbursement of funds. The treasurer has administrative responsibilities over the accounting department.

**General Trustee Board:** Constitutionally elected individuals who hold in trust both the property and intellectual properties of the Church Of God In Christ. They are responsible for budgetary and fiduciary matters.

**Judiciary Board:** The supreme court of the Church Of God In Christ and the third branch of church government. The judiciary board handles all assigned cases involving litigation within the Church.

**Jurisdiction:** an area (sometimes territorial) where a designated individual has administrative and legal power to execute authority; defined for the purpose of disciplining colleagues, training and development of those over whom the bishop has power to sanction. The bishop has the ability to generate or collect revenues and as a matter of superintendence and report the revenue through the system.

**Jurisdictional Assemblies:** The body of ordained clergymen certified in the jurisdiction and serves as the initial tribunal in the court system.

**Jurisdictional Bishop - (an Episcopal rank):** An invested and consecrated clergyman who has the responsibility for the maintenance of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction. He is responsible for the appointment and disciplining of clergymen. He is the chief interpreter of scripture in the jurisdiction and is responsible for the continuity of spiritual formation, bible study, communal worship and the holy ordinances of the Church.

and developing in the vocation of ministry; a non-ordained clergyman.

**Local Board of Trustees:** Duly elected church member entrusted from the local congregation, having the responsibility of trust and oversight of the property and business functions of the Church.

**Ordained Elder (an Episcopal rank)** - A clergyman consecrated by the bishop, fully empowered in ministry. In the Church Of God In Christ, a clergyman without charge, meaning a non-pastor.

**Pastor (an Episcopal rank):** A fully ordained and consecrated clergyman who is in charge of a local congregation. He is responsible for spiritual formation, bible study, personal prayer, communal worship, visitation, baptism and Holy Communion.

**Polity - (Greek - politeia, meaning citizenship):** Pertains to the order and processes within the Church; a form of governance, constitutional in nature.

**Presbyterian Structure:** A system governed by a board of elders (people of experience and rank within the connection or local church structure). These people serve as a court or leadership group. An example is the Presbyterian Church. Their system is made of local Church leaders called presbyteries, geographical leaders called Synods, and the General Assembly Representative leaders that decide general church matters.

**Presiding Bishop:** Duly elected chief apostle of the Church Of God In Christ; president and chief executive officer of the corporate structure; the spiritual leader of the entire Church Of God In Christ denomination.

**Superintendency:** A method of oversight and control of the church organization used in the jurisdictional structure as defined by the Episcopal order.

**Titular:** The titles given to position holders in the Church; having to do with the nature or possessing a title, whether the duty associated with the title is performed or not. Example: a bishop is a bishop whether retired, emeritus or active.

**Unlicensed Minister (an Episcopal rank):** The beginning level of ecclesiastical calling where a candidate is trained in episcopal functions.

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# ORDINATION OF MINISTERS IN THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

Bishop Barnett K. Thoroughood

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## *Teacher's Notes:*

### *Understanding the Culture of Ordination*

*In order to teach candidates for ordination in an effective and astute manner, the teacher must demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the culture which frames and legitimizes present ordination practices and places them within a spiritual and historical context. Candidates need to understand that policies and procedures regarding the appointment and ordination of ministers have been codified into a National Standardized Ordination Curriculum, requiring them to study and to become knowledgeable of the national curriculum so that they can demonstrate mastery on the national standardized assessment. Passing the national assessment qualifies candidates for public ordination, which attests to their competence, character, and qualifications to carry out the duties and responsibilities of their office. To be successful in this class, students must demonstrate the following competencies:*

- 1. Show a thorough knowledge of the culture which provides a foundational structure for our current liturgical practice of ordaining elders to preach the Gospel;*
- 2. Understand and appreciate the ecclesiastical history of our church and the vital role played by our founder, Bishop Mason, in establishing and developing policies and procedures pertaining to the appointment of ministers to spread the Gospel as important elements of this culture;*
- 3. Define two distinguishing characteristics of holiness as a way of life;*
- 4. Draw a line of demarcation between modern day ordination and apostolic ordination;*
- 5. Explain the difference between ordination versus consecration as current liturgical practices in the Church.*

The culture in which Bishop Mason instituted and developed policies and procedures for appointing and ordaining men to preach the Gospel provides a foundational structure which frames and legitimizes current ordination practices, placing them within a spiritual and historical context. A knowledge of the culture of ordination in the Church Of God In Christ is vital to its teach-

ing and training ministry because it enlightens one about the spiritual origins, development and history of the Church on the one hand and educates one concerning the consequences of that ordination.

**KEY TERMS**

Apostolic Ordination	Class A
Episcopal Holiness	Class B
Investiture Ordinal	Cassock
Ordinand Ordination	Band Cincture
Presbyter	Surplice
Vestments of Ordained Elder	Pectoral Cross
Dress Code	Tippet
	Sanctioned Vestment Colors in Church

**Culture of Ordination in the Church Of God In Christ**

From the very beginning of Bishop Charles Harrison Mason’s ministry of developing and establishing the Church Of God In Christ, policies and procedures were to be adopted regarding consecration, ordination, and appointment of ministers to spread the Gospel throughout the length and breadth of these United States. Emulating the New Testament apostles, Bishop Mason and those who assisted him gave credence to men of faith by the laying on of hands. Bishop Mason appointed men to go into various parts of the nation to preach the Gospel to men and women of all color, inspiring them to have faith in Jesus, and to establish churches and congregations. In addition to preaching the Gospel and establishing churches, these appointees were commissioned to evangelize the world.

Sent to declare the message of sanctification (holiness) and being baptized with the Holy Ghost, men who were descendents of slaves, farmers, and sharecroppers, laid aside their hoes and plowshears, and submitted themselves to the call of Christ in their lives and to the apostolic authority of Bishop Mason to appoint them to do ministry. As a result, they created a culture of apostolic ordination for the Church. Upon the laying on of hands by the founding father, without question, these men were endowed with the power of the Holy Ghost to go and to effect change in the lives of believers throughout the world. It is from this culture that we have established our modern day practice of ordaining elders into the Gospel ministry.

Although many of the fathers of our Church adopted Bishop Mason’s method of appointing men to ministry, during the era of the late Bishop James



Oglethorpe Patterson, Sr., the Church sought to codify its standards and procedures in order to bring about a much more orderly method that coincided with Christendom everywhere. Under Bishop Patterson's leadership, the first formal ordination program and ceremony emerged from this. Because of the leadership of the Presiding Bishop in this matter, many of the bishops in the church began to adopt various ordination procedures and practices for their jurisdictions. Thus, a true standard of ordination for the Church was now being uniformly applied and practiced.

Historically, young men were given some form of training by their pastors and were recommended to the Jurisdictional Bishop for ordination. The Jurisdictional Bishop traditionally is the only clergy authorized to ordain ministers in his jurisdiction. The Jurisdictional Bishop would appoint an ordination committee to examine the men to see if they were well-versed in the Scriptures, doctrine, and polity of the Church Of God In Christ. Thus, the candidates were presented to the Bishop for public ordination. The Bishop would call the candidates forward, and he, along with the presbyters (district superintendents and pastors), would lay hands upon them and appoint them as elders in the Church Of God In Christ.

### ***Teaching Tips: Vestments of the Ordained Elder***

***Remind students to read the Official Handbook of the Church Of God In Christ, pp 100-108: Dress Code, Divisions I through VI. Emphasize the ministerial leadership and rank of the ordained elder and its fundamental place as the entry level to the hierarchal structure of our Church. As the teacher, you must make sure that candidates are able to do the following:***

- 1. Explain the theological history and spiritual significance of the dress code.***
- 2. Distinguish between civic and liturgical attire and the occasions for which they are appropriate.***
- 3. Correctly use alternative vestment classification categories (Class A and Class B) to designate appropriate liturgical and civic standards of clerical attire.***
- 4. Distinguish among sanctioned colors used for vestments in the Church Of God In Christ and what color is only appropriate for elders, pastors, and superintendents.***
- 5. List and explain violations of the dress code.***

The ministry of the ordained elder is considered to be the most dynamic level of ministerial leadership in the life of our church. This rank produces pastoral ministry in its purest form. Pastors, under shepherds (pastoral assistants of various roles), district superintendents, and bishops all come through the rank and file of this office. This office thus serves as the fundamental entry level to the hierarchical structure of our church.

The vestments of this office are indicative of its rank and file. The dress code of an ordained elder is both liturgical and civic, or **Class A** or **Class B**. **Class A** is his civil attire while **Class B** is his ceremonial or liturgical attire. During the transitional years of our church, the late Presiding Bishop James Oglethorpe Patterson, Sr. codified the dress code for all clergy. The dress code coincided with the dress code of the Anglican Church. However, those who were commissioned to formulate this new dress code for the Church Of God In Christ painstakingly did so with the understanding that our dress code would not denigrate the practices and doctrinal beliefs of our Most Holy Faith.

The dress code that was adopted was designed to express the Elder's humility and servitude to Christ and His church. These vestments remind those who wear them and others of the importance of men who would serve the Lord's Church through leading a life of singular piety and self denial. These vestments are to be worn appropriately with strict observance of the color codes which indicate the hierarchical rank of clerics in the Church Of God In Christ; scarlet, red-purple, and blue-purple symbolize Episcopal hierarchical leadership in our Church; thus, scarlet is reserved exclusively for the Presiding Bishop, red-purple for the General Board and the General Supervisor of Women, and blue-purple for Jurisdictional and Auxiliary Bishops. Black is worn by the rank and file leadership of the Church (superintendents, pastors) and by all ordained elders. Ordained elders should therefore abstain from wearing any part of these vestments inappropriately.

### ***Teacher Tips: The Investiture and Vestments***

***Look at key terms (Class A and Class B attire and specific definitions and explanations of vestment articles) in the glossary before you begin to teach. It is imperative that the teacher has a commanding knowledge of ordination, its significance and its procedures; and that he is well-versed in explicating and articulating the meaning, significance, and symbolism of priestly attire. Candidates, as a result of this class, will be able to demonstrate their competence in the following ways:***

1. *Define and explain the investiture and give a detailed explanation of the clerical attire appropriate thereto.*
2. *Distinguish between liturgical and civic attire and the occasions for which they are appropriate.*
3. *Articulate the theological history and symbolism associated with individual vestment articles in terms of what they reveal about the ordained elder and his priestly office.*
4. *List and describe in detail the individual components of the ordained elder's civic attire.*

## THE INVESTITURE: CLASS A

Before the ordinand is fully vested in the garments of his priestly office during the ceremony of ordination, the candidate is initially vested with a black shirt with a pontiff neck band collar. He is also dressed with a traditional garment much like the ephod that was worn by the priest of the Levitical Priesthood. Following the Roman tradition, the ephods worn by priests of the Levitical Priesthood were replaced in the Roman Catholic and Anglican Communion by the Anglican or Roman (Jesuit) **cassock**. Because the Anglican tradition of dress is more suitable, the Church Of God In Christ has chosen it for its ordained clerics. This garment suggests that the elder is first and foremost a servant.

The black Anglican **cassock** is expressly worn to demonstrate the elder's willingness to divest himself of all worldly fashions. The elder covers himself so that congregants are focused towards Christ and not on the personage of the elder during worship.

The second part of the ordained elder's vestment in which he is initially dressed for the ordination service is the **band cincture**. This belt-like garment is worn around the waist with its tassels suspended from the left side downward unevenly. The cincture is a symbol of the towel with which Jesus girdled Himself about during the Last Supper as He instituted the ordinance of Foot Washing. This portion of the elder's vestments reminds him that he is a servant.

The third part of the ordained elder's vestment is the **surplice**. The surplice is a white, wide, flare-sleeved outer garment that is worn over the cassock with Florentine lace at its hem and cuffs. This garment is worn by the elder as a symbol of his office (priest). At no time is the elder allowed to wear pins, *pendants*, *boutonnieres*, or any other item affixed to this garment.

The pectoral cross and rope are symbols of the elder as a prisoner of our Lord Jesus Christ. The ordained elder's pectoral cross is worn suspended from his neck by a three foot black cord. At no time is an elder allowed to wear a gold or silver cross suspended by a chain of any sort. This right to wear crosses suspended by chains in the Church Of God In Christ is reserved exclusively for bishops. Whenever the elder is not officiating in a given service, the cross is always worn in his shirt pocket over his heart.

The fifth and final part of the ordained elder's vestment is a black **tippet**. The tippet is a long stole-like garment that is worn around the neck and across the shoulders hanging evenly down the front of the surplice. This garment, worn as a symbol of the elder as a prophet and priest, may have a patch of the seal of the Church Of God In Christ sown eight inches from the bottom left side and worn under the heart.

## **THE ORDAINED ELDER'S CIVIC ATTIRE: CLASS B**

The dress code for elders serving in civic settings is designed to present the elder as a servant of our Lord and His Church. Elders are to abstain from gaudy, flashy clothing or garments that are not indicative of the sacred office to which they have been called. Therefore, in an effort to present our clergy in an appropriate manner, the Church Of God In Christ has adopted the following dress for civic attire:

The elder is to adorn himself in a conservative cut black, single breasted suit with black buttons. No type of pocket squares should be worn in the breast pocket of his suit. He is also to wear a black clergy shirt with a white neck ban collar (pontiff style). He is to wear conservative black shoes with black shoelaces and black socks. The elder is to wear his pectoral cross suspended by a black cord. The ordained elder may wear his cross exposed if he is officiating; however, in all other cases, he is to wear his cross concealed in his left shirt pocket. If the elder is not performing any charge or officiating in any type of service, he may wear a work-day or tab collar shirt.

