

# Notes

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**Wade H. Phillips  
Presiding Bishop**

## Welcome!

The second annual General Assembly of Zion Assembly Church of God is here. We have looked forward to this special time together with the Lord since we closed the first historic Assembly in September 2004. I believe God will meet with us during these next few days in a special way, and impart to us His will and eternal wisdom for the last days Zion. Let us listen carefully to what “the Spirit saith unto the churches,” and prepare ourselves to go forward under the invincible leadership of our great Commander.

You——ministers and members of Zion Assembly—are to be commended for your stand in this present restoration of the church. You are all heroes to me. I esteem you highly for your manifest convictions, courageous sacrifices, and steadfast labor of love. I trust this Assembly will be a blessing to you, that it will be a time of refreshing and rejuvenation—a “feast of fat things.”

There have been many victories won this year. We have much for which to praise and glorify God! The Old Ship of Zion is back on course, sailing full speed ahead; her officers and crew are now all determined to work together until she reaches the other shore. Let us sail on—in truth and power and glory—until our work in this world is done, and we are “caught up” to meet the Lord in the air!

## ADMINISTRATION

Presiding Bishop / Moderator..... Wade H. Phillips  
Superintendent of Operations..... E. A. McDonald, Jr.  
Chief Clerk..... Julia Massey  
Chief Usher..... Joseph Steele  
Chief Registrar..... Marie Crook

## ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Chairman..... E. A. McDonald, Jr.  
Secretary..... Zachary Snyder  
Members..... A. B. White  
Ricky Graves  
Joshua Amara  
William Crook  
Joseph Steele  
**(Alternates)**  
Ron Massey  
C. R. Gregory

Video..... Scott Neill  
Sound Equipment..... Preston Parris  
Photography..... Julie Steele

## Pre-Assembly Programs

- . **Presbytery Meeting** (Tuesday, September 6th)
- . **Ministers’ Luncheon** (Wednesday, September 7th)
- . **International Office Building Renovation ---  
Invocation for Divine Blessing** (Wednesday, September 7th)

### Wednesday

6:00 p.m. Worship—Ohio Church  
Special Song—Darlene Miller, TN  
Scripture Reading—Jeannie Quillen, MD  
Bible Pledge—Zachary Snyder, IN  
**Official Opening of the Assembly—Presiding Bishop**  
Welcome—Joseph and Julie Steele, NC  
Special Singing—Wooten Sisters  
Assembly Expense Offering  
**Message**—“Stretching Forth With Vision”—  
E. A. McDonald, Jr., TN

### Thursday

9:05 a.m. Welcome  
Devotional—Columbia, SC Mission  
Special Song—Trevor Graves, TN  
**Message**—“Stretch Forth...In Faith”—  
Todd McDonald, TN  
General Treasurer’s Report  
Other Reports:

- Presiding Bishop
- Assistant Presiding Bishop
- Managing Editor *Voice of Zion*
- Youth and Evangelism Director
- Sunday School Director

#### —Lunch Break—

1:40 p.m. **Reports from Around the World**  
1:45 p.m. **Western Region**—*A. B. White, Overseer*  
California Utah  
Nevada Washington  
Oregon  
2:18 p.m. **Southeast Region**—*E. A. McDonald, Jr., Overseer*  
Alabama Mississippi  
Florida South Carolina  
Georgia Tennessee

3:30 p.m. **Midwest Region**—*Ron Massey, Overseer*  
Indiana Ohio  
Kentucky Virginia  
Maryland West Virginia  
North Carolina  
4:55 p.m. **Northwest Region**—*Gary Larsen, Overseer*  
5:10 p.m. **East Africa**—*Joshua O. Amara, Overseer*  
Kenya  
Tanzania  
**Virgin Islands**—*Wade H. Phillips, Overseer*  
**Mexico Canada Philippines**

