

Promise #3: Protect the Unity of the Church and Submit to Church Discipline

1 Corinthians 1:10 I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no _____ among you, but that you be _____ in the same mind and the same judgment.

Matthew 18:15-17 -- 15 “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between _____ . If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. **16** But if he does not listen, take _____ others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. **17** If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to _____. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

As members, you are promising to *protect the unity of the church*. In the Corinthian church, there were many divisions, with some following Paul, others Peter, others Apollos. Paul urges them to be united in the same mind and the same judgment.

How do you protect the unity of the church?

1. **Abstain from _____**. Gossip is when we speak about someone in a way that defames, dishonors or hurts their character and it is cancer to a church community. When we have a conflict with someone, often our first response is to talk to everyone except the person we have the conflict with. Jesus says, that when someone sins against you, you tell him his fault “between you and him alone.” When someone is in sin in our church community, “you who are spiritual should restore him (or her) in a spirit of gentleness.” (Gal 6:1) As members, we must learn how to resolve conflict in a biblical way.
2. **If you have a disagreement or question about the church, talk to _____**. If you have a question or disagreement about the direction of the church, the best thing to do is to talk to someone on leadership *directly*, whether it is a Pastor, Elder, community group or ministry team leader. We want to learn from constructive criticism about our church, and we would much rather hear it *directly* from you than from a third party. It is the same principle as above. When church members “grumble” about the church and never talk to leadership directly, it spreads disunity and mistrust quickly.
3. **Even if you disagree, do not be _____**. As a member, you are promising to protect the unity of the church. You probably will not agree with every single thing that our leadership decides to do as a church. If it is a minor issue, then you should let it go. If it is a major issue, then you should talk to leadership directly. Even if you disagree, as a member, you are promising to submit to your leaders. This means you must promise not to be divisive. If you feel you cannot accept the direction of the church, then you should consider finding another church, which is not necessarily a bad thing. If you are considering leaving the church, you should speak with a leader directly beforehand.
4. **Submit to _____**. Matthew 18 gives us a pattern to follow when resolving church conflicts: it should start with direct, private conversations with just the people involved. If someone is struggling with sin, as a church the first step is to talk about it in truth and love in small groups. As a member, you are committing to being held accountable, because we all need it! We have a natural tendency to be self-deceived and blind to our sin. In more serious cases, there may be times when the Elders of the church need to step in to restore someone “caught in sin” in a “spirit of gentleness.” (Gal. 6:1). This may involve stepping down from serving or leadership positions, and in the most extreme cases, excommunication if there is a refusal to repent from sin (Matt. 18:17, 1 Cor 5:2, 2 Thess. 3:10).

Guide to Resolving Conflict
Adapted from Ken Sande, "The Peacemaker"

1. Consider _____.
 - Is this a pattern?
 - Is there a barrier?
 - Is it causing harm?
 - If no -- Maybe it's not that big of a deal. You should just let it go. as you dwell on the cross, you need to just forgive them. Overlooking means truly forgiving them.
2. Get the _____ out of your own eye. (Matthew 7:3-5)
 - break the cycle of conflict. When you go to the cross, you realize, you are also a broken person.
 - Own your part, whatever percentage it is, fully and without excuses.
 - This often, but not always, "melts" the other person's heart and they also confess their sin.
3. Gently _____
 - Matthew 7 – does not mean just giving in. it means first focusing on your own sin, draining yourself of sinful anger.
 - But to truly love the other person is to honestly bring up the way they have hurt you.
 - Gal 6:1 – restore in a spirit of gentleness.
 - Affirm the relationship, be honest.
4. Go and be _____
 - Matthew 5:23-24 – before worshiping God, be reconciled
 - reconciliation only comes after steps 1-3.
 - **Rom 12:18 – If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.**
 - Full reconciliation is not always possible.
 - But what it means on your end, you need to do steps 1-3, and then you need to forgive them, regardless of if they repent or not. that means ***releasing the punishment to God, leaving it to the Holy Spirit***. you are no longer going to try to punish them, directly or indirectly (in your heart, coldness, bitterness)
 - Doesn't mean the relationship or trust is restored – you may have to still keep boundaries, but you no longer are harboring bitterness.
 - Pray and hope for full reconciliation – for them to repent, to rebuild trust and relationship.

Statement of Faith and Theological Distinctives

This is our statement of faith and summarizes the core doctrines of Christianity. As a member, you must agree with these beliefs, as they summarize what it means to be a Christian.

1. We believe in the _____ as the inspired Word of God and completely inerrant in their original writings. They are the ultimate and final authority in faith and Christian living.
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: _____. The Father is the Almighty God who created and sustains the whole universe.
3. We believe that Jesus Christ is the _____. He was begotten of the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary. He is true God and true man. He was crucified, died and buried for the atonement of sin. He rose again from the dead on the third day, and ascended bodily into heaven as our Priest and Advocate. He will return bodily to earth.
4. We believe that the _____ is the third person of the triune Godhead. He is the Comforter who guides and inspires us to accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. He leads and enlightens us in understanding God's Word and He also guides and inspires our daily walk with God.
5. We believe that human kind was created in the _____. Human kind sinned and fell, thereby incurring not only physical death but also that spiritual death which is separation from God. All human kind is born with a _____.
6. We believe that all who _____ of their sins and receive by _____ Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are born of the Holy Spirit and thereby become the children of God.
7. We believe that the _____ is the gathering of the redeemed believers on the earth in a certain locality and is a part of the universal church of God. We believe in the principle of separation of Church and State, guaranteeing an individual's freedom to choose one's own faith.
8. We believe that every redeemed believer is commissioned to witness and _____ both locally and worldwide.
9. We believe that every redeemed believer is to be _____ of the earth, including leading a life that demonstrates, upholds and aids the welfare and justice of society.
10. We believe in the _____ of the believer and of the non-believer, and in the everlasting blessedness of the believer and the everlasting conscious punishment of the non-believer.