### ***Teacher's Notes: The Ordinal***

***As you begin to teach this class, make sure that candidates understand and fully appreciate the sacredness and the seriousness of this high and holy hour of public ordination, as well as the process, its ecclesiastical participants, and their own specific role. The instructor needs to emphasize that***

*the receiving of holy orders certifies the clergyman as knowledgeable and equipped to administer the duties of his office, and establishes his credibility in the operations and functions of the Church Of God In Christ. As a result of this session, ordination candidates will be able to perform the following:*

- 1. Define and explain the following terms: ordinal, ordinand, ordination;*
- 2. Describe the ordinal procedure, its ecclesiastical participants, and explain their specific role, as well as the role of the candidates during this sacred hour.*
- 3. Demonstrate a commanding knowledge of the significance of ordination and explain what the receiving of holy orders empowers them to do and how it gives credibility to their ministry.*
- 4. Specify the clerical attire to be worn for the occasion.*
- 5. Name, describe, and give the significance of the vestments of their office with which they are adorned during this sacred ceremony.*
- 6. Discuss the importance of Holy Communion during the ordination service.*
- 7. Elaborate on the value and significance of the bishop's charge and instructions to the candidate.*

## **THE ORDINAL**

The service of ordination takes place after the candidate has been thoroughly examined and has met all the requirements set by the National Standardized Ordination Curriculum. The candidate is to be vested in a black cassock with a black band cincture around his waist. At the hour of consecration, the candidate is presented to the bishop for public ordination:

**The Presenter:** *[shall come before the bishop and say], (The bishop's name), Bishop in the Church Of God In Christ, on behalf of the Ordination Board of (the name of the Jurisdiction), we present to you (the name of the candidate) to be ordained an elder in the Church Of God In Christ.*

**The Bishop:** *Has he been examined in accordance with the Standardized Ordination Curriculum of the Church Of God In Christ? And do you believe his manner of life to be suitable to the exercise of this ministry?*

*and a statement of consent to you that he has accepted the requirements of the Church Of God In Christ, and we believe him to be qualified for this order.*

**The Bishop:** *[to the Candidate]: Will you be loyal to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of Christ as practiced by the Church Of God In Christ? And will you, in accordance with the discipline of the Church Of God In Christ, obey your bishop and other ministers who may have authority over you and your work?*

**The Candidate:** *I am willing and ready to do so; and I solemnly declare that I do believe the Holy Bible both Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Church Of God In Christ.*

*[The candidate then signs the above declaration in the sight of all present.]*  
*[All stand.]*

**The Bishop:** *Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, you know the importance of this ministry, and the weight of your responsibility in consenting to the ordination of (the name of the candidate) as an elder in the Church Of God In Christ). Therefore, if any of you know of any impediment or crime for which cause we should not proceed, come forward now and make it known.*

*[If there is no objection, the Bishop continues.]*

**The Bishop:** *Is it your will that (the name of the candidate) be ordained an elder?*

**The People:** *It is.*

**The Bishop:** *Will you uphold him in this ministry?*

**The People:** *We will.*

*[All are seated except the candidate who stands before the Bishop.]*

**The Bishop:** *[addresses the candidate]: My brother, the Church is the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Ghost. All believers are called to make Christ known as Savior and Lord, and to share in the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. Now you are called to work as an elder together with your pastor, district superintendent, bishop, and fellow elders, and to take your share in the Council of Elders of the Church Of God In Christ.*

*As an elder, it will be your task to proclaim by word and deed the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to fashion your life in accordance with its precepts. You are*

*to love and serve the Lord's people among whom you work, caring alike for young and old, strong and weak, rich and poor. You are to preach, to declare God's forgiveness to penitent sinners, to pronounce God's blessing, to share in the administration of Water Baptism and in the celebration of Holy Communion and to perform all other ministrations entrusted to you by your pastor and bishop.*

*In all that you do, you are to nourish the Lord's people from the richest of His grace, and strengthen them to glorify God in this life and in the life to come.*

*My brother, do you now in the presence of this company commit yourself to this trust and responsibility?*

**The Candidate:** *I do.*

**The Bishop:** *Will you respect and be guided by the pastoral direction and leadership of your pastor and bishop?*

**The Candidate:** *I will.*

**The Bishop:** *Will you be diligent in the reading and study of the Holy Scriptures, and in seeking the knowledge of such things as may make you a stronger and more able minister of Christ?*

**The Candidate:** *I will.*

**The Bishop:** *Will you do your best to pattern your life [and that of your family, or household, or community] in accordance with the teaching of Christ, so that you may be a wholesome example to the saints of God everywhere?*

**The Candidate:** *I will.*

**The Bishop:** *May the Lord who has given you the will to do these things give you the grace and power to perform them.*

**The Candidate:** *Amen.*

[The Bishop now asks all to stand except the candidate who kneels facing the Bishop and the presbyters who stand to the left and right of the Bishop to lay hands upon the candidate and pray.]

The Bishop may pray this prayer:

*God and Father of us all, we praise You for Your infinite love in calling us to be a holy people in the kingdom of Your Son Jesus our Lord, who is the image of Your eternal and invisible glory, the firstborn among many brethren, and the head of the Church. We thank You that by His death He has overcome*

*upon your people, making some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, and some teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry and the building up of His body. Therefore, Father, through Jesus Christ Your Son, give the Holy Spirit to (name of candidate); fill him with grace and power, and make him an elder in Your Church. May he exalt you, O Lord, in the midst of Your people; boldly proclaim the Gospel of salvation, and rightly divide the Word of truth to all men everywhere.*

*Grant that in all things he may serve without reproach so that Your people may be strengthened and Your Name glorified in all the world. All this we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with You and the Holy Ghost, lives and reigns, one God, forever and ever, Amen.*

[The newly ordained elder is now vested with the surplice, pectoral cross, and tippet.]

[The Bishop then presents the Bible to the newly ordained elder, saying:]

*[Receive the Bible as a sign of the authority given to you to preach the word of God and to administer the Ordinances of the Church. Do not forget the trust committed to you as an elder of the Church Of God In Christ.]*

[The Bishop and the presbyters greet the newly ordained elder and present him to the congregation. The Bishop then prepares for the Sacrament of Communion. After Communion has been served, the Bishop gives the benediction and dismisses the congregation.]

## EXAM QUESTIONS

### I. TRUE OR FALSE

Read the following statements carefully to determine whether each one is true or false. Use T or F to give your answer.

1. Following the example of New Testament apostles, Bishop Mason and his assistants gave credence to men of faith by the laying on of hands. **T or F**
2. The late Bishop Gilbert Earl Patterson was the first COGIC leader to adopt the founder's method of appointing men to ministry, seeking to codify its standard and procedure. **T or F**
3. The first order of ordination was published under the leadership of the Bishop James Oglethorpe Patterson, Sr., and from this, bishops in



the Church began to adopt various ordination procedures and practices for their jurisdictions. **T or F**

4. The jurisdictional bishop, as well as superintendents, are the only clergy authorized to ordain ministers. **T or F**
5. When the candidates are presented to the Bishop for public ordination, only he, (the bishop) lays hands upon them after he appoints them as elders in the Church Of God In Christ. **T or F**
6. All clerics in the Church, including the presiding bishop, members of the general board, and jurisdictional bishops, pass through the rank and file of ordained eldership. **T or F**
7. The Office of the Ordained Elder does not serve as the fundamental entry level to the hierarchical structure of our church. **T or F**
8. The dress code for the ordained elder expresses his humility and servitude to Christ and His church. **T or F**
9. The vestments of the ordained elder are indicative of his place in the rank and file of the Church, and they conform to a dress code, which includes classes A, B, and C. **T or F**
10. The dress code, codified for all clergy during the transitional years of our Church under the leadership of the late Bishop J. O. Patterson, Sr., coincided with the dress code of the Episcopal Church. **T or F**

## **II. MULTIPLE CHOICE:**

**Select the best answer from the choices provided under each statement or phrase.**

1. **Bishop Mason appointed elders in the Church Of God In Christ to:**
  - a. Extend the influence of the new ecclesiastical body
  - b. Demonstrate his apostolic authority
  - c. Preach the Gospel to everyone
  - d. Establish churches and evangelize the world
  - e. C only
  - f. C and D
  - g. None of the above

**committee to:**

- a. Examine candidates' criminal and personal backgrounds
- b. Examine the extent to which candidates were versed in the Scriptures, doctrine, and polity of the Church
- c. Determine the candidates' intellectual acuity, linguistic skill, and theological aptitude

**3. An ordained elder's Class B vestments:**

- a. Convey his sense of pride and his desire for spiritual perfection
- b. Signal his rank in the Church and his awareness of his superiority to his parishioners
- c. Express his humility and service to Christ and His Church
- d. Remind him and others of his life of single piety and self denial
- e. Suggest that he is first and foremost a servant
- f. A only
- g. Both B and C
- h. C, D, and E

**4. An ordained elder's Class a attire includes all of the following except**

- a. A gold cross suspended from a three foot black rope
- b. A black shirt with a pontiff neck band collar
- c. A conservative, single-breasted black suit
- d. Conservative black shoes with black shoelaces

**5. During the Ceremony of Ordination, the candidate is initially vested in:**

- a. A surplice, a black shirt with pontiff neck band collar, his Anglican cassock, and a gold cross suspended from a three foot gold Gucci chain
- b. A black shirt with a pontiff neck band collar, a black Anglican cassock, and a band cincture
- c. Only a black Anglican cassock

**6. The ordinand is ceremonially vested after the Bishop's prayer of consecration with:**

- a. The surplice, pectoral cross, and tippet
- b. The cassock, cincture, and pectoral cross
- c. The surplice, cincture, pectoral cross, and cassock

**7. Select the letter which correctly gives the vestment color codes indicating the hierarchical rank of clerics in the Church Of God In Christ:**

- a. Blue-purple for presiding bishop, scarlet for general board members and the general supervisor of women, red-purple for jurisdictional and auxiliary bishops, and black for superintendents, pastors, and all elders
- b. Red-purple for presiding bishop, black for general board members and the general supervisor of women, blue-purple for jurisdictional and auxiliary bishops, and scarlet for superintendents, pastors, and all ordained elders
- c. Scarlet for presiding bishop, red-purple for general board members and the general supervisor of women, blue-purple for jurisdictional and auxiliary bishops, and black for superintendents, pastors, and all ordained elders

**8. Which statement or statements violate the Class B dress code?**

- a. A tippet, cincture, black Anglican cassock, a silver pectoral cross, surplice, and a black shirt with a pontiff band collar.
- b. A gold cross suspended from a black cord, a COGIC lapel pin affixed to the surplice, a tippet, a cincture, and a black Anglican cassock.
- c. A double-breasted, black pin-striped suit with a white pocket square, a white shirt with a pontiff band collar, a surplice, and a tippet with a COGIC seal on both sides.
- d. B and C
- e. Only C
- f. None of the above

**9. The cassock worn by the candidate during ordination, chosen because it was considered more suitable:**

- a. Is a traditional garment much like the ephod worn by priests of the Levitical Priesthood
- b. Comes from the Anglican tradition of dress
- c. Hails from the Episcopalian and Lutheran traditions of dress
- d. Originates from the Catholic and Presbyterian vestment traditions
- e. None of the above
- f. Both A and B

**10. The silver pectoral cross is only worn exposed if the elder is:**

- a. Attending a funeral of a dignitary or bishop
- b. Officiating during a service

- c. Dancing in the spirit
- d. Serving as a state or national adjutant

### III. FILL IN THE BLANKS:

Write in the correct answers.

1. The dress code of an ordained elder is both or Class A and Class B and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Class A is his \_\_\_\_\_ attire, and Class B is his \_\_\_\_\_ attire.
3. The three purposes for choosing the Anglican cassock were \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The ordination service takes place after the candidate has and \_\_\_\_\_.
5. During the ordinal, the candidate promises to be loyal to and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Holiness is defined as and by and is characterized by \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The Jurisdictional Bishop and the candidate in the ceremony lay hands on the \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The \_\_\_\_\_ is a belt-like garment worn around the waist with its tassels suspended from the left side downward unevenly.
9. When the Bishop presents the newly ordained elder with the Bible, he (the bishop) asserts that and \_\_\_\_\_.
10. The \_\_\_\_\_ that is worn over the \_\_\_\_\_ is a white, wide, flare-sleeved outer garment with Florentine lace at its hem and cuffs. This garment is worn by the elder as a symbol of his office ( \_\_\_\_\_ ).

## IV. ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Carefully explain the meaning and importance of the ordained elder's liturgical vestments, emphasizing the symbolism associated with them in terms of what they reveal about the ordained elder and his priestly office.
2. Discuss the difference between ordination and consecration as current liturgical practices on the one hand and the difference between apostolic ordination and modern day ordination on the other.
3. Elaborate on the overall significance of the ordination ceremony in terms of its spiritual value, its influence on public credibility, and its proof of clerical competence.
4. Summarize the Bishop's charge and instructions to the ordination candidate, stressing the importance of the words.

## GLOSSARY

**Apostolic ordination:** The appointing of men and the laying on of hands by the presbyters to endow men with the power of the Holy Ghost to go and effect change in the lives of believers throughout the world. In the early days of our Church, Bishop Mason, using his apostolic authority, appointed overseers to serve under him in various parts of the country and the world. Today, the Presiding Bishop appoints and consecrates men (already serving the Church as ordained elders with charge as pastors and/or superintendents) to the office of auxiliary or jurisdictional bishop.

**Band cincture:** A belt-like garment worn around the waste with its tassels suspended from the left side downward unevenly. This portion of the elder's vestments reminds him that he is a servant.

**Cassock:** A long floor length robe worn over a black shirt with a pontiff neck band collar and long black pants. It is expressly worn to demonstrate the elder's willingness to divest himself of all worldly fashions.

**Class B:** The ordained elder's civic attire consisting of a conservative cut black, single-breasted suit with black buttons, a black clergy shirt with a white neck (pontiff style), a pectoral cross suspended by black cord, conservative black shoes with black shoelaces, and black socks. No type of pocket square should be worn in the breast pocket of his suit.

Anglican cassock, the band cincture, the white cassock with Florentine lace at its hem and cuffs worn over the cassock, the silver pectoral cross suspended from his neck by a three foot black cord, and the tippet, a long stole like garment that is worn around the neck and across the shoulders hanging down the front of the surplice. The tippet may have a patch of the seal of the Church Of God In Christ if it is sown eight inches from the bottom of the left side.

**Culture:** A systematic pattern of ecclesiastical beliefs, practices, and procedures established by Bishop Mason through his apostolic authority for the consecration, ordination, and appointment of ministers.

**Dress code:** Rules for dress designed to express the elder's humility and servitude to Christ and His church.

**Episcopal:** Of or related to a bishop or the bishopric.

**Holiness:** Sanctification characterized by being separated from sin and being set apart for service to the Kingdom of God.

**Investiture:** The act or ceremony of adorning ministers during the ordination service in the clerical garments which symbolize their priestly office.

**Ordinal:** The hour of consecration when the candidate is presented to the Bishop for public ordination, at which time the ordinand promises to be loyal to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of Christ, receives the Episcopal charge and instructions, partakes of Holy Communion, and is vested with his surplice, pectoral cross, and tippet.

**Ordinand:** The minister who is a candidate for ordination.

**Ordination:** A solemn, sacred ecclesiastical ceremony in which a minister or ministers are appointed and licensed after the laying on of hands to spread the Gospel, establish churches, and evangelize the world.

**Pectoral cross:** A silver cross worn suspended from his neck by a three foot black cord and exposed only if officiating; in all other cases, the cross is concealed in the left shirt pocket. The pectoral cross and rope are symbols of the elder being a prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Presbyter:** District superintendents and pastors.

**Sanctioned vestment Colors in the Church:** Color vestments (scarlet, red-purple, and blue-purple) symbolize hierarchical Episcopal leadership in the Church Of God In Christ: red is reserved exclusively for the presiding bishop, red-purple for the general board members and the general supervisor of wom-

en, and blue-purple for jurisdictional and auxiliary bishops. Black is worn by the rank and file leadership of the Church (superintendents and pastors) and by all ordained elders without charge. Inappropriately wearing of the colors of the presiding bishop, the general board, or jurisdictional and auxiliary bishops is a violation of the dress code.

**Surplice:** A white, wide, flare-sleeved outer garment that is worn over the cassock with Florentine lace at its hem and cuffs. This garment is worn by the elder as a symbol of his office (priest).

**Tippet:** A long stole-like garment that is worn around the neck and across the shoulders hanging evenly down the front of the surplice. This garment is worn as a symbol of the elder as a prophet and priest.