#### —Supper Break—

6:50 p.m. Worship Service—Bayou La Batre, AL Church  
Senior Program, “A Goodly Heritage”—  
Kenneth Merritt, TN  
Special Singing—Wooten Sisters  
Assembly Expense Offering  
**Message**—“Stretch Forth...In Power”—  
Ron Massey, WV  
Invitation

### Friday

7:45 a.m. Morning Prayer Service—Gene & Ruth Tingler,  
VA  
Special Songs—Molly Hayward, MD, Zion’s  
Melodies, AL  
**Message**—“Stretch Forth...In Love”—  
Roger Tidwell  
Special Songs—Jim Melton, OH, Trevor Graves,  
TN  
Recognition of Special Guests  
**Presiding Bishop’s Annual Address**

#### —Lunch Break—

1:55 p.m. Worship Service—Crab Orchard, TN Church  
**Message**—“Stretch Forth...In Truth”—  
William Crook, TN  
Special Songs—Zion’s Melodies, AL, Robert  
Llaneza, NC, Marie Crook, TN  
*Voice of Zion* Program—Joseph A. Steele,  
Managing Editor  
Ordination Service

—**Supper Break**—

**Friday**

6:35 p.m. Worship Service—Salisbury, MD Church  
Boost for School of Ministry  
Special Song—Zion’s Melodies, AL  
Assembly Expense Offering  
**Message**—“Stretch Forth...In Obedience”—  
John Norton, TN  
Special Singing—The King’s Messengers  
**Healing Service**

**Saturday**

9:00 a.m. Worship Service—Little Bingamon, WV Church  
**Sunday School Program**—Jeannie Quillen  
**Mission Program**—Eunice Gregory  
Special Singing—The King’s Messengers  
**Shepherding Ministries**  
Special Song—Little Bingamon Trio, WV  
**Message**—“Stretch Forth...Unto the Regions  
Beyond”—Danny Ramirez, CA

—**Lunch Break**—

2:35 p.m. Special Songs—Victoria Deakle, AL, Courtney  
Fields, AL  
Special Testimonies  
Special Song—Little Bingamon Trio, WV  
**Youth Program**—Zachary Snyder

—**Supper Break**—

6:35 p.m. Congregational Song  
Special Singing—The Prophets Quartet  
Assembly Business Committee Report  
Special Song—Zachary Snyder, IN  
**Message**—“Stretch Forth...In Joy”—  
Joshua Amara, Kenya  
Appointments  
Consecration Service

## Business Sessions

### General Treasurer's Report

September 8, 2005

First, I want to give thanks to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost for the bountiful blessings and favor bestowed upon Zion Assembly Church of God during the past assembly year. Through your sacrificial giving and faithful support to the International Offices, God has enabled the general leadership to carry out all the ministries and responsibilities as outlined by the General Assembly.

In accordance with the recommendation adopted by the General Assembly in 2004, all funds received by the International Offices were recorded under the specific ministry for which they were received. However, with the exception of offerings received for a specific use (such as the building fund offering received in the 2004 Assembly), all funds have been dispersed as one General Fund. Therefore, the report will show large balances in some funds and deficits in others. For example, we have supplemented various ministries and expenses out of the tithe fund, which offset the balance shown in the tithe fund.

All allotments for the General Leadership have been made in accordance with the recommendation of the assembly "where funds are available." Even though funds were very limited in the beginning of the year, all general workers at the international offices have given full time to the ministries for which they have been appointed.