Theological Distinctives

Our theological distinctives reflect what distinguishes Anchor Community Church from other churches who would affirm the basic doctrines. These distinctives indelibly shape the way that Anchor Community Church is led and the direction the church is headed. We do not expect all members to embrace all aspects of these distinctives, but members should expect that the distinctives will be maintained in all ministry environments at Anchor Community Church, and members may not teach contrary to them.

Distinctive:

Adam and Eve were made to complement each other in a one-flesh union in the covenant of marriage that establishes the only God-ordained pattern of sexual relations for men and women. In God's wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. (Gen. 1:27, 2:24)

Distinctive:

The salvation of humanity is fundamentally the work of God. Before the foundation of the world, God elected His people, setting His affection and grace upon them (Rom. 8:29–30). In love God predestined His people for adoption (Eph. 1:4–6). Faith is a gift of grace that is given by the mercy and pleasure of God, so that no one may boast. Apart from the intervention of God, humanity cannot choose of his own accord to worship God and pursue righteousness (Rom. 3; Eph. 2:1–3). God's sovereignty in salvation is comprehensive: from first to last, all of salvation is the work of God. We believe that God's sovereignty in salvation neither diminishes the responsibility of people to believe in Christ nor marginalizes the necessity and power of prayer and evangelism, but rather reinforces and establishes them as the ordained means by which God accomplishes his ordained ends. (Acts 13:48, 16:30-31, Matthew 11:27-28)

Distinctive:

Water baptism is only intended for those who have received the saving benefits of Christ through the new birth of the Holy Spirit. (Col. 2:11-12) In obedience to Christ's command and as a testimony to God, the Church, oneself and the world, believers are baptized by water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19) Water baptism is a visual and symbolic demonstration of a person's union with Christ in the likeness of His death and resurrection. It signifies that a former way of life has been put to death and vividly depicts the release from the mastery of Satan, sin and death. (Rom. 6:3-5)

Distinctive:

Men and women are absolutely equal in essence, dignity and value but are distinct by divine design. As part of God's good created order, men and women are to have different yet complementary roles and responsibilities in the home and church. In the ministry of the church, both men and women are encouraged to serve Christ and to be developed to their full potential in the manifold ministries of the people of God. However, the office of elder is reserved for qualified men. (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:18, Gal. 3:28, 1 Cor. 11:2-16, 1 Tim. 2:11-15, 3:1-7)

Promise #4: Financially support the church through tithes and offering

1. Giving Must Be In _____

- a. *The guideline of the _____* - In the OT believers were required to give a tenth of their income to the support of the ministry and the needs of the poor. The NT only once specifically mentions the tithe (Luke 11:42), explaining that since we are far more blessed and indebted to God than OT believers, we are to be more generous, not less. Thus the tithe (10%) annual gift of income is a kind of minimum guideline for giving.
- b. *The guideline of _____* - Paul says about the Macedonians, “they gave as much as they were able and even beyond their ability” (2 Cor. 8:3). That means they gave until it meant a sacrifice in their lifestyle.
- c. *The guideline of _____* - Christians are also to give “according to their ability” (Acts 11:29). There are seasons to economic life. And there are economic responsibilities to our families and to our debts. In many cases, good planning over time will be necessary to move our giving into Biblical proportions without renegeing on legal and personal financial obligations.

2. Giving Must Be A _____ Response To God's Grace.

Paul asked for money this way: “I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love for you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, he became poor, so that through his poverty you might become rich.” (2 Cor. 8:8-9). What a test! Paul says that the difference between moralists (those who think God accepts them for their good works) and Christians (those who know they are sinners saved purely through grace) is that a Christian wants to give as generously as he or she received.

3. Giving Must Be _____.

Paul directed Corinthians to set aside a portion of their wealth each week until he could come and take it to famine victims in Palestine (1 Cor. 16:2-3). Usually “spontaneous” and unplanned giving, while perhaps joyful (principle #2) is not proportionate (principle #1). The actual tally of completely spontaneous giving usually shows little sacrifice involved. We must plan. We must allow the church to help with reminders and directions. A way to plan:

- 1) Decide what percentage of your income you will give to the Lord's work this year.
- 2) Ask two questions: Is this a sacrificial figure? On the other hand, is it a responsible figure?
- 3) Set aside the Lord's portion first whenever the money is received. It is his, not yours.

Promise #5: Serve the church using your gifts and talents

Spiritual Gifts: gifts given for the benefit of the all

Eph 4	Prophets, evangelists, teachers	shepherds	Apostles
1 Cor 12	knowledge, prophecy/prophets, discernment, teachers	Healing, miracles, tongues, helping	Wisdom, apostles, administration, faith
Rom 12	Prophecy, teaching	Service, exhortation, generosity, mercy	leadership
1 Pet 4	Speaking	Service	
Ways in which to use these gifts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teaching youth or children through the Youth ministry and Children’s ministry/Nursery. - Talk to a leader to get trained to be community group leader. - Join the Worship Team, which builds up the congregation through musical worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Finding out what peoples’ needs are and rallying others to help in your community group - sending encouraging notes/messages - Joining the Hospitality Team which aims to make sure people feel welcomed on Sundays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Join the Operations Team which helps with setting up our Sunday Services. - Join the Productions Team which helps with the A/V aspects on Sundays. - Join the Events Planning Team which organizes and plans events and activities. - Join the Communications Team which works with graphic design, social media and the website.

Membership Interview Sign-Up Form: Please submit by October 31.