**Vestments of the Ordained elder:** The official clerical garments sanctioned by the Church.

*Teacher's Notes:*

*The Student of Preaching must preach the Word. Be instant in season and out of season. Must preach in the power of the Holy Spirit, but preach with homiletical skills and intelligence.*

*Preaching is communication; therefore, speech and public speaking are very important ingredients. Preaching is unique to Christianity. It is God's way of presenting the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Preaching is the best and most productive way of bringing men and women to Christ.*

*Preaching is predicated on the Word of God. The Bible should be the unique source of Christian Preaching. Many subjects both current and patriotic are preached from our pulpits, but they must have the proper biblical support (II Timothy 4:1, 2, 5).*

*The mandate for preaching is steeped in the Word of God. The Word of God is the unique communication of God Himself to the world. The Bible is the most righteous and holiest source of truth and there is no reason why anyone should preach without it being the primary source.*

*Preachers are stewards of what God has invested in them. God makes the choice and holds the preachers accountable for their stewardship. People expect to hear from God through His Word presented by the preacher so that the preached Word can be applied to their daily lives. So the preacher must preach the Word of God in the power of the Spirit, and with homiletical skills.*

*Every preacher who is going to be ordained in the Church Of God In Christ should understand the fundamentals of Preaching Preparation and Delivery. The course will introduce the student to a basic understanding of Christian communications. The class will teach the preacher how to prepare spiritually for preaching, to understand the role of the Holy Spirit in preaching and to give a clear understanding of the different types of forms of sermons and styles.*



## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The class will teach each candidate how to Prepare and Deliver a Sermon following four phases from preparation to presentation. Beginning with Scripture Selection and Exegesis which is to make a critical analysis of the text, survey its context and gain a clear understanding of the Scripture text for preaching. Students will then advance to Understanding the Principles and Practice of Preaching, that is to select a text and prepare a sermon from an out- line to the final preparation for delivery. Each candidate must then learn to Develop and Understand the Shape and the Styles of Sermons, finally reaching Delivery where he must preach the sermon with clear communication and Christian understanding.

## **PREACHING COMPETENCE**

The competent preacher must have a conviction about God, a conviction about the Bible, a conviction about the Church, a conviction about the pastorate and a conviction about the Holy Spirit.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

All students will select a text, do exegesis, write an exegetical essay, an outline, and a full manuscript of the sermon. Students will deliver their sermons in class and be evaluated by the instructor. Each sermon should be 20-25 minutes in length. The evaluation of the exegesis, exegetical essay, outline, full manuscript and the delivery of the sermon will determine whether the student understands the principles and practice of preaching.

## **PREACHING COURSE SYLLABUS**

### ***Teaching Tips/Introduction***

In introducing the course to students, provide an in depth orientation to preaching by exploring the Theology of Preaching and explaining the importance of Preparation for Preaching. The most important element in Preaching is the Preparation of the Preacher.

1. The call from God, and an unction or anointing (a specific burden) is placed in the individual by God. The Preacher must realize who is the Master, of course, with reference to God. There is an obvious distinction between other men's lives and the life of a "called out" Preacher. You are like apostle Paul, who says, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind and pressing forward." There must be a yielding on the part of the individual to

Christian truth and a motivation to share that truth with others.

As a preacher, you must be healthy, have a family altar and as John Stott says, must have a ministry built upon five Convictions:

- a. a Conviction about God.
- b. a Conviction about Jesus Christ.
- c. a Conviction about the Word of God.
- d. a Conviction about the Holy Spirit.
- e. a Conviction about the Church.

### ***Teaching Tips/Communication and Preaching, Principles and Practice***

In this course, focus on the importance of Christian Communication and its connection to Preaching. Continue the lesson with an in depth analysis of Preaching, Principles and Practice. Answer the questions: What is preaching? Is preaching a teachable skill? What is the work of the Holy Spirit in preaching?

Preaching is communication - a process by which meanings are exchanged between two individuals through a common system of symbols.

Preaching is introspective, probing or self-analysis with each Gospel message. Our message examines us before having relevant meaning to others.

Preaching is unique to Christianity. It is the greatest means by which the Gospel of Salvation can be presented to mankind. Preaching is also the most persuasive way to bring men and women to Christ.

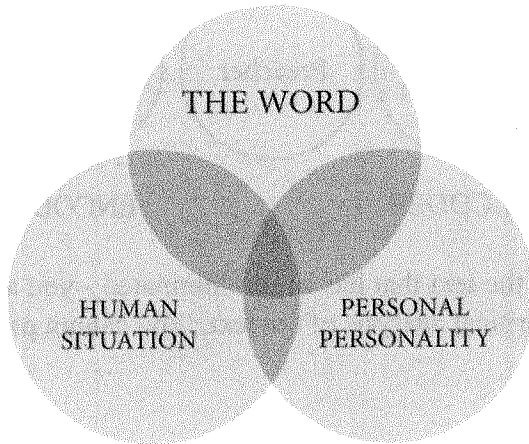
1. All preaching, no matter what form, must include the education of the listener.
2. Christian preaching must always come near to Christ.
3. It must include instruction, inspiration, devotion, correction, interpretation, persuasion, and conversion.

The purpose of preaching is to make truth more clear, and duty more urgent, to enlighten the mind, rouse the conscience, touch the heart, and persuade men and women to accept the Gospel Message and live the Christian Life.

### ***Teaching Tips/Exegesis and The Working Document***

Correlate this lesson with The Working Document or the written outline of the text.

## The Sermon



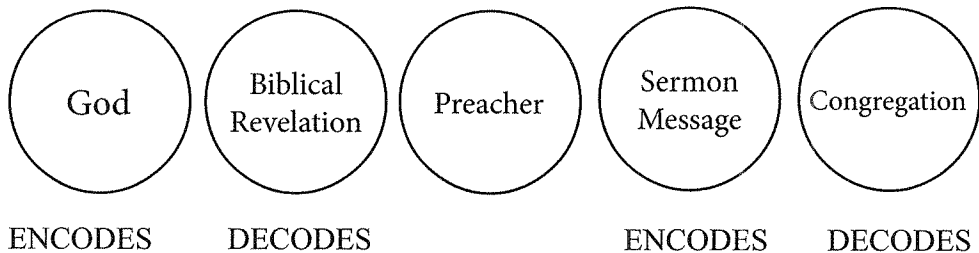
The sermon is an address from the Word of God to the Human Situation through the filter of the Preachers Personality.

Homiletics – is the science of sermon construction. It is the laws and principles that govern the art of Preaching. Preaching is an art and homiletics is the law that governs the art. Homiletics is that branch of theology which teaches the principles and rules that govern sermon preparation. Homiletics is the science, preaching is the art and the sermon is the end product.

We believe that the gift of Preaching is from God, but, but, but, I also believe that skills for Preaching can be learned and developed. Therefore we need to understand sermon construction, sermon development, and delivery.

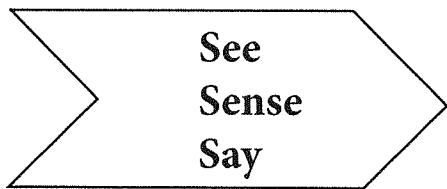
### The Work of the Holy Spirit in Preaching

Preachers must have a passion for God's Word. The preacher must meditate in the Word day and night. As you meditate daily in His Word, the Holy Spirit will illuminate Scripture portions for your preaching and teaching ministry. From the beginning of your personal time in the Word, all the way to the delivery of the sermon, we must understand that this is a Holy Ghost experience.



After you receive the text that has been illuminated - you are ready to begin your Exegesis, a critical analysis of the text. You cannot preach what you do not know.

The best way to see what is in the text is inductively, by examining every detail of the text before coming to a conclusion about what the text means.



1. Recognize the relationship of various ideas in the text.
2. Discover for yourself first, then search out what others say about the text.

3. Search and locate the heart of the text.

4. Then draw conclusions.

Once the heart of the text is located, it is time to begin our Biblical Exegesis. Survey the context – every text must be examined in its contextual surrounding. Do good Exegesis.

**Exegesis** – a critical analysis of the selected text. We must begin by surveying its context. Every text must be examined within its contextual surroundings. Look at the particular items which is to serve as the basis of the sermon in the light of the larger biblical portions of which it is a part. This would mean that a verse would be considered in regard to the chapter and book of the Bible wherever it was found.

There are seven things that should be considered when doing exegetical research:

1. Who is the speaker or writer of the text.
2. To whom was the text originally addressed.
3. The time of the writing of the text.
4. The place of origin of the text.
5. The occasion or circumstances calling forth the message.
6. The aim of the text.
7. The theme of the text.

The factual data should be recorded together with scripture reference for each item. Much of this material can be used within the sermon as illustrative material. In finding this information, you should use all reference material available:

- Different versions of the Bible
- Commentaries (Devotional and Scholarly)
- Bible Dictionary
- Lexicons

Don't forget to survey other sermons written and preached on the same textual material.

After all reference material has been gathered, then determine what material clarifies the textual passage most effectively. The data that clarifies the text clearly should be used to construct an exegetical essay (a story) that clarifies the text and context. After which, you are ready to begin sermon construction.

### **The Working Document** (Outlining the Text)

The outline should consist of the following components: title, text, purpose, introduction, the transitions, the Body, applications, climax and conclusions.

**The Body** - where the purpose of the sermon is fully developed. There are basically 3 types.

- a. Problem Solution
- b. Time Sequences
- c. Inductive and Deductive

**Climax and Conclusion** - The climax is the point toward which everything in the sermon should move. The conclusion drives home the point that has already been made.

**Delivery of the Sermon**

- 1. The sermon must be properly delivered.
- 2. Movement in pulpit
- 3. Eye contact
- 4. Hand gestures

**Sermon Evaluation**

Each sermon should have some way or criteria in which it can be evaluated. It should be evaluated internally and externally. The categories are:

- a. Introduction
- b. Body of the Sermon
- c. Conclusion
- d. Message and Delivery

***Teaching Tips/Planning a Preaching Program***

As a part of the course, allow students to explore the practical applications of their role as preachers through Planning a Preaching Program.

**SERMON OUTLINE TITLE**

Title  
Text

**PURPOSE**

**I. Introduction** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**(Transition)**

**BODY**

- II. First Main Point**
- A.
- B.

**(Transition)**

**III. Second Main Point**

- A.
- B.
- C.

**(Transition)**

**IV. Third Main Point**

- A.
- B.

**(Transition)**

**V. Climax - Conclusion**

**SERMON EVALUATION FORM**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Jurisdiction:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Text:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Body Of The Sermon:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Application:**

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**Background Scriptures:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Climax – Conclusion:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Delivery (Voice, Hand Gestures, Body Movement):** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**THE ETHICS**

“Let Brotherly Love Continue”

Since we are to live a pure life – characterized by doing what is good, then we ought to know what we should or should not do. Hebrews 13, gives some practical ethical guidelines which will result in a Christian life that is without rebuke when they are exercised.

We have a great responsibility to live to the glory and honor of God, and shut the mouth of the critics. People make their evaluation about God on the basis of you and me. Jesus entered that reality in the Sermon on the Mount.

He said, *“Let your life so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father, who is in heaven.”* (Matthew 5:16)

We should live in such a way that men not only cannot criticize us, but rather glorify God because of our lives. Our lives must be a true reflection of our integrity.

The term *ethics* refers to a standard of moral judgment. The supreme ethic for the Christian is loving his brother. Brotherly love is one word in the Greek: *Philadelphia*. It comes from two words: *phileo*, which means “to have affection for,” or from *adelphos*, which means “brother” or “from the same womb,” in a more literal sense. Therefore, the compounding meaning is “to have great affection for one who came from the same womb.”

Although our brothers in Christ are not from the one womb physically, they are spiritually, having been born in the Spirit into one body. We are all broth-



ers in Christ. Brotherly love is important for three reasons:

- 1. It reveals Christian's identity to the world (John 13:34).**
- 2. It reveals a Christian's identity to himself (1 John 3:14)**
- 3. It delights God (Psalms 133:1).**

When Christians are divisive and critical, brotherly love cannot exist. As a result, the testimony of the church suffers, the assurance of salvation lessens and God is not glorified. Love only grows in the garden of humility.

**Humility allows us to love all people.**

**Love for the brethren identifies you with Christ.**

**Selfish pride causes love to grow cold.**

**Self must die for brotherly love to continue.**

## **LIFE INVENTORY**

1. What was the happiest year or period in your life?
2. What things do you do well?
3. Tell about a turning point in your life.
4. What has been the lowest point in your life?
5. Was there an event in which you demonstrated great courage?
6. Was there a time of heavy grief? More than one?
7. Tell about some things you do poorly, which you have to continue doing anyway.
8. What are some things you would like to stop doing?
9. What are some things you would really like to get better at?
10. Tell about some peak experiences you have had.
11. Tell about some peak experiences you would like to have.
12. Tell about one missed opportunity in your life.
13. Are there some values you are struggling to establish?
14. What are some things you want to start doing now, right at this point in your life?

## Questions For Training Ministers For Preaching

1. What are some of the competencies in preaching every ordained minister should have?

**A Preacher should have basic knowledge and skills for preaching, and he or she should be empowered to perform at the highest level.**

2. What does the preacher need spiritually to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ with integrity?

**A minister needs a “Prayer and fasting” life.**

3. What must a candidate know to prepare a sermon?

**He or she must understand how to do good exegesis.**

**Must be able to move from a contextual analysis to an outline of a sermon. when the written sermon is completed, the preacher must be able to deliver the sermon under the anointing, with homiletical skills and good communication.**

## GLOSSARY

**Archeological Light** - research turned up that may have data bearing on a passage of scripture.

**Biblical Exegesis** - a critical analysis of a text of scripture for a preaching position.

**Biblical Revelation** - the mind and thought and will of God revealed in the Bible.

**Christian Year or Church Year** - succession of holy days observed by the liturgical church. Gives preeminence to special events having to do with the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, such as Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.

**Deductive Examination** - begins with assertions of truth and then selects the particulars in the text that seem to prove the assertions.

**Delivery** - preaching the well constructed and developed sermon.

**Exegesis** - a critical analysis.

**Exegetical Essay** - explanation of the exegeted material or research in an essay or story form.

**Heralding** - preaching the Gospel.

**Hermeneutics** - the science of interpretation, particularly as it applies to the Bible.

**Homily** - a very short sermon presentation.

**Homiletics** – is the branch of theology which teaches the principles and rules which govern sermon preparation.

**Inductive Examination** - examines the particulars of the text to come to a conclusion about what you see and what it means.

**Orthodoxy** - true and right beliefs.

**Orthoproxis** - the right practice of these beliefs.

**Sermon Construction** - title, text, introduction, body and conclusion of a sermon.

**Sermon Development** - adding the particulars to sermon construction: application, illustration and background scriptures.

**Sermon Evaluation** - evaluation internally and externally of a sermon.

**Teaching** - educative portion of the preaching of the Gospel.

## COURSE OVERVIEW

As a candidate for holy orders your quest to prepare to serve is paramount. Possibly you feel anxious about your skills to stand before people with untold needs and produce worthy stewardship? What does it mean to walk daily in this life and yet be effective and disciplined enough to serve God and humanity? Surely, you have been commissioned to help the weak, encourage the brokenhearted and provide healing words to those troubled and scarred by life's experience. In order to achieve effective ministry one must have that sense of preparedness and deep confidence in God! Where does that sense of ability and faith come from? The answer centers on the subject of "spiritual formation", which is the focus of this unit.

This course is designed to encourage your growth and development spiritually. God has the essential tools and skill set so that your accomplishments are done to his glory and His people's benefit. Ministerial competence can be attained and prayerfully applied when and wherever necessary. The Church Of God In Christ would have it no other way. Your receiving ordination places you in line with the saints of old. God sent them forth and you will be ready as well. Have faith in God. Don't feel beleaguered or inadequate. God is faithful. Your spiritual formation is in the making.