### FUNDS RECEIVED

TITHE FUND	\$71,283.81
<i>VOICE OF ZION</i> SUBSCRIPTIONS	5,719.65
<i>VOICE OF ZION</i> OFFERINGS	2,950.90
EXPENSE	8,878.61
WORLD MISSIONS	8,050.99
MISSIONS	18,832.03
BUILDING FUND	31,875.60
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY	6,925.41
OVERSEER	2,927.43
YOUTH	1,706.26
OCTOBER-MARCH MISSION	4,086.77
OTHER	<u>8,344.92</u>
TOTAL FUNDS RECEIVED	\$171,582.38

## **Assembly Business Committee Report**

Adopted by the General Assembly

We, the Assembly Business Committee for Zion Assembly Church of God, after prayerful and careful consideration, make the following recommendations to the General Assembly for your consideration and approval:

### **SECTION I OFFICIAL CHURCH LOGO**

A. We express appreciation to Josh Creek of Scottsville, Kentucky for the electronic rendering of the logo printed on front of the Assembly program. The preliminary design was submitted by the Presiding Bishop to the Assembly Committee. We feel it uniquely expresses the purpose and mission of Zion Assembly Church of God. We recommend that this logo, with slight modification by the Assembly Business Committee, be used this Assembly year on official church publications such as literature, stationary, etc. A final version of this logo will be presented to the 2006 General Assembly for approval. Use of the logo should be limited to International Offices publications unless special permission is obtained from the General Leadership.

B. We recommend that a modified version of this logo be designed for display on church signs and marques. We further recommend that no copies, reproductions, or facsimiles of the logo be made without special permission from the General Leadership.

### **SECTION II PUBLIC RELATIONS**

#### **A. Outreach Ministries**

We would like to call your attention to Section V of the committee report to the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual General Assembly in 2004, entitled "Church Ministries:"

While it is necessary to departmentalize in order to involve the whole church in ministry, we should keep in mind that all departments of the church should be coordinated through the pastor. This will insure that each support ministry works in harmony with, and for the good of, the church as a whole. Each person selected to direct ministries in the local church should be members in good standing and possess high spiritual qualities. We recommend that each pastor in consultation with the under-shepherds appoint leaders to have the oversight of the following ministries.

Support ministries adopted by the first General Assembly in 2004 included Sunday School, Youth Ministries, Shepherding Ministries, and Missions. In order to fulfill the mandates of the Scriptures and the great commission, we recommend that in the context of these auxiliaries, special emphasis be placed on ministering to the aged, sick, widows, prisoners, and shut-ins. We further recommend that, where possible, specific individuals be appointed to lead the church in these ministries, and that special emphasis be given to outreach by the pastor and support ministries' leaders. Special emphasis should be given also to these areas of ministry by the Regional and/or State Overseers.

#### **B. *Voice of Zion***

We recommend that the official church publication, *Voice of Zion*, continue to be published monthly. We further recommend that it be expanded to twenty-four pages when it is deemed feasible by the publishing committee. The costs to underwrite funding for printing and mailing of the *Voice of Zion* this past year was approximately six thousand dollars (\$6,000.00). We therefore recommend that the cost of subscriptions be increased January 2006 to eighteen dollars

(\$18.00) per year. Our goal of one thousand subscriptions would alleviate the need for the *Voice of Zion* to be underwritten from the general church funds. We therefore encourage everyone to be a booster for the *Voice of Zion*.

**C. Utilizing Media**

As the world becomes more technologically advanced, we must take advantage of every available resource to fulfill the great commission and reach the millions who have not yet heard the Gospel. Where it is feasible, local churches should utilize radio, audio, video, Web sites, newspapers, distribution of the *Voice of Zion*, etc., to advertise Zion Assembly Church of God and to spread the “Good News.” We recommend that when it is deemed feasible by the general leadership, the International Offices establish a Web site and create multimedia resources that can be downloaded and distributed by the local churches. We further recommend that the youth offerings designated by the 1<sup>st</sup> Assembly for the “support of publications” be redefined and boosted as “Media Resources Offerings.”

**D. Religious Affiliations**

While it is commendable for our ministers and churches to be involved in community affairs, we recommend that caution be exercised when involving ourselves with secular and other religious organizations. We should be diligent not to unite in any formal way with religious associations and counsels that contradict or compromise our *Abstract of Faith* and Assembly rulings, particularly in regard to our faith and practices.

**SECTION III REGIONAL/STATE OVERSEER  
OFFERINGS**

We want to express appreciation and commend those serving as Regional Overseers for their labor of love this past year. While the churches have responded liberally to provide

for the travel expenses of the Overseers, these positions at the present are non-paid positions. Therefore, we recommend that the Regional/State Mission Director be responsible for boosting a special love offering and pounding for the Regional/State Overseer once a year prior to the Regional/State Convention.

**SECTION IV PASTORAL APPOINTMENTS**

SECTION VI, Part C, Paragraph 2 of the Assembly Committee Report to the 2004 General Assembly entitled PASTORS, reads as follows:

After much prayer and consultation with the local church, pastors should be appointed by the Regional Overseer (or State/National Overseer as the case may be). Those appointed should feed and care for the sheep, and serve as long as they are affirmed by the Overseer and the local church.

We recommend that the section be changed to read:

After much prayer and consultation with the pastor and the local church, pastors should be appointed by the Regional Overseer (or National/State Overseer as the case may be). We recommend that, if possible, pastors be notified in writing at least sixty days prior to the Regional/National/State Convention of their appointments, and that the appointments be made formal during the Regional/National/State convention. Those appointed should feed and care for the sheep, and serve as long as they are affirmed by mutual agreement (as far as possible) between the Pastor, Overseer and the local church. Pastoral responsibilities begin on Monday following the last Sunday of July, and continue through the last Sunday of July the following year.

## **SECTION V INTERNATIONAL OFFICES**

### **A. General Trustees**

We recommend that the Presiding Bishop, General Treasurer, and Managing Editor of the Voice of Zion serve as General Trustees for Zion Assembly Church of God with International Offices located at 5512 Water Level Highway, Cleveland, Tennessee 37323, and that they be authorized to endorse all legal documents pertinent to the daily operation of Zion Assembly Church of God, within the rulings and recommendation of the General Assembly.

### **B. Construction Committee**

Section III of the committee report adopted by the 2004 General Assembly entitled "General Properties" reads as follows:

Prior to organizing Zion Assembly Church of God, a Trust Agreement was established by Wade Phillips, E. A. McDonald, and Joseph Steele for the purpose of receiving money, and investing in real estate which could be developed for future use, if and when the need arose. A building with approximately three acres of land at 5512 Water Level Highway in Cleveland, Tennessee was purchased on January 29, 2004. We recommend that this assembly approve and accept the proposal presented by the Zion Assembly Trust to develop this property for general offices and a school of ministry. This facility can also be used for worship by the local congregation, which could help support the operational expenses of the general offices.

In Accordance with this recommendation we submit the following:

1. That a Construction Committee consisting of seven persons be appointed by the Presiding Bishop to

act in an advisory capacity for the construction and development of the International Offices and School of Ministry facilities, and that this be a standing committee to make recommendations to the Assembly for the development and construction of future projects at the International Offices. This committee could also serve in an advisory capacity for local and state projects when needed.

2. That the architectural drawings submitted by Rardin and Carroll Architectural Firm of Chattanooga, Tennessee, which are based on the preliminary drawings available at the 2004 General Assembly, be approved and that construction on the International Offices begin as soon as it is deemed financially feasible by the General Properties Trustees.

### **C. Deeding Properties**

We recommend that the properties at 5512 Water Level Highway Cleveland, Tennessee 37323 currently held by the Trustees of Zion Assembly Church of God, Trust Agreement, be transferred to Zion Assembly Church of God with International Offices at 5512 Water Level Highway Cleveland, Tennessee 37323, and that four persons in addition to the General Trustees be selected by the Assembly Business Committee and approved by the General Assembly to serve as General Properties Trustees. These seven, in accordance with future Assembly recommendations, would furnish a letter of consent for the General Trustees to endorse legal documents for buying, selling, and encumbering General Church Properties.