What is spiritual formation? Spiritual formation is an interactive process between God and a believer by which the Holy Ghost transforms the believer into the image of Christ. The process is owned by God, but the individual must be willing to surrender or discipline him or herself in order for transformation or sanctification to occur.

The goal of spiritual formation is to become like Christ. The means of achieving this goal are called Spiritual Disciplines. According to Richard Foster in *The Celebration of Discipline*, there are 12 spiritual disciplines. They are meditation, prayer, fasting, study, simplicity, solitude, submission, service, confession, worship, guidance and celebration.

## *Teacher's Notes*

*Consecration of our Christian life seems to be a forgotten virtue. Superficiality is the order or norm of our day. God calls us to move from the surface and live in the depths of His spirituality. God intends the disciplines of the holy life to be for everyone, especially those called to the gospel ministry.*

*The primary requirement to live a dedicated consecrated life is a longing after God. As the psalmist states "As the hart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for thee oh God; my soul thirsts for God! For the living God." (Psalm 42:1-2).*

*We need the courage to move beyond the norms of our Christian culture and affirm that there is more to life than the material gains of the world. We should be willing to study and explore the spiritual life. The spiritual disciplines are an inward and spiritual reality, and the inner attitude of the heart is far more crucial in coming into the reality of the spiritual life.*

*The life that is pleasing to God is not a series of religious duty, but a true dedication to Him. We want to experience a life of relationship and intimacy with God. We must be open to a new realization of an inner righteousness graciously receive from God. The needed change within us is God's work, not ours. The demand is for an inside job, and only God can work from the inside.*

*As the minister contemplates on the ministerial calling from God, he must also reflect upon the spiritual depth that will be needed to accomplish the mission to which he has been called.*

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The intentions of this course are that students will:

Develop an understanding of the nature of ministry. That students will explore the spiritual disciplines of fasting, prayer, consecration, scripture and study to understand the process of spiritual growth. That they will develop a new understanding of self by means of evaluation instruments. And that students will participate in an on-going experience in which to learn interactive skills and group leadership.

## **MINISTERIAL COMPETENCE**

At the end of this course, an achiever of ministerial competence should have a clear biblical concept of the nature of ministry, an active, disciplined spiritual

his gifts for ministry and finally, and developed life-long learning skills.

**SPIRITUAL FORMATION COURSE SYLLABUS**

**I. Introduction**

- To the Course
- Teacher’s Notes
- Course Objectives
- Ministerial Competence

**II. At the beginning of the class, each student must discuss their spiritual Pilgrimage**

**III. The Spiritual Disciplines**

Door to Liberation

Foster, pp.1-76

The Inward Disciplines:

- Meditation
- Prayer
- Fasting
- Study

**IV. The Outward Disciplines**

Foster, pp.77-140

- Simplicity
- Solitude
- Submission
- Service

**V. The Corporate Disciplines**

Foster, pp.144-201

- Confession
- Worship
- Guidance
- Celebration

## *Teaching Tips / Introduction*

*In introducing the course to students, provide an in depth orientation to the importance of Spiritual Formation for Ministry.*

### **The Basis to Spiritual Formation is the Teaching of the Disciplined Life**

The Spiritual Disciplines open the door to a spiritual relationship and fellowship with God. The needed change within us is God's work, not ours. But, the Inward Disciplines open the door for God to do His Work.

### **The Inward Disciplines:**

1. Meditation
2. Prayer
3. Fasting
4. Study

**Christian Meditation** - is the ability to hear God's voice and obey His Word. The purpose of meditation is to have a familiar friendship with Jesus. It helps us to become comfortable in the presence of God. Christian meditation leads us to the inner wholeness necessary to give ourselves to God freely. You, as a teacher, should further discuss **"Preparation for Meditation,"** and **"Forms of Meditation."**

**The Discipline of Prayer** - prayer catapults us into the frontier of the Spiritual Life. Of all the Spiritual Disciplines, prayer is the most central because it ushers us into perpetual communion with the Father.

Meditation introduces us to the inner life, fasting is an accompanying means, study transforms our minds, but it is the Discipline of Prayer that brings us into the deepest and highest work of the human spirit. Real prayer is life creating and life changing.

**Prayer** - secret, fervent, believing prayer, lies at the root of all personal godliness. To pray is to change. Prayer is the central avenue God uses to transform us. The way to learn to pray must be understood because real prayer is something to learn.

1. Proper Time and Place
2. Discipline in Prayer
3. Getting in contact with God
4. Simplifying Prayer: openness and honesty

al discipline and demonstrated models of spiritual formation that we can draw upon today. Mother E. J. Dabney's book, *What it Means to Pray Through!*, is a classic example of spiritual formation. In this book, she documents with great passion and clarity how her personal spiritual struggles helped to establish and develop the local church ministry of which her husband, Elder Dabney, was pastor, Garden of Prayer COGIC, Philadelphia, PA. The key to her story was the three-year commitment that she made to pray and fast daily until the Lord gave them a breakthrough in the ministry. Needless to say, by the time that her three year commitment was over, God had transformed their ministry and had given her national prominence as a God-fearing prayer warrior. Our founder, Bishop Mason was known nationwide for his ardent spiritual disciplines, including extended fasting, protracted daily praying and dedication. The growth of COGIC could, in a real sense, be traced back to the tremendous spiritual disciplines of other leaders in our pioneering generation and in succeeding generations. Your success in the ministry to which God has called and assigned you will be greatly enhanced as you attend to the need to perfect your spiritual disciplines and formation.

**The Discipline of Fasting** – abstaining from food for a spiritual purpose. Biblical fasting always centers in spiritual purposes. The different means of fasting in scripture:

**The Normal Fast** – abstaining from all food, solid or liquid, but not from water.

**Partial Fast** – There is a restriction of diet but not total abstention.

**Absolute Fast** – Abstaining from both food and water.

Fasting is a private matter between the individual and God. Then there are also corporate and public fasts that should be considered. Regular or weekly fasting has had such a profound effect in the lives of some that they have sought to find a Biblical command for it so that it may be urged upon all Christians. There is no definite command. Jesus' teaching on fasting is directly in the context of His teaching on giving and praying. It is as if there is almost an unconscious assumption that giving, praying, and fasting are all a part of Christian devotion.

The purpose of fasting centers on God. It must be God-initiated and God-ordained. We must also understand the practice of fasting in Biblical and natural history.

**The Discipline of Study** – we have said that the purpose of the Spiritual Disci-



plines is the total transformation of the person. They aim at replacing old destructive habits of thought with new life-giving habits. Nowhere is this purpose more clearly seen than in the Discipline of Study. Many Christians remain in bondage to fears and anxieties simply because they do not avail themselves of the Discipline of Study.

### **What is Study?**

Study is a specific kind of experience in which, through careful attention to reality, the mind is enabled to move in a certain direction. The mind will always take on an order conforming to the order upon which it concentrates. The Old Testament instructs the Israelites to write the laws on gates and doorposts and bind them to their wrists so that they shall be as frontlets between their eyes (Deuteronomy 11:19).

There are four steps in study – repetition, concentration, comprehension, and reflection.

The Outward Disciplines must also be studied and embraced in our Spiritual Formation.

**The Discipline of Simplicity** – is an inward reality that results in an outward life-style. Both the inward and the outward aspect of Simplicity are essential. We deceive ourselves if we believe we can possess the inward reality without its having a profound effect on how we live. True simplicity makes us conscious of a certain openness, gentleness, innocence, gaiety and serenity. Simplicity brings joy and balance. Duplicity brings anxiety and fear. God made man simple, man's complex problems are of his own device.

What does the Bible say about Simplicity? How is outward expression of Simplicity experienced? The inner reality is not a reality until there is an outward expression. Experiencing the liberating Spirit of Simplicity will offset how we live.

**The Discipline of Solitude** – is more of a state of mind and heart than it is a place. There is a Solitude of heart that can be maintained at all times. We can cultivate an inner Solitude and silence that sets us free from loneliness and fear. Loneliness is inner emptiness. Solitude is inner fulfillment.

**Solitude and Silence** - without silence there is no solitude. Though silence sometimes involves the absence of speech, it always involves the act of listening. Simply to refrain from talking, without a heart listening to God, is not silence. We must understand the connection between inner Solitude and inner

1. Take advantage of the little Solitudes that fill our day.
  - a. Early morning moments in bed.
  - b. Morning coffee time, before going to work.
  - c. Bumper to bumper traffic.

2. Find some quiet time.

We can find or develop a quiet place designed for silence and solitude. a. a family altar in the home.

3. Find a place outside the home.

- a. a park
- b. a church
- c. a chapel

4. Spiritual retreats once or twice a year.

5. Four times a year withdraw for three to four hours for the purpose of reorienting your life goals.

**The Discipline of Submission** – of all the Spiritual Disciplines, none has been more abused than the Discipline of Submission. Somehow the human species has an extraordinary knack for taking the best teaching and turning it to the worst ends. Nothing can put people into bondage like religion, and nothing in religion has done more to manipulate and destroy people than a deficient teaching on submission. Therefore, you must work your way through Discipline with great care and discernment in order to ensure that we are ministers of life, not death.

Every Discipline has its corresponding freedom. The purpose of the Disciplines is freedom. Our aim is the freedom, not the Discipline. The moment we make the Discipline our central focus, we turn it into law and lose the corresponding freedom.

**What freedom corresponds to Submission?**

It is the ability to lay down the terrible burden of always needing things to go the way we want them to go, to get our own way.

The obsession to demand that things go the way we want them to go is one of the greatest bondages in human society today. In the Discipline of Submission, we are released to drop the matter and forget it. Frankly, most things in life are not nearly as important as we think they are. Our lives will not come to an end if this or that does not happen.

The Biblical teaching on Submission focuses primarily on the spirit with which we view other people. Scriptures communicate to us an inner attitude of mutual subordination. In Submission, we are at last free to value other people. Their dreams and plans become important to us. We enter into a new, wonderful, glorious freedom, the freedom to give up our own rights for the good of others. For the first time, we can love people unconditionally. We have given up the right to demand that they return our love. No longer do we feel that we have to be treated in a certain way. We rejoice in their successes. We feel genuine sorrow in their failures. It is of little consequence that our plans are frustrated if their plans succeed. We discover that it is far better to serve our neighbor than to have our own way.

Finally, in our day there has arisen a special problem about submission as it relates to authority. When people begin to move into the spiritual realm, they see that Jesus is teaching a concept of authority that runs completely counter to the thinking of the systems of this world. They come to perceive that authority does not reside in positions or degrees or titles or tenure or any outward symbol.

The way of Christ is in another direction altogether – the way of Spiritual Authority. Spiritual Authority is God-ordained and God-sustained.

The person with Spiritual Authority may have an outward position of authority or may not, it makes no difference. Spiritual Authority is marked by both compassion and power. Those who walk in the Spirit can identify it immediately. They know without question that submission is due the Word that has been given in Spiritual Authority.

**The Discipline of Service** – As the cross is the sign of submission, so the towel is the sign of Service. Jesus in (Luke) took a towel and a basin and redefined greatness. Having lived out servant-hood before them, Jesus called His disciples to the way of Service. *“If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you (John 13:14-15).*

In Service, we must experience the many little deaths of going beyond ourselves. Service banished us to the mundane, the ordinary, the trivial. In the Discipline of Service, there is also great liberty. Service enables us to say “no” to the world’s games of promotion and authority. It abolishes our need (and de-sires) for a pecking order. The point is not that we are to do away with

leadership and authority are seen easily. The point is that Jesus completely redefined leadership and rearranged the lines of authority.

Jesus never taught that everyone had equal authority. In fact, He had a great deal to say about genuine Spiritual Authority and taught that many did not possess it. But the authority of which Jesus spoke is not the authority of a pecking order. Jesus was not just reversing the pecking order as many suppose, He was abolishing it. The authority of which He spoke was not an authority to manipulate and control. It was an authority of function, not of status. Whoever would be great among you must be your servant... even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve (Matthew 20: 25-28). Therefore, the Spiritual Authority of Jesus is an authority not found in a position or a title, but a towel.

**Service and Humility** – More than any other single way, the grace of Humility is worked into our lives through the Discipline of Service. Humility is one of those virtues that is never gained by seeking it. The more we pursue it, the more distant it becomes. To think we have it is sure evidence that we do not. What can we do? We must understand that service is conducive to the growth of humility. Nothing disciplines the inordinate desires of the flesh like service and nothing transforms the desires of the flesh like serving in anonymity.

The flesh whines against service but screams against hidden service. It strains and pulls for honor and recognition. It will devise subtle, religiously acceptable means to call attention to the service rendered. If we stoutly refuse to give into this lust of the flesh, we crucify it. Every time we crucify the flesh, we crucify our pride and arrogance.

So ministers should be challenged to desire and seek after the Spiritual Life.

### ***Teaching Tips / Discovering God's Will for your Life***

*Ensure an understanding of the importance of discovering God's Will for each student's life. Follow the structure of the Basic Principles of this finding including an obligation to God, an obligation to self and an obligation to others. Explore the prerequisites for a fuller knowledge of God's Will for each student's life. Define how God's Will has the power and authority to guide each student and finally, address the mistakes each should avoid in this discovery.*

## ***Teaching Tips / Defining Your Ministry in the Pulpit and Beyond***

*Begin this section by spending time reflecting on the path to spiritual growth. Particular attention should be paid to pp. 1-76 in the required text: Foster, Richard-Celebration as you focus on the Inward Disciplines of meditation, prayer, fasting, and study. Next in this series, study the Outward Disciplines of simplicity, solitude, submission and service. Assign pp. 77-140 in the required text: Foster, Richard-Celebration. End the series with the Corporate Disciplines of confession, worship, guidance and celebration as they correlate directly with pp. 144-201 of the required text: Foster, Richard-Celebration.*

## ***Teaching Tips / Course Requirements***

*Require that each student keep a weekly journal in which they record what is happening in their ministry and spiritual life as a result of the various aspects of the course. These journals can be read and discussed at the end of the course as a group project and personal evaluation.*

## **THE ETHICS**

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We have a great responsibility to live to the glory and honor of God, and shut the mouth of the critics. People make their evaluation about God on the basis of you and me. Jesus entered that reality in the Sermon on the Mount.

He said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

We should live in such a way that men not only cannot criticize us, but rather glorify God because of our lives. Our lives must be a true reflection of our integrity.

The term ethics refers to a standard of moral judgment. The supreme ethic for the Christian is loving his brother. Brotherly love is one word in the Greek: *Philadelphia*. It comes from two words: *phileo*, which means “to have affection for” or from *adelphos*, which means “brother” or “from the same

have great affection for one who came from the same womb.”

Although our brothers in Christ are not from the one womb physically, they are spiritually, having been born in the Spirit into one body. We are all brothers in Christ. Brotherly love is important for three reasons:

- 1. It reveals a Christian’s identity to the world (John 13:34)**
- 2. It reveals a Christian’s identity to himself (1 John 3:14)**
- 3. It delights God (Psalms 133:1)**

When Christians are divisive and critical, brotherly love cannot exist. As a result, the testimony of the church suffers, the assurance of salvation lessens and God is not glorified. Love only grows in the garden of humility.

Humility allows us to love all people.

Love for the brethren identifies you with Christ.

Selfish pride causes love to grow cold.

Self must die for brotherly love to continue.