### **D. Financing for International Office Project**

We recommend that the General Properties Trustees be authorized to secure financing for the International Offices. The exact amount of the loan to be determined by the General Properties Trustees in relation to the cost of construction and the church's financial status. We also recommend that the

committee consider the possibility of private funding for securing the lowest loan rates.

**SECTION VI LOCAL CHURCH**

**A. Deeding Local Church Properties**

Local church properties belong to the local church. However, there are many aspects to be considered in deeding properties to protect the local church from loss. We recommend that a standard deed from the Zion Assembly Church of God be drafted by an attorney, and that local church property should be deeded to the local church Property Trustees of:

\_\_\_\_\_ Zion Assembly Church of God, at  
\_\_\_\_\_ (local street address),  
\_\_\_\_\_ (City, State and Zip Code),  
with International Offices at 5512 Water Level Highway  
Cleveland, Tennessee 37323

**B. Local Church Trustees**

We recommend that the local church, in regular quarterly business meeting, select at least three local church trustees (men or women who are familiar with and established in biblical principles as outlined by the General Assembly), and that they be authorized to endorse all legal documents pertinent to the daily operation of local Zion Assembly Church of God, within the rulings and recommendations of the local church and the General Assembly. Those selected should be reaffirmed in the first business meeting after each General Assembly, and serve as long as they retain the unanimous approval of the local church. In the case of death or moral failure, a new trustee should be selected at the next quarterly business meeting.

**SECTION VII GENERAL ASSEMBLY DATES**

The Presiding Bishop has been authorized by the General Assembly to set the dates for the annual meeting. However, selecting dates for the Assembly to accommodate pastoral changes, school teachers, and families with children enrolled in school are difficult. The Presiding Bishop has requested that this committee solicit your suggestions and comments concerning a suitable date for the Assembly.

# Presiding Bishop's Annual Address

## Introduction

As I look on this congregation here today my heart is enlarged—enlarged because I see in you the workmanship of God. I feel the same Spirit that inspired David to write, “It is the Lord that hath made us and not we ourselves,” and the apostle Paul to declare to the church at Corinth, “Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, Who hath made us able ministers of the new testament.” This same revelation is expressed by the apostle in his epistle to the Ephesians: “We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Then a moment later he continued to advance their understanding of God’s eternal purpose for all believers, declaring that God will “reconcile [all] unto God in one body by the cross...[that we should all be] fellow citizens with the saints, and the household of God, [and all be] fitly framed together...for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” In all of these inspired passages the apostle is simply building upon Jesus’ prophetic promise to the church; “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall be one fold, and one shepherd” (John 10:16).

It has been not quite seventeen months since that decisive moment on April 20, 2004 in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, when many of you here today, inspired by the Spirit of God, stepped out by faith to reorganize the church under a new administration—an administration that you believed would faithfully restore the church, and under the Holy Ghost direct and govern it according to the teachings of Christ and the apostles. That step required great faith and inspired courage—faith and courage that comes only from God. My heart is enlarged because you took this action not primarily as a reaction against our former administration and fellowship, but because you desired to keep your sacred covenant before the Lord and one another. You did it not because of resentment or

emulation, but in order to stand blameless before Him! You did it because the same prophetic vision that once inspired your spirit, and enlightened your understanding of God’s church, still burned in your hearts and illuminated your minds—a vision of the church here on earth in power, in holiness, and in glory; a vision of a people who will keep themselves so much under the power and influence of the Spirit, and so much under the truth and authority of the Scriptures, that they will walk by the same rule of faith, mind the same thing, and discipline themselves under the same government and doctrine.

This leap of faith—this great venture of restoration in which we are now engaged—has not been taken without a price to pay. You have had to sacrifice many comforts and conveniences; including places of worship, financial blessings, position, social status, and, in many cases, you have had to endure ridicule, mockery, and marginalizing (shunning) by “friends” and families. But many of you, like me, have been so busy in this great move to restore the church that you did not know you were being shunned. And when you learned of it, you had pity on the ignorance and confusion rather than resentment. In the spirit of Jesus and Stephen, you have prayed rather, “Lord, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

You are to be commended for being willing to pay the price for this restoration! Like well-trained and seasoned soldiers you have held your ground, endured hardness, and remained true to your convictions. But no doubt because of this you have within your breasts today the witness of the Holy Spirit, and the personal satisfaction that you have been true not only to God but to your own selves. While others have merely talked about what is right and true, you have put your faith into action, refusing to fellowship with the “unfruitful works of darkness!” You have not, as Paul put it, merely “beat the air,” but have proven the sincerity of your convictions by joining in this great move to revive and renew the church—to put it back on the tracks of truth and genuine spirituality, in order that the church might fulfill its prophetic destiny as outlined in the Scriptures!

I want to take this opportunity, also, to commend many of you here today, who were not in that historic meeting on April 20, 2004, but have since united with this last days Zion, and have committed (or re-committed) yourselves to the vision and prophetic expectation that ravished the hearts of our great forefathers and foremothers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the prophets and apostles in Old and New Testaments before them! Like Moses, you have decided rather “to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.” You have refused to support the preaching of a defective Gospel—to participate in fellowships that compromise the teachings and practices of Jesus and the apostles. You have rather committed (or re-committed) yourselves to “continue steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship.” By uniting with Zion Assembly, you have affirmed or reaffirmed your covenant to live by “every word of God” and to proclaim the “whole counsel of God.” You have reaffirmed your hope and expectation of “a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing”—and in Jesus’ promise that there shall be “one fold,” in which all born again believers will be united and perfected in the faith!

For this, you have won my admiration. I esteem you highly. You are all heroes to me. This is why my heart is enlarged, and why this body assembled here today—though now small in comparison to what it shall be—is in my estimation so noble and magnificent, and I believe also in the sight of God. This humble body represented by you here today—though belittled and despised by many—God has raised up in this hour to do His bidding, and to interact together with Him to fulfill His eternal purpose in the earth!

I will conclude this introduction with the words of A. J. Tomlinson, spoken in his annual address in 1929, in reference to those who fought so valiantly with him in the struggle in the 1920s:

Doubtless many of you would have retreated or withdrawn from the battlefield long ago as the shot and shell flew thick and fast about you, but you

remembered that you were truly in the institution that is fulfilling prophecy in the last days, and that knowledge heartened you up so powerfully that nothing could move you from your steadfastness, because of the revelation God had given you at some previous time. And I tell you now in this Twenty-Fourth Annual Assembly, that God is still going to let enough oppositions, and shakings, and difficulties, and quakes like earthquakes, come upon us that will shake everybody that can be shaken out...I do not make this statement without some backing or signification from God’s Word. “Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, yet once more, signifieth the REMOVING of those things that are shaken, as of the things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain (Hebrews 12:26, 27.” (*Historical Annual Addresses* 2:54, 55)

## **Section I Progress Report**

A few statistics here will show our progress in the last twelve months (since our last Assembly). These will surely excite the interest of this Assembly and encourage us to work even harder in this present restoration. They reveal the favor of God in the noble work in which we are now engaged. As mentioned above, it has been less than seventeen months since we took that bold step to reorganize the church under a new administration. The *Minutes* of that meeting show that eighty-three brave souls stepped out to reaffirm their faith and to reorganize the church. These precious few were scattered across two countries and about twelve states: their actions were based on faith and deep convictions about what is right and true. These eighty-three courageous believers returned home and began to reorganize themselves into churches and missions in the next few weeks and months. Some of the works at first were very small, organized in homes, garages, and offices with only a hand full of members. Your presiding bishop and his

wife, and your assistant presiding bishop, returned home in Cleveland and organized the church in that city with three members. This was done in the office of Brother McDonald. He then was selected as the pastor, and Sister Phillips accepted the appointment as church clerk. My input in that meeting was to just make motions and second everything. But, though we were only three, wouldn't you know the attendance doubled almost every meeting we had after that for two or three weeks. Soon we were having 15-20 in our meetings, and today we anticipate in the near future a large church in Cleveland. I mention this because our experience in Cleveland is typical of what is happening in several places around the country. I now understand the significance of God speaking to me so vividly on several occasions about three years, saying, "Do not despise the day of small things."