## **LIFE INVENTORY**

1. What was the happiest year or period in your life?
2. What things do you do well?
3. Tell about a turning point in your life.
4. What has been the lowest point in your life?
5. Was there an event in which you demonstrated great courage?
6. Was there a time of heavy grief? More than one?
7. Tell about some things you do poorly, which you have to continue doing anyway.
8. What are some things you would like to stop doing?
9. What are some things you would really like to get better at?
10. Tell about some peak experiences you have had.

11. Tell about some peak experiences you would like to have.
12. Tell about one missed opportunity in your life.
13. Are there some values you are struggling to establish?
14. What are some things you want to start doing now, right at this point in your life?

## ATTITUDE

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company... a church... a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice everyday regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day.

We cannot change our past.... We cannot change the fact that people act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one thing we have, and that is our attitude.

I am convinced that life is 10% of what happens to me and 90% how I react to it.

And so it is with you... we are in charge of our ATTITUDES.

## EXAM QUESTIONS

**Answer questions true or false and give a detailed explanation for your answer.**

1. Fasting is a private matter between the individual and God. **T or F**
2. The Disciplines help you to conquer or deal with slavery of ingrained habits of sin. **T or F**
3. Because we lack a divine center, our need for security leads us to an attachment to things. **T or F**
4. When we choose to be a servant, we give up the right to be in charge. **T or F**
5. Self-righteous service requires external rewards. **T or F**

world. **T or F**

8. Fasting is a hunger strike to gain political power or attract attention to a good cause. **T or F**
9. Understand the connection between inner solitude and inner silence; they are inseparable **T or F**

**Select One:**

**1. The Disciplines:**

- a. are the door to liberation
- b. are a longing after God
- c. are service
- d. are reflection

**2. The Primary Requirement Of The Disciplines:**

- a. restriction of the diet, but not total abstention
- b. the ability to hear the voice of God and obey His Word
- c. repetition
- d. a longing after God

**3. The Spiritual Disciplines Are Faced With Two Problems:**

- a. authority and promotion
- b. service and repetition
- c. concentration and comprehension
- d. reflection and liberation

**4. The Discipline Of Study Involves Four Steps:**

- a. a longing after God, service, abstaining from both food and water, Divine Center
- b. restriction of the diet but not absolute abstention, authority, reflection, repetition
- c. concentration, comprehension, reflection, ability to hear God's voice and obey His Word
- d. the mind is enabled to move in a certain direction, comprehension, repetition, a longing after God

**5. Absolute Fast Is:**

- a. restriction of the diet, but not total abstention
- b. abstaining from both food and water
- c. a spiritual sacrifice
- d. a time of prayer and study of God's Word



**6. Christian Meditation is:**

- a. reflection
- b. the ability to hear the voice of God and obey His Word
- c. a time of silence and solitude
- d. Divine Center

**7. Simplicity Is To Live Outside Of:**

- a. the materialistic or physical world, allowing us to know how to explore the inward life
- b. Service
- c. submission
- d. the Disciplines

**8. The Towel Is A Sign Of:**

- a. service
- b. reflection
- c. authority
- d. submission

**9. The Normal Fast Is:**

- a. restriction of the diet, but not total abstention
- b. abstaining from both food and water
- c. a spiritual sacrifice
- d. a time of prayer and study of God's Word

**10. The Discipline Of Service Enables Us To Say "No" To:**

- a. the materialistic or physical world, allowing us to know how to explore the inward life
- b. authority
- c. self-righteousness
- d. sin

**11. The Discipline Of Study:**

- a. is the Door to Liberation
- b. is the ability to hear the voice of God and obey His word
- c. is Comprehension
- d. a longing after God

**ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the purpose of the Spiritual Disciplines?
2. Define the purpose and practice of fasting.
3. What is the difference between the Discipline of Prayer and the Discipline

4. What is the difference between the inward and outward Disciplines?
5. Define the Discipline of Service.

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# PRACTICAL COUNSELING FOR CLERGY

Elder Morris Dupree, Ph.D.

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## KEY TERMS

Contextual lens	Authority
Ethical analysis	Clergy
Ethics	Circumspectly
Morality	Pastoral Care
Boundaries	Scope of practice
Conditioned Response	Narcissistic
Power	Ego
	Star factor

## GLOSSARY

1. Contextual lens- How we perceive and apply information
2. Ethical analysis- A term used to evaluate a person's actions and decisions
3. Ethics-Moral principle that governs an individual or groups behaviors
4. Morality-Principles concerning the distinction between right and wrong or good and bad behavior
5. Boundaries-are guidelines, rules or limits that a person creates to identify for him- or herself what are reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave around him or her and how he or she will respond when someone steps outside those limits
6. Conditioned Response-An automatic response established by training
7. Power-Ability to influence persons of events; It can be exercised in helpful and harmful ways
8. Authority-Legitimated power, publically validated and usually institu-

9. Clergy-Elders or Ministers ordained for religious duties
10. Circumspectly-careful to consider all circumstances and possible consequences
11. Pastoral Care-concerning or appropriate to the giving of spiritual guidance
12. Professional objectivity- accurately assessing needs and causes of behaviors to set goals
13. Scope of practice- Scope of competence also defines or limits what the individual within the profession may do and is determined by one's education, training and experience
14. Narcissistic-in which the individual is described as being excessively pre-occupied with issues of personal adequacy, power, prestige and vanity
15. Ego- A person's sense of self-esteem or self-importance
16. Star factor- Super star with special privileges

## **INTRODUCTION**

It is highly pertinent that ordained Elders of the gospel understand their role as a helping professional. Due to heightened litigation in society and an increase in sex scandals, elders or religious leaders need to be aware of their decisions and boundaries whether they are in the pulpit, office, or community. At times, making a decision appears to be straight forward and easy. While other times, it can be mind boggling, intense, spur of the moment, confounded by multiple factors and life changing. Parent (2005) alluded to this by writing, "Every individual, every situation and every interaction brings with it a unique and complex set of decisions and choices (p.6)." Ultimately etiological factors that direct decisions are grounded in the essence of human needs, preferences, goals and guiding principles. As Christians we seek to please God in all our ways, as taught in the scripture Proverbs 3:6, "In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy path." Therefore, our conduct is not just a reflection upon ourselves, but it is a mirror image that represents Christ and his

grace towards us.

Decision making is an essential distinguishing role in leadership; it is comprised of individual's values, beliefs, guiding principles, competency and experience. This composite contextual lens is used to help guide our affairs; taking into account the impact things may have on the present and future and on self and others. Responsibility and accountability is at the forefront of the decision making process. Specific judgments can be made within the concept of decisions pertaining to rational or irrational that is highly correlated with the outcome.

Ethical analysis is a term used to evaluate a person's actions and decisions correlated with a situation or conflict. In terms of ethics and moral dimensions actions are viewed as right and wrong; and character is seen as good or bad. The result of these decisions and choices form the elder or church leader's values and core beliefs, which leads to their level of ethical practice. Ethics are usually aligned within our values and are generally referred to as a philosophical discipline (Gladding, 2007). It is a moral philosophy that involves systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong behavior. This morality consists of the judgment and evaluation of actions. Ethics determines the nature and focus on principles and standards that govern relationships between individuals, such as those between professional helpers and their clients. One's morality is defined by whether they consider decisions right, wrong, good or bad; or what type of decisions should be made. Religious leaders are by definition community leaders who carry spiritual, as well as, organization and community leadership roles. They are expected to be compassionate, ethical, and moral leaders who hold the well-being of those they lead as a sacred trust.

Aspiring Elders play a dual role in the lives of individuals within their congregations and in the community. They have multifaceted responsibilities concerning church membership. For churches that have larger congregations, Elders can assign particular members to oversee specialty services. However, with ministries in bucolic areas and with smaller memberships, the Elder may play multiple roles due to lack of resources within the church and the community. Regardless of the circumstances that may facilitate a person from the congregation or community to access counseling, the Elder is responsible to act with integrity and within the parameters of the scope of the relationship. Religious leaders have authority, power, and influence associated with their title and role they play in their congregant's lives. Every individual has a frame of reference which determines their expectations and the way they address clergy. They rely on the wisdom of the religious leader believing that

sue Christ. The religious leader's advice ranges from spiritual advice, managing conflict, grief and loss, recommendations for child rearing, or marriage issues. This advice may be sought during times of crisis and the parishioner's final decisions may be based on the counsel from the religious leader. It is common for people to anticipate with heightened eagerness the advice from their religious leader. Whether an individual is in the valley of despair or on the mountain top, a clergyman's influence over their congregant is significant and should not be taken for granted. Trust between the religious leader and the individual is given and not earned; as the individual tends to place a high value on the religious leader's guidance.

The dialogues, meetings, and conversations that clergy have with people will take place in multiple environmental settings such as hospices, hospitals, court, church, homes and community. Therefore, clergy must understand and be aware of the dynamics that take place during dialogue. The context of verbal and nonverbal responses involves interpretation of roles and personal boundaries. The interpretation of roles that has been affirmed through previous interactions set the precedent for framing a relationship. Within the context of the frame are standards, norms, and rules that mitigate the interactions that determine whether a response is appropriate or not. This ultimately helps people to construct judgment and understand the parameters and expectations for social interactions. The parishioners' frame of reference will ultimately dictate their behaviors, create judgments about their personal interactions, and gauge their standards of conduct.

This brief chapter will address ethics, morals, and boundary issues of counseling and review indicators of unprincipled behaviors, manipulative suggestions and statements, and innuendos of nonverbal behaviors that would warrant clergy to set boundaries and consider appropriate interactions of themselves and others.

## **COUNSELING AND BOUNDARIES**

### **"The Counseling Session"**

There was a lady who came to see the preacher and the women start crying. As the women continued to cry the pastor moved next to her and reached out his hand and gently placed it on her shoulder. This appeared to be a small gesture and he wanted to communicate to her that she was not alone. The women started crying more, the pastor then moved closer to her on the side and placed his arms over her shoulders and begin to pray. However, after

the prayer he did not move because he felt that it was appropriate to be by her side, after all she is having a hard time in life and she needs to know that someone cares. After several minutes, the pastor continued to sit by her and her head was in the locks of his shoulders. The pastor did not pay this any mind because he felt that this is what counseling is, helping a person resolve their grief. However, after consoling her and her tears stopped flowing, there was a shift in the room. This vulnerable woman that was crying all of a sudden begins to kiss the neck of the preacher and things became intense. Well, to make a long story short, the story ends like this: she lifted her dress, they had sex on his desk, and afterwards the pastor was shaking his head asking himself “how did I get into this mess?”

Concerning the story mentioned above, you may be shaking your head and thinking, “I saw this coming”, however when you are interacting with people things move quickly. It appears that the initial intentions of the clergyman were appropriately supportive. His motives of wanting to console the woman seemed pure. He had no previous plans of having a sexual encounter with this woman, however when boundaries are blurred it increases the risk for unethical behaviors and actions. The bible teaches in Ephesians 4:7 “Neither give place to the devil”. In other words, we are taught not to give the enemy any land or topography. Therefore, in terms of religious leaders as counselors it is imperative that boundaries are set and roles are clearly defined and understood with people.

Setting boundaries in the counseling relationship is highly pertinent and it ensures that a line is drawn between one’s personal and professional life thus providing structure and safety for the individual. One is able to decipher what they are responsible for and the appropriate limits in the counseling relationship. It is suggested that Pastors may spend an average of 3 to 10 hours of counseling a week (Young, Griffith, Williams, 2003). Boundaries and predictability become paramount when working with individuals that are often vulnerable, and in need. It is upmost important that boundaries are established especially when dealing with people that have diverse backgrounds, life experiences, and abusive histories.

Boundaries are learned behaviors that have been taught through interacting with others. Boundaries can be strengthened through conditioned response, realigned and reestablished through correction and feedback. In healthy relationships boundaries are established and set the precedence for our interaction that we have. They give parameters and structure that dictate the growth of relationships and also help to determine the extent of the relationship. Personal boundaries are communicated verbally and nonverbally, intrinsically and ex-

boundaries such as world views, role(s), customs and laws. All these factors help govern and shape behavior and determine appropriate interactions.

Boundaries are more like rubber bands (Parent, 2005). “They can be expanded under significant pressure, but are designed to return immediately to their original shape when the pressure is released. At times boundaries in counseling needs to be flexible, not losing their shape, but capable when expanding when necessary” (p. 7). This gives clergy the ability to be innovative with interventions and adapt to various events and situations. For example, a clergy may visit an opposite sex member of their congregation when they are released from the hospital and their home alone. However, this does not dictate the norm of the relationship between the parishioner and the clergyman. The boundary of the clergymen was extended due to intervening appropriately and being a good shepherd. However, after a one time exception has been established the boundary concerning home visits needs to immediately be put back into place.

The story mentioned above is an example of how the lack of boundaries can negatively affect the counseling relationship and have profound repercussions on the congregation, and the reputation of clergy at large. Events that have significant impact on clergymen and parishioners that consist of violating boundaries generally are processes that happen over time; they are subtle and hard to detect; these relationships operate under a veneer deception that is guised under good intentions and is not easily identifiable (Blackburn, 2000; Brushwyler, 1996).

Brushwyler (1996) stated, “Boundary violations exist on a continuum from subtle, almost imperceptible violations, to obvious, legally punishable behavior. The more we are aware of subtleties of professional boundaries that we all violate at times in our ministry, the more we can responsibly direct our professional behaviors towards positive servant ministries to others (p.1).” The bible states in Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

In 1991, a study was conducted on women that were placed in uncertain circumstances who were emotionally distraught and turned to the spiritual leader for help (Lebaqz, 1991). The study showed that the majority of clergyman that participated in the research was sexually aroused by tearful women. According to this research a pastor that embraces emotionally distraught women by “sympathetically embracing her” is putting himself in a potential high risk



situation and in a potentially abusive position. Unfortunately the pastor in the story set himself up for an affair that he did not want but he inadvertently encouraged. Blackburn (2000) expressed, "it is striking how dangerously intimate and even seductive a counseling session can become when a woman is pouring out her heart to a male minister, especially if she is in a bad marriage or is unmarried."

Generally, we use boundaries in social interactions to help us cope with 'power and vulnerability in relationships' (Parent, 2005, 6). Clergy are responsible for establishing and maintaining clear, appropriate boundaries in all counseling and counseling-related relationships (Blackburn, 2000). They are responsible for role modeling boundaries in the church. This is embedded in dignity, respect, love, and having compassion for the congregants. The bible teaches in the Book of John that we need to love one another as Christ has loved us. Religious leaders must treat congregants with dignity, respect, and high regard; and lead their congregations with humility and integrity, remaining aware of their influence over congregants and of their personal struggles (Author, 2006).

Because a clergy may be dealing with personal issues does not preclude them from pursuing the call of Ministry. However, they need to resolve the issues that may hamper and impede their ability to set boundaries and make good decisions. At times this introspective process may cause them to question themselves and their motives for pursuing ministry. If unresolved issues from the past have not been adequately dealt with, there is an increased risk to engage in impulsive, self-centered, and gratifying behavior and decision-making. God gives us the grace to deal with our negative decisions and outcomes from the past. He does not condone running away or covering up past errors. Clergymen who justify their unethical actions display a dual personality, which consists of acting one way in the community and within the church community, while engaging in opposite behaviors when outside the presence of their congregants. This type of dual personality that is displayed has roots tied into emotional and developmental issues that are not resolved (Carter & McGoldrick, 1999). James 1:8 reads, "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." Boundaries are blurred and constantly crossed when personal issues have not been recognized, help has not been sought, and issues are unresolved. These things can have future ramification and become hindrances in relationships. Here are a list of attributes that are red flags that can lead to lack of boundaries:

you should be to a person)

- 2) Sharing too much personal information with people you don't know well or to whom you are trying to connect with
- 3) Obsessive thinking about someone
- 4) Temperament (easily angered)
- 5) Entitled (expect more from others than yourself)
- 6) Poor Marriage
  - a. Not spending enough time at home and desires are not being met
- 7) History of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or emotional neglect with no resolution
- 8) Accepting food, gifts, and affections that you don't want
- 9) Sexual identity confusion
- 10) Wanting others to fulfill your emotional needs and wanting them to anticipate your needs
- 11) Burn out
- 12) Manipulative, intimidating, and abusive behaviors to get others to comply with your agenda

Having appropriate boundaries requires that clergy give careful thought concerning the issues of others in order to discern an appropriate intervention. By exploring their own intentions about ministry and coming to terms with any personal issues that will negatively impact their judgment, clergy are more likely to pursue helpful resources and engage in proactive accountability structures to maintain integrity and make ethical decisions.

Boundaries are highly important while working with a diverse population. The bible tells us in Matthew 10:16, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

Jesus had a subsequent conversation with Peter while praying in Gethsemane before his crucifixion. Matthew 26:41 indicates Him teaching “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak.” These two verse admonish us to be vigilant and fortify ourselves through prayer so that we may be able to stand against the whiles of the devil as taught in Ephesians 6:10.

A clergyman may ignore warning signs that they are approaching inappropriate boundaries. These signs can be identified by:

- 1) Spending too much time with counselee (phone, church, community and etc.)
- 2) Receiving phone calls no one knows about it (private)
- 3) “You are the only one that understands me”-Counselee response
- 4) History of sexual deviant behaviors and communication consist of glorifying inappropriate sexual conduct
- 5) Personal stories that have nothing to do with counseling topics
- 6) Ignoring comments that have personal overtones and innuendoes
- 7) Inappropriate dress attire
- 8) Unable to avoid physical contact of any kind (i.e., touching, hugging, holding hands) between themselves and the persons they counsel
- 9) Verbal statements such as sweetheart, baby and honey can be misconstrued as flirtatious
- 10) Feeling more like a friend then a pastor

## **DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COUNSELING AND PREACHING**

Differentiating between the counselor and preacher roles enable one to set appropriate boundaries. The primary purpose of a preacher is to teach the gospel and bring good tidings of joy to compel men to repent and ask what I must do to be saved. I Corinthians 1:21 reads, “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” Mark 1:14-15 expressed; “Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God. And saying the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe the gospel.” This scripture references the ministry of Jesus Christ and the message he preached to save souls. The bible states in Jeremiah 31:3, “The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.”

this type of teaching ministry, preachers must recognize that that people have a plethora of issues that need to be addressed. After salvation then comes the process of cleansing and sanctification. I Corinthians 6:11, “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

The needs of the people can be so complex that the preacher can become overwhelmed and exhausted. Pastoral care is a terminology used to describe such things as “hospital visits, telephone calls expressing concern or reassurance, and informal, brief conversations about needs in people lives, and pastoral counseling (Blackburn, 2000).” The bible speaks of a Shepherd that he is to feed the sheep, protect the sheep and guide the sheep.

Because pastors are often considered ‘friend, teacher, spiritual advisor, shepherd, and sometimes even coworker’ to their congregants (Parent, 2005, p. 8), they must be able to quickly adapt to different roles, social expectations, circumstances, and levels of social interactions. As one takes on diverse roles they need to address the parameters within the relationships that outline the interactions that guide the course of outcome. Roles are formulated in society to help implement social norms which are accepted standards of behaviors. If roles and norms are deviated from, the interaction between people become unpredictable. This causes issues with boundaries and level of expectations. Counseling can be administered by licensed or unlicensed professional. Counseling interventions can target various individuals, families and groups. The primary focus of the counseling process is to offer tools for understanding, connecting, and helping that can be used to promote self-awareness, self-improvement, and skills to enhance all aspects of life (Nystul, 2003). However, pastoral counseling encompasses guidance through biblical principles that can help the counselee. Their major purpose should be to place emphasis on the counselee relationship with God. As cited in Blackburn (2000), Wayne Oats believed that the ultimate issue with counselee was their relationship with God. He stated to clergymen, “the difference it can make if you and I make the presence of the Eternal God the central dynamic in our dialogue with counselees. In essence, I want to move from dialogue to triologue in pastoral counseling.”

Generally, counseling is short-term ranging from 3 to 12 weeks and can address a number of issues. This includes interpersonal relationships, coping with stress, problem solving, crisis management and interventions and life transitions. Counseling may take place in a variety of settings such as school, churches, and mental health clinics. For clergy, counseling can also occur in

other private places including the family home. It is important for clergy to have flexibility in settings in order to build relationships and provide for the overall needs of the congregants, however, this flexibility can be a liability and endanger counseling relationship with actions are not governed accordingly, as in the story described above where the session took place in a secluded office setting.

Clergy must use protective measures when conducting counseling sessions with congregants. They must clearly establish their role as a counselor and not as an Elder. They must avoid becoming overly involved and risk losing professional objectivity. When professional objectivity is lost then the relevance and goals of counseling has been lost which then changes the dynamics within the relationship. Signs of losing professional objectivity include clergy appearing to rescue people from their own unhappiness, having an excessive desire to help, having an excessive need to be liked, getting too emotionally involved by having more of a desire for the individual's lifestyle change than they appear to want for themselves. It can be exhausting investing that amount of effort convincing individual(s) to change.

These tendencies may shift the emphasis from the individual taking responsibility for their lives to the clergy modeling the role of a super hero or messiah complex.

Clergy determine their plan of action for assisting the individual reach their goal by not only understanding the problem the individual is facing from a spiritual and natural perspective, but also by understanding their role within the counseling relationship. Determining the steps needed to accomplish the goal involves the clergy assessing their competence, counseling experience, limitations, and resources. When determining the most efficient approach to deal with people your role healer will ultimately help in determining the most effective problem resolution strategy. As a healer, the clergy not only must be aware of the people and their problem(s), but their own level of competence and specific counseling skill level to appropriately address and intervene with the individual.

If a thorough assessment of the problem is not completed initially, Elders may find themselves oblivious to the individual's specific needs, historical background, and the depth of their challenges. This can create a smoke screen intervention. While believing that you are helping with their problems you can be ineffective and creating a disastrous situation. An individual's perceptions may be grounded in one's own life experiences. Therefore, during a counseling session, clergy can unknowingly give a person negative attention, feeding an erotic fantasy. A simple gesture of a hug can be misconstrued as

where an individual expresses a need for multiple sessions during a given week, clergyman should conduct more frequent assessments of the individuals' specific needs.

Another issue that may arise out of loss of professional objectivity is inappropriate self-disclosure. This is manifested when counselors spend a large amount of the session talking about their own personal feelings thus deviating from the plan of action and the desired goals of the individual.

#### Abuse of Power and Sexual Misconduct

The prevalence of sexual misconduct by clergy has impacted the church and society at large. There have been criminal and civil law suits filed against churches resulting in huge monetary settlements to the victims and clergy being removed from leadership positions. This type of distress not only affects the victim and their family, but has forced churches to sell their property in order to pay off their settlements.

In the past clergy was protected and if any violations of sexual misconduct took place the issue was 'shrouded by silence and secrecy' (Francis & Turner, 1995). Today, litigation concerning sexual misconduct towards practitioners in the church is at an all-time high. Churches and institutions are being held accountable for issues related to sexual misconduct and the emotional and spiritual betrayal of women and children. The ramifications of these actions have brought scrutiny and skepticism towards leaders in the church. At this point, leaders are no longer given the 'benefit of the doubt'. Victims are allowing jurors to determine if there is 'reasonable doubt' concerning allegations towards leaders in the church.

Ordained elders need to understand the importance of maintaining integrity, setting boundaries, and making ethical decisions during counseling sessions, even when dealing with issues that are not easy to discuss such as sexual relationships and one's sexual temptations. These are hot topics in society, yet it appears to be a taboo subject to discuss in the church. It appears easier for church leaders to discuss Old and New Testament stories such as David's indiscretions with Beersheba, Solomon and his wives and concubines, and even the issues concerning the church of Corinth than to deal with their own nature pertaining to sex.

Due to the high regard that congregants have towards their leader they grant them extraordinary trust, power, and authority (Haug, 1999). The influence that clergy have in their congregants' life may result in simple requests being completed and obeyed because of the respect they have towards clergy and the reverence they have towards God. Parishioners have the tendency to be

influenced by the Godlike qualities (anointing) that they see and experience in the church with clergy. At times clergy may neglect or overlook the power and influence of being a spiritual leader of a congregation and in the community. They may not be cognizant of the admiration or high regard that their congregants may have towards them. Robison (2004) and Parent (2005) both articulated that clergy has the propensity to minimize their power or their position towards their congregation. At times spiritual authority is allotted with untested trust. Further, that they are not always aware of their influence over their congregants. This discrepancy in perception may result in the leader minimizing or ignoring boundaries, thus making it difficult to address sexual misconduct.

A male clergy's anointing and spiritual authority can be attractive to women causing them to seek attention, affection, and desire to have a special relationship (Francis & Turner, 1995; Haug, 1999). If these women have an extensive history of abuse resulting in being overly sexualized, they may tend to have poor boundaries, may be infatuated by their leader, have obsessive thoughts about their leader, experience vacillated mood swings, may dress provocatively to get the leader's attention, become involved with excessive amounts of church duties, purchase gifts for the leader, and be disrespectful to the leader's spouse.

In 1991 a study was completed by Francis and Turner concerning the sexual misconduct of pastors. The report indicated that 19% of pastors reported experiencing inappropriate sexual encounters or sexual intercourse with someone in their congregation. When asked to identify their sexual partner, 69% of the pastors reported that it was someone in their local church. The victims included clients that they counseled, church staff, leaders, and other church members. Another study was completed in 2001 concerning sexual misconduct with pastors. Reports showed that 37% of pastors admitted to experiencing inappropriate sexual behaviors with someone in their congregation and 12% engaged in sexual intercourse with a church member (Meek, McMinn, Burnett, Maazzarelia, and Voytenko, 2004). In 1991 sexual misconduct was so much on the rise until insurance companies released reports that they were unwilling to pay for 'human disaster of sexual misconduct' (Francis & Turner, 1995).

Any sexual relationship between a religious leader and a congregant is thus more accurately described as 'abuse of power' rather than 'affair', as an affair implies mutual consent. Because of the power the leader holds and the attachment of congregants to their leaders, the congregant has much less power to say "no" to sexual overtures, rendering the concept of 'consent' virtual-

leading candidates to have inappropriate sexual contact among professional helpers. There have been numerous studies that looked at the causality of this trend. Causes ranged from mental health issues, severe loneliness, bad marriages, personal crisis, depression, lack of boundaries and etc (Francis & Turner, 1995; Meek et al., 2004).

Francis and Turner (1995) looked at the characteristics of clergy that engaged in sexual misconduct. They identified four groups of Pastors: 1) The naïve and uninformed pastor; 2) Pastors that are in personal crisis or a painful marriage; 3) Narcissistic pastors; and 4) Clergy that is addicted sexually.

The naïve and uninformed pastor has difficulty setting boundaries for themselves and others. They lack insight concerning intentions of behaviors, tend to see the good in others, minimize their role, and make a conscious effort to reduce their power between themselves and congregants. This type of pastor uses touch inappropriately, schedules appointments when the church is empty, they lack judgment, at times can be enablers, and they may be resistant to training and supervision. When confronted about concerns for such behavior, even the concerns expressed by their own spouse, this type of pastor accuses people of having filthy minds.

The pastor in a crisis or painful marriage uses vulnerable women in the church to satisfy his own needs for acceptance, emotional support, and intimacy. It is likely that he has suffered for years hiding his marital and personal problems and he may feel trapped in the relationship with no alternatives. He may be experiencing verbally abusive language at home and at times physical abuse. This type of pastor may have difficulty reaching out for counsel due to embarrassment, shamed, feelings of incompetency, and that their leadership position may be in jeopardy due to their personal issues. As a result, he may engage in inappropriate sexual behaviors to find comfort.

The third type of pastor has a narcissistic personality. He is talented, gifted, and very charismatic, thus people are drawn to him. He is focused on stroking his ego, looks to hear how good he is from others, feels entitled, is self-centered, and believes that the world revolves around him and his personal agenda. He enjoys having sexual encounters with various women, wants to be the best lover that he can possibly be, and justifies his need to satisfy his sexual urges. Rediger (1990) referred to this Pastor as the 'star factor'. They hold lofty positions in the church, know a lot of people, and are self-indulgent. They set rules that they expect others to follow, but cannot see how the rules apply to them as well. They see sex with women as a conquest and the encounters are needed for recognition and power. In summary, this Pas-



tor is self-centered and feels entitled. He also struggles with supervision and submitting to authority.

The fourth type of pastor is identified as being addicted to pornography. There are myriad of ways that clergy becomes involved with pornography. They range from dysfunction in childhood, lack of intimacy in their marriage, death of a spouse, and etc. Signs of addiction range from excessive masturbation, history of childhood sexual problems, and lack of impulse control. Clergy that engage in this behavior may spend excessive amount of time looking at books and videos, have private mailbox, and objectify women.

It is highly important for clergy to understand when sexual misconduct takes place in the church and its impact on the congregation, community, and the reputation and credibility of church leaders as a whole. The bible teaches us to, "Follow peace with all men and holiness without which know man shall see the Lord."

## **ETHICS AND MORALS**

The concept of Ethics and Morals are predicated in the values and the worth of human beings. As mentioned above ethics focuses on the principals and standards that govern relationships between individuals and those between professional helpers and their clients. Morality on the other hand involves the judgment and evaluation of actions. Professional counselors that have license and certification seek to obtain accreditation from organizations concerning acceptable level of standards.

For the clergy it is the word of God that governs behaviors and by which actions are evaluated. The bible states in I Timothy 2:16-17, "All scriptures is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instructions in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

In making ethical decisions clergy need to be reflective when considering interventions. There are several ethical principles that can help assist with conscious decision making while helping and intervening with others including, but not limited to: 1) Beneficence (doing good and preventing harm); 2) Nonmaleficence (not inflicting harm); 3) Autonomy (respecting freedom of choice and determination); 4) Justice (fairness); and 5) Fidelity (faithfulness and honoring commitments) (Gladding, 2007; Nystul, 2003).

Furthermore to ensure the safety of self and others leaders are to take prudent measures to safeguard themselves when meeting with parishioners by adhering to the following:

A. Ministers are to conduct counseling sessions in appropriate settings at ap-

B. Counseling sessions must take place in only the professional portion of the rectory or other Church facility. Sessions are never to be conducted in the private living quarters.

C. Counseling sessions are not to be held in places or at times that would tend to cause confusion about the nature of the relationship for the person being counseled.

D. Counseling sessions should be held in an appropriate professional setting and should be scheduled for normal business hours - ordinarily between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

1. Timed sessions

- a. Have someone there in the building
- b. Take notes
- c. Over sight and support

2. Counseling in the home

- a. Last resort or option
- b. Things happen or emergencies
- c. Take someone with you of the same sex
- d. Determine if the situation is an emergency

3) Acquire trained staff to deal with specialized events

- e. Set an appointment at your office after the visit
- f. Seek others for advice

## SUMMARY

Ultimately clergy is being held responsible for their behaviors in society. Clergy needs to take prudent measures to safeguard and protect themselves from allegations and engaging unethical behavioral. There are certain steps that can be taken to protect self and others. This brief chapter talked about boundaries, ethics, sexual misconduct, and the significance of identifying roles. God called you to the ministry be faithful, walk circumspectly, seek Godly counsel and be opened and honest with yourself. The bible states Luke 18:1, "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

## GLOSSARY

**Consecration** - totally dedicated to the will of God.

**Corporate Disciplines** - confession, worship, guidance and celebration.

**fasting** - abstaining from food for spiritual purpose. inward disciplines - meditation, prayer, fasting and study Meditation - introduces us to the inner life.

Outward disciplines - simplicity, solitude, submission and service.

**Prayer** - is the central avenue God uses to transform us. It ushers us into communication with God.

**Service** - enables us to say “no” to the world’s games of promotion and authority.

**Simplicity** - is an inward reality that results in an outward life-style.

**Solitude** - sets us free in silence to clearly hear the voice of God.

**Spiritual Formation** - is formatting for your spiritual life, putting your life in a disciplined spiritual order.

study - transforms our minds.

**Submission** - gives us a release to drop the matter into the hands of God, we give up the right to demand anything in return for our love.

**The Disciplines** - the door to a life of consecration; realization of greater good.

**Wholistic Ministry** - a well rounded ministry, both natural and spiritual.

This unit is on women in ministry in the Church Of God In Christ (COGIC). It will cover the rich heritage unfolded in the COGIC women's department and to explore the issues that continue to stir debate about the role of women in the great commission to spread the gospel message worldwide. Four separate, but overlapping, forces have shaped women's ministry in COGIC:

- African American history, culture, and religiosity;
- The impact of women in the Holiness-Pentecostal revival;
- COGIC founder Bishop C.H. Mason's determination to forge a place for women in the church consistent with biblical doctrine; and
- The principles and practices of the Church as articulated by its Articles of Religion and Constitution.

As the first Christian body independently organized by African Americans who were not withdrawing or separating from a white-affiliated group, COGIC draws much of its approach to gender relations from the heritage passed on from the formerly enslaved. The early pioneers preserved many aspects of their culture when organizing COGIC during the early years of official "Jim Crow" after the Civil War.

COGIC is also a Classical Pentecostal body that emerged from the Holiness/Pentecostal revival of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As a result, COGIC shares the heritage of other holiness and Pentecostal churches that have encouraged women to exercise their spiritual gifts. Although COGIC men and women have worked together, their roles have often been different because the Church Of God In Christ bases its doctrine and practice on the Bible, with scripture as the key to understanding the spiritual equality of women in the church.

This text explores the partnership between men and women in COGIC by discussing the diverse roots that explain current policies and practice.

Upon completing this study, students should understand the purpose, structure, function, and ministries of the Women's Department in COGIC. Moreover, they will more fully grasp how the Women's Department and women's ministries in COGIC have emerged over the decades. Further, upon completing this study, students should understand why COGIC allows local church flexibility to shape their women's departments and provides opportunities for women to exercise their spiritual and temporal gifts. Female students should also be

inspired to seek guidance from the Lord about how as sanctified women they can build upon COGIC's rich heritage of commitment to Kingdom work.

The Teacher's Guide includes a longer body of information and questions that are not in the Student Edition. The Student Edition has a set of study questions. Both editions include a list of key people and a glossary of key terms.

The unit begins with the origins of women's work in COGIC, continues with subsequent explanations of the foundational auxiliaries, biographical sketches of the leaders of the women's department and other key women leaders in COGIC, and concludes with a discussion of current issues and their biblical implications for women today. It explores the roles of women in the Old and New Testaments and addresses the writings of the Apostles. Subsequent topics provide an overview of the African American religious heritage and the early "preaching women" who participated in holiness and Pentecostal revivals. The focus then shifts to the women who helped establish the Women's Department and those who made other major contributions to COGIC's growth. The text concludes with observations about the changing roles of women in COGIC and prospects for the future.

## **BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS AND EARLY CHURCH HISTORY**

On the Day of Pentecost although Jesus Christ empowered women to proclaim the Gospel, even during Old Testament times, women played critical roles in forth telling the word of God. Sin brought conflict between men and women as part of the curse upon Adam and Eve which was inherited by their descendants.

Other women prophets in the Old Testament include Naodiah (Nehemiah 6:15) and the mother of Isaiah's children (Isaiah 8:3). At a time when most Jewish Rabbis refused to teach women because they considered them mentally inferior to men, Jesus taught women in the temple (Luke 21:1-1). The New Testament records that Jesus treated women as social equals with men. The Church Of God In Christ has always authorized women to speak freely in the churches. Pentecostal churches have generally given women more freedom to minister than other churches mainly because of their emphasis on the exercise of spiritual gifts in winning souls for Christ and building churches based on empowerment by the Holy Ghost.

Church historians provide additional evidence that women played important roles in the growth and development of the Christian church. When the Roman Empire finally accepted Christianity as legitimate in the fourth century AD, a Ro-

By the end of the 1700's, women were allowed to preach and exhort in churches founded by the Society of Friends (Quakers). Most male leaders of the Holiness Revival supported the idea that women should be able to exercise leadership roles and many of them also promoted woman's suffrage. Both were woman suffragists and social reform leaders.

The Church Of God In Christ came out of this Holiness Revival whose leaders were from all denominations – Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, Presbyterians, and some Catholics. Charles Harrison Mason, founder of the Church Of God In Christ, was among those touched by Amanda Smith's life and testimony. Smith was the only woman and only African American member of the National Camp Meeting Association and her work as a missionary help provide the foundations for women's work in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church as well as inspiration for women in Holiness churches. The Revival began when Seymour was invited to Los Angeles to pastor a church that had been founded by a woman who was a Holiness leader. During the next ten years, the number of women preachers dramatically increased, with many Holiness and Pentecostal churches being pastored by women. The number of women evangelists increased dramatically after 1900 and about 3,000 women served as Christian clergy in the early years of the 20th century. But after 1920, the number of women leading churches rapidly declined.

### **Bishop Mason's Vision for Women in Ministry of the Church Of God In Christ**

In 1907 Bishop Mason reincorporated COGIC and organized the first Convocation. With large numbers of women joining COGIC, Bishop Mason was faced with the challenge of organizing and harnessing their energy, talents, and spiritual gifts. The women's department grew out of Bishop Mason's vision that the women who were becoming COGIC members would be organized into a department that would work in harmony with male leadership.

As church historian C. Eric Lincoln wrote, the "African-American heritage . . . made possible prominent roles in religion for women both in Africa and on American plantations." The enslaved turned to both men and women for spiritual advice and prayer.

Enslaved women also worked side by side with men in the fields, plowing and doing other arduous work, and many enslaved women, like the legendary Underground Railroad conductor Harriet Tubman, helped to clear forests, working alongside men felling trees and cutting wood. Each national supervisor has added units, bands and boards to the Women's Department to enhance its

growth and development. Bishop Mason's vision was that each church would have a woman's department, headed by the Church Mother, who may have been "in charge" of the church in the absence of the pastor. Bishop Mason and Mother Robinson created a role for women by establishing the Women's Department in 1911. As a result, COGIC women have always had opportunities to exercise their gifts and contribute to a church that still maintains ultimate male authority. Under the direction of Bishop Mason, COGIC established a separate and unique ministry to promote the work of women in the church.

The Church Mother worked in collaboration with the pastor, along with the other leaders, to provide leadership in the local congregation when the pastor was absent. Some have speculated that he created this structure because there were too few men in the early years of the church for there to be men who could serve as assistant pastors. Whatever the motive may have been, the collaboration between the pastor, the Church Mother and other local leaders was consistent. Under the direction of Bishop Mason, COGIC established a separate and unique ministry to promote the work of women in the church.

The current role of the Church Mother has changed over the years and in many churches the pastor's wife (First Lady) is the head of the women's department. This change has caused some power struggles in some congregations. The head of the women's department should possess some leadership skills in order to effectively lead the women of the congregation. She should also be an example to the women. Many of the pastor's wives have functioned as administrators and co-founders of the church; therefore, they have a position of authority when many of the members join the newly established fellowship. As the congregation grows, they maintain their position as administrator/leader of the women. A Church Mother who is appointed by the pastor in these cases is usually in an advisory/motherly role. It is not advised to have a First Lady to serve as the head of the women's department if she is not a licensed missionary. The church mother and the First Lady should work together harmoniously to keep unity in among the women.

## **FOUNDATIONAL AUXILIARIES OF THE WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT**

As the largest department in COGIC, the Women's Department, established in 1911, has been influential in the leadership and organization of the church since its inception. The Constitution of the Church Of God In Christ, Article VI, Section A, states, "There shall be a Women's Department in the General Church and in each Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction." The Constitution further

Bishop, who will have the power to appoint and remove the Jurisdictional Supervisor, who shall supervise the work of the Women's Department of the Jurisdiction of her appointment. The Jurisdictional Supervisor shall have the power to appoint and remove District Missionaries in the Jurisdiction of their appointment. The Women's Department shall supervise the Auxiliaries coming under its jurisdiction. Many local congregations, foreign missions and schools were established through the leadership of women in COGIC.

### **Auxiliaries of the Women's Department**

#### **Prayer and Bible Band**

To train women to know their bibles and to love their husband and children.

#### **Sewing Circle (Artistic Fingers)**

To train women to use their hands to sew, knit, crochet and to become better homemakers.

#### **Home and Foreign Mission\***

To have a deep concern for people at home and abroad and to make the Lord Jesus known to all peoples.

#### **Purity Class**

To train youth 12 to 18 to maintain and protect moral standards and to live holy.

#### **Sunshine Band**

To train children 3 to 12 and teach them about Jesus.

*\*This auxiliary is not to be confused with the Home and Foreign Missions Department in Article VI Section D of the Constitution.*

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST**

General Supervisor

Assistant General Supervisor

Jurisdictional Supervisor

Assistant Jurisdictional Supervisor

District Missionary

Church Mother

Missionaries

Lay Women



## **THE ASPIRING MISSIONARY**

*(Aspire: To have a desire or ambition)*

An Aspiring Missionary is one who feels a deep urge to do more to help build the work of God, where God places her.

She is one ever eager to be in prayer and under instruction of her Pastor (or those whom the Pastor places in teaching capacities).

She sees the sick as a chance to be of help to one of God's creation (saved or unsaved) and goes prayerfully to meet the need.

When she becomes over-anxious about what to do about the great zeal she feels, she will go to her Pastor for guidance. God has already given him the answer for her.

She is a willing worker; one who does not seek to choose the work she will do, but rather works under guidance of her Pastor or his designee.

She is glad to be able to do any tasks some may shun. She is willing to be taught in any work God may bless her to do for Him.

The Aspiring Missionary understands that God often gives us understanding and answers through our leaders. She does not seek license nor will she ask for them.

She does not leave her local church to conduct meetings and, as long as her children have need of her at home she will not do so.

She will wait for her Pastor to recommend her to the Jurisdictional Supervisor to receive her Deaconess License.

## **THE DEACONESS MISSIONARY**

A Deaconess Missionary is the next step after Aspiring Missionary, and is entirely left to the leading of her Pastor.

The Pastor will determine when a woman is sufficiently knowledgeable in God's Word, the doctrine of the Church Of God In Christ, and aware of the work of the Department of Women.

The Pastor will recommend her to the Jurisdictional Supervisor. Upon receiving the recommendation, the Supervisor will inform her when she can expect to be examined by written test.

The Board of Examiners will give the Supervisor their recommendation, and once the sister has proven to them her capability, the Supervisor issues a Deaconess License.

1. Women who will daily study the Word of God as their rule of faith and practice.
2. Women who will seek knowledge from their leader that they may be able to rightfully divide the word of truth.
3. Women who live a consistent Christian life that they may help others by precept and example.
4. Women who are governed by those in authority to direct their efforts to greater channels of service.

## **THE EVANGELIST MISSIONARY**

The Evangelist Missionary is a woman who has been (1) taught in her local church, being found faithful in her saved life and in carrying out the work as assigned by her Pastor or his designate, and (2) has been recommended by her Pastor to the Jurisdictional Supervisor for Deaconess License, and (3) held these credentials for a considerable amount of time.

She has proven her obedience to leadership, submission to instruction, and attendance to all duties:

1. At home
2. At church (local, district, jurisdictional, and national)
3. In the community

Because she is stable in mind, well versed in the Word of God, deeply concerned about souls being saved and willing to give herself for the service of God; her Pastor again recommends her to the Jurisdictional Supervisor to receive Evangelist Missionary License.

### **The Evangelist Missionary must:**

1. Be a member of a local Church Of God In Christ congregation
2. Be at all times in good standing with the Pastor
3. Be a supporter of designated worship and study services of the local church
4. Pay her membership assessments to her local church
5. Know, believe and teach the doctrine of the Church Of God In Christ
6. Make personal reports to all Districts, Jurisdictional and National meetings
7. She must be available to do ministry in the local church, district, and state, which could extend into other states and or areas (as endorsed by her leaders)

## **Other Qualifications for Missionaries or Evangelists**

The qualifications of a missionary or evangelist are little different from that of any minister of the gospel. All preachers and teachers have many things in common—everyone must possess certain evangelistic qualities if he or she is to be successful. There are many qualifications that the missionary must meet, but we will consider here only four:

1. A Missionary Must Have a Mission and a Vision
2. The Missionary Must Have Spiritual Power
3. The Missionary Must Have Wisdom
4. The Missionary Must Always Be Ready to Serve

## **THE MISSIONARY PLEDGE**

*I believe in the doctrine of this, the Church Of God In Christ, as it is interpreted by our founder Bishop C. H. Mason, and perpetuated by the ministers of said church, to be the Doctrine of the Bible.*

*As a missionary, I pledge my loyalty to this church and its doctrine pledging to teach it faithfully and no other as long as I hold its licenses.*

*I further pledge my loyalty to the leadership of this church, always holding them in honor and esteem.*

*I also pledge my obedience and service to the best of my ability, according to the dictation of the Scriptures.*

## **Leaders of the Church Of God In Christ Women's Department**

**Mother Lizzie Woods Robinson**

**First Supervisor of Women**

**1911-1945**

*Biographical Sketch of Mother Lizzie Wood Robinson*

In 1911, Lizzie Woods met Charles Harrison Mason, founder of the Church Of God In Christ (COGIC). Before the year ended, C. H. Mason appointed her the first Overseer of Women's Work, a title later changed to General Supervisor. In 1922, there were enough COGIC churches in Nebraska to hold a state convocation.

As a church organizer, Robinson created the Prayer and Bible Band which maintained doctrinal consistency for the church and sustained regular bible teaching in all COGIC congregations. She also organized under the Women's

the Sewing Circle for women.

Through Robinson's efforts, Church Mother became an official position in COGIC. Since males were then a distinct minority in COGIC congregations, this arrangement allowed one man to be the pastor of several churches, leaving the Church Mother in charge, at the pastor's discretion. At each organizational level, from the local church to the state or jurisdictional level, Robinson appointed a Church Mother who served under the authority and with the consent of the pastor. At the state level she appointed State Mothers, who later became State or Jurisdictional Supervisors and served under authority of male State Overseers, later called Jurisdictional Bishops. The Women's department trained women to become licensed missionaries and evangelists. This arrangement permitted women to fully exercise their spiritual gifts. She also led women in establishing standards of simplicity and modesty of dress, to distinguish themselves as sanctified women set apart to serve Jesus Christ.

Mother Robinson devoted her final years to raising funds through the state Women's Department to help pay for the building of a national headquarters in Memphis.

### **Mother Lillian Brooks Coffey** **Second General Supervisor** **1945-1964**

After playing a major role in establishing new COGIC missions and helping Bishop Mason manage church business affairs, Mother Lillian Brooks Coffey was appointed to succeed Mother Robinson as international leader of the Women's Department after Mother Robinson's Home Going. Under Mother Coffey's leadership, COGIC women gained national and international prominence through her close association with such influential political and educational leaders as Mary McLeod Bethune and through her organizing the first International Women's Convention which was held in Los Angeles in 1951.

Lillian Brooks joined the Church Of God In Christ in 1903 when she was converted at age seven. Mother Coffey devoted her energies to organizing prayer bands, one of which became the first Church Of God In Christ established in Chicago. In 1925, when she was only 29, Bishop Mason appointed her as State Supervisor of Women for the state of Michigan. She ultimately became the financial secretary for the Church Of God In Christ before being named by Bishop Mason to head the Women's Department.

Mother Coffey is best remembered for her work in 1951, when she organized the Women's International Convention held in Los Angeles, California hosted by Mother L.O. Hales and Bishop Samuel Crouch. Women paid \$100.00, the cost of Red Card registration and boarded the Coffey Train in Chicago, Illinois. Mother Coffey presided over 14 conventions, 1951-1964.

Mother Coffey was an active member of the National Council of Negro Women and expanded the reach of COGIC's Women's Department.

**Mother Anne L. Bailey**  
**Third General Supervisor**  
**1964-1975**

Mother Anne L. Bailey, of Detroit, Michigan, served many years as State Supervisor with much pioneer work in New Jersey. She served as first financial secretary to the first National Mother Lizzie Woods Robinson until Mother Robinson's death. She served faithfully as Assistant International Supervisor to Mother Coffey and as Vice-President of the Women's International Convention until the death of Mother Coffey in 1964.

She dug out raw churches in several states; organized women everywhere, supported pastors and their wives, and families and educated their children, and taught other women to do this same faithful service in the church. She sacrificed, traveled with founder Senior Bishop Mason as companion and secretary in his declining years. She took time to counsel, console, encourage and tell the Gospel story everywhere she went.

It was not easy to pioneer new work in the raw fields for the Church Of God In Christ, since Holiness had been little spoken among the people and they had to have this new experience for themselves in order for them to believe it. When a work was fully established, organized and perfected by the women, then a pastor was sent to take over and the raw field was again the only open door.

At the passing of Mother Coffey, she was immediately appointed to take up the banner by Senior Bishop O.T. Jones, with full consent of the brethren and all the women! The post of International Supervisor and President of Women's International Convention she held with much dignity and much progress (1975). Mother Bailey served faithfully and peacefully under the administrations of Founder Bishop C. H. Mason, then the special committee along with Mother Coffey, which was appointed by Bishop Mason, Bishop J. S. Bailey, Bishop A. B. McEwen, Bishop O. M. Kelly, the Interim Board, Executive

Under her supervision the Women's International Convention became greater each year. She was instrumental in supporting the Home and Foreign Mission Department with thousands of dollars annually, answered many suffering missionary calls, both home and foreign, and added thousands to the general church needs annually.

### **Mother Mattie Mae Clark McGlothen**

#### **Fourth General Supervisor**

**1996 - 1994**

In 1924, Mother McGlothen acknowledged her call to ministry. On December 13, 1939, Mother Lizzie Robinson appointed Mother McGlothen State Supervisor for the States of California and Washington. In addition to her duties as jurisdictional supervisor, Dr. McGlothen served the International Women's Department as President of Hospitality for over 28 years and Assistant General Supervisor to Mother Annie Bailey. In 1976, she was appointed General Supervisor of the International Department of Women by the late Bishop J.O. Patterson, Sr., Presiding Bishop of the Church Of God In Christ. She also served with the late Bishop L.H. Ford since the inception of his administration as Presiding Prelate of the Church Of God In Christ.

Under the prolific leadership of Dr. Mattie McGlothen, the International Women's Department had phenomenal growth. Mother McGlothen was proclaimed by hundreds, and rightfully so, as a woman of great wisdom, devotion, stability, and strong faith in God.

### **Mother Emma Frances Crouch**

#### **Fifth General Supervisor**

**1994-1997**

Mother Crouch served as General Supervisor of Women and President of the Women's International Convention of the Church Of God In Christ for a brief period, from 1994 to 1997. She was saved, sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost in 1930. She proved to be an ardent worker for the Lord and her church. She served as Young People's Willing Workers (YPWW) Chairlady, District Missionary, and in 1976 she was appointed by Bishop T. D. Iglehart to be the first Supervisor of Women for the Texas Southwest Jurisdiction.

Although appointed by the late Presiding Bishop L. H. Ford, she worked almost exclusively with Presiding Bishop Chandler D. Owens. She caught his vision for the year 2000 and rallied the women to join the move of God that

would lead them into the 21st Century. Mother Crouch wrought good work and that work will praise her in the gate.

### **Mother Willie Mae Smalls Rivers** **Sixth General Supervisor**

It was the Centennial Year of the Church Of God In Christ that Mother Willie Mae Rivers was elevated to lead the women. God had prepared and established her in the hearts and minds of the leadership and constituency of our church. Her consistent and committed labor over the years validated and corroborated her destiny to serve as the Sixth General Supervisor of Women. In 1946, Mother Rivers attended a revival one night and after hearing the gospel preached by the husband and wife team, (Supt. Jacob C. & Missionary Francina Dantzler) she believed and was baptized in the Holy Ghost. She became a member of the Calvary Church Of God In Christ where Elder (later Bishop) Johnnie Johnson is pastor. She was appointed Church Mother at the age of twenty (20). She continues to serve in that capacity.

Because of her dedication, Mother Rivers was chosen to serve as District Missionary and later as Assistant Supervisor to the late Mother Alice Marie Saunders. In 1968 she was appointed and is presently the Supervisor of the Department of Women for the South Carolina Jurisdiction. Her loyal dedication to God and her leaders is exemplified throughout the Church Of God In Christ, Inc.

Mother Rivers is also the founder and president of the Community Christian Women / Men Fellowship which was organized to reach people in all walks of life. Giving all praises to God, this fellowship has been a blessing to many souls through spiritual enrichment. Aid is provided for those less fortunate and the bereaved receive love and comfort during their time of sorrow.

## **OTHER WOMEN LEADERS IN THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST**

### **Dr. Mattie Moss Clark** **Music Ministry**

Born Mattie Juliet Moss, began playing the piano when she was six years old. By 12, she became the musician for her mother's services at the Church of Christ and Prayer. After high school, she attended Selma University and received training in classical music and choral singing. In addition, she continued to travel with her mother and play at her mission services.

She married Dr. Mattie Clark in 1947 and lived with her sister Sibil Burke and became a

the leadership of Bishop W. Rimson, she was baptized in the Holy Ghost and subsequently became the Minister of Music. She served an historic tenure as Minister of Music for both Southwest Michigan Jurisdiction and Bailey Temple Church Of God In Christ, under Bishop John Seth Bailey. Soon she was in demand to train choirs at churches throughout the brotherhood of COGIC.

In 1958, she recorded “Going to Heaven to Meet the King”, with the Southwest Michigan State Choir, becoming the first person to commit the sounds of a choir to record. She was also the first person to separate vocal parts into soprano, alto and tenor. She received three gold albums with the Southwest Michigan State Choir, and went on to write and arrange hundreds of songs and recorded over 50 albums.

### **Dr. Arenia C. Mallory** **Educational Leader**

Arenia C. Mallory was a religious grade- and high-school founder and advocate for civil rights and the poor in Holmes County, Mississippi. Mallory’s best-known role was the founder and head of Saints Industrial and Literary School, a private secondary school for students grades one through twelve. in Lexington, Mississippi. The school was renamed and is currently called the Saints Academy. She was president of the school from 1926 to 1983. It is run under the Church Of God In Christ. Mallory was an active member of the church and participated in the Women’s Department and was a leader in the national church. From 1952 to 1955, she was on the board of directors of the Regional Council of Negro Leadership, a pro self-help, civil rights organization led by Dr. T.R.M. Howard of Mound Bayou, Mississippi.

Mallory also was an advocate for the provision of health and welfare for sharecroppers in Holmes County, Mississippi. She was instrumental in orchestrating several programs in the county to raise money, books, and clothing for her students. In 1934, Mallory hosted the sorority Alpha Kappa Alpha Mississippi Health Project. The sorority consisted of rural teachers in neighboring counties. Additionally, she was an advocate for black and women’s rights. She was a member of the National Council of Negro Women. She served as the Vice President of this group from 1953 to 1957. She was a consultant for the U.S. Department of Labor (1963) and the first woman and first African American elected to the Holmes County Board of Education.

### **Mother Elizabeth J. Dabney**



## **Prayer Ministry**

Although little is known about Elizabeth Dabney's youth, she often said she learned the value of prayer from her mother, who always kept a family altar in their home. In 1926, after Mason met Dabney and her husband, E.H. Dabney, he asked the couple to move to Philadelphia to help COGIC Elder Orzo Thurston Jones, Sr. begin a ministry there.

Elizabeth Dabney made a covenant with God that if He would send revival to their turbulent neighborhood; she would meet Him in prayer at an appointed time each morning for three years. Soon the mission could not accommodate the people, and the couple had to rent a larger space. Although Dabney was ridiculed because of her daily prayer regimen, with some people even leaving notes in the church demanding that the Dabneys leave the neighborhood, at the end of the three years people began contacting her from around the country, requesting prayer. Hundreds came to Christ, with some visiting from as far as Syria, Africa, China, India, Australia and England. Mason was informed of her work and began sending her out across the United States. A group of businessmen purchased a church building for her and her husband, and they named it the Garden of Prayer COGIC. Dabney's book *What It Means to Pray Through* is still a widely read resource on intercession.

## **Evangelist (Mother) Elsie Isabelle Shaw**

### **Prayer Ministry**

Evangelist Elsie Isabelle Shaw accepted Christ as her savior and was filled with the "Holy Ghost" in the 30's under the pastorate of Bishop O. M. Kelly of New York. These were the prime years of founder Bishop Charles Mason. Her very existence soon became predicated on an incomparable dedication to Christ and the needs of His people.

She contributed the fruits of her talent in music education. She taught at Saints Academy in Lexington, Mississippi and the Chicago and Memphis Public Schools. She not only taught her pupils the academic basics, she also instructed on the fundamental principles of decent living.

Service was her calling. She cheerfully would serve the saints as a food service. It was after God's training for service, that she received the calling to evangelize for the edification of the Lord's church and his people. For over forty-one (41) years as a missionary evangelist, she emphasized the power of prayer. She dutifully carried out this spiritual gift of prayer for more than

## **Mother Emily Bram Bibby**

### **National Evangelist**

Evangelist Emily Bram-Bibby, was saved at the age of ten, and that was the beginning of a world-wide ministry. Singing, playing the piano, and speaking in churches all over, whether large or small, was her calling. She was not limited to speaking in her denomination, the Church Of God In Christ, but wherever a door was open.

For many years served at Washington Temple Church Of God In Christ in New York under the pastorate of the late Bishop F. D. Washington. She served as his Assistant Pastor as well as many other positions. After leaving New York, she moved to Dallas, Texas and served under the late Elder S. E. Mitchell.

Mother Bibby served in many areas of the church. She was the National Expediter of the International Women's Department Church Of God In Christ. She traveled on the Evangelist Team with our late Presiding Bishop J. O. Patterson, Sr. She was the oldest evangelist in the Church Of God In Christ, serving the church for more than 80 years singing that signature song "One Day at a Time."

## **PART SIX:**

### **Transformations-Where Do We Go From Here?**

#### **Debate about Ordination of Women in the Church Of God In Christ**

In this study of women's ministry in COGIC, we clearly see that our founder, Bishop Mason, was quite liberal in his views about women's roles in the church. What other denomination had a woman who was appointed and given the title of overseer just as the men who were overseers in 1911? What other denomination allowed the leader of the women to speak every day of the Holy Convocation? What other denomination allowed its Women's Department to *organize and hold its own separate convention?* What other denomination allows the women to teach, preach and evangelize without seminary training? What other denomination allows women to be left in charge of a church without being ordained?

What is clear is that women's roles in COGIC have emerged over the decades and they continue to evolve. Women serve in a multiplicity of roles within the church at every level, as well as within institutional ministries outside of the

ch. In our ranks are women who serve as chaplains at the highest ranks in all branches of our military, in hospitals, prisons, police academies, and in numerous secular institutions. In these settings, these women, most of whom hold graduate degrees in theology and other academic disciplines, perform varied duties as required by their job titles. Aside from the many functions women have performed in COGIC over the years, many new roles and responsibilities for women are being put in place, in response to the needs of church and society.

**present these are the facts, as noted in**

**the Church Of God In Christ Manual,**

**the Church Of God In Christ recognizes the scriptural importance of women in the Christian Ministry, the first at the tomb on the morning of Christ's resurrection to the chosen disciples and etc., but nowhere can we find a mandate to ordain women to be an Elder, Bishop or Pastor. Women may teach the gospel to others, have charge of a church in absence of a Pastor, if the Pastor so wishes without adopting the title of Elder, Reverend, Bishop or Pastor. Paul styled the women who labored with him as servants or helpers, not Elders, Bishops or Pastors. (p. 146)**

**women can serve in many ministries in the Women's Department of COGIC that are scripturally based.**

**Hospitality, Alms and Good Works**

- Hospitality Unit
- Sewing Circle
- Home and Foreign Mission
- Prayer and Bible Band
- Deaconess Circle
- Adjutant Sisters

**Peak Ministries in COGIC**

- Aspiring Missionary
- Deaconess Missionary
- Evangelist Missionary
- Teacher
- Church Mother

APPLICATION FOR ORDINATION

Please read the following carefully before signing this application form:

I certify that all information I have provided in order to apply for and seek credentials from The Church Of God In Christ, Inc. is true, complete, and correct. I understand that the aforementioned credentials are the property of the Church Of God In Christ, Inc.

I understand that any information provided by me that is found to be false, incomplete, or misrepresented in any respect, will be sufficient cause to cancel further consideration of this application for ordination, or (ii) immediately revoke my credentials and/or terminate me from employment and/or affiliation with The Church Of God In Christ, whenever it is discovered.

If I am granted credentials with The Church Of God In Christ, Inc., I understand that my possession of these credentials will be at-will, and The Church Of God In Christ, Inc. reserves the right to revoke my credentials at any time for any reason, including but not limited to violations of the Sexual Misconduct Policy, with or without cause and without prior notice, except as may be required by the Official Manual of The Church Of God In Christ and applicable law.

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(Print Name)

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(Applicant's Signature)

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(Ordination Board Chairman's Signature)

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(Jurisdictional Bishop's Signature)

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(Date)