In that meeting on April 20, 2004 at Pigeon Forge, TN we scheduled the first General Assembly for September 23-26, 2004. The *Minutes* of that Assembly show that in those five months we had organized 25 churches in 3 countries (12 in the United States, 8 in Kenya, and 5 in Tanzania). Twelve months later in this Second Annual Assembly records show that we now have 70 churches and missions in 14 states and 3 countries. This means that the number of churches has more than doubled since the last Assembly. The records show also that the number of ministers has increased from 51 to 83—an increase of 32 ministers. Also, our finances have increased every month since we reorganized seventeen months ago. The General Treasurer reported yesterday that more than \$171,000.00 passed through the International Offices this year. I believe this is outstanding for our first full year in operation. We had our first term of the School of Ministry with 44 students, including staff. The subscriptions for the *Voice of Zion* have increased, and we have every reason to believe that there will be substantial increases in every department of the church this coming year.

But what is more important than all these dollar signs and numbers is the restoration of love, piety, and unity in our fellowship. There is now a genuine spirituality permeating our

communion that is continually spreading and flowing in and through the hearts of our ministers and members everywhere. For this we magnify the Lord! We may rest assured also, that as we continue to maintain the "unity of the Spirit" we will see more increases in numbers and finances this coming year.

## **Section II** **"On the Right Line"**

I have borrowed this phrase—"on the right line"—from a comment made by A. J. Tomlinson in 1943. Just before he passed on to his reward, he was interviewed in Fields of the Wood by his son, Homer, during a live radio broadcast for the "Burger Mountain Revival Hour." He was asked what attracted him to return to the mountain in 1902, and particularly to the group of believers then called by the name "Holiness Church at Camp Creek." His answer was: "I wanted to know if they were on the right line." What he meant was the line that God had laid out in His eternal Word—the line from God to us—over against the lines that men had drawn up for their particular sects and denominations. He meant the line of truth—the line of right doctrine—which is universal (even cosmic) in its scope and effect, as David declared, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" (Psalm 19:1-4). Isaiah is more particular when he says in regard to this truth, "Whom shall he teach knowledge? And whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line; here a little there a little: for with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak unto his people..." (Isaiah 28:9-13).

This is what the late bishop meant by "the right line"—the clear and unmistakable Word of God that has the power within it to transform our lives and order them in truth and holiness. And if we refuse to bow to the plain truths of Holy

Scripture, refuse to allow the Word of God to recreate us, and mold us into his perfect image, He will find a people who will. Just as he “cut off” Israel, and grafted in the Gentiles who were willing to obey, so he will cut us off and graft in another people, if we now begin to backslide or “fall away” from our covenant. This is exactly how the apostle Paul interprets David’s passage referred to above, saying, “So faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world” (Romans 10:17, 18).

Now, I don’t believe divorce and remarriage (while your spouse is still living) is “the right line”—the line that God has laid down in His Word. For the Bible says, “What God has joined together let not man put asunder.” The apostle Paul declares without qualification, “For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then, if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from the law; so she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man (Romans 7:2-3). Thus, when men allow for remarriage while one’s spouse is still living, this is man’s line, not God’s.

I don’t believe that dressing in a gaudy fashion---in the fashions of the world---is “the right line.” It is certainly not becoming to a child of God and representative of true spirituality. Even Roman Catholics know better than this (note the plainness of their nuns and “saints!”). God has called us unto holiness and modesty. So we are admonished by the apostle not to “conform to this world.” We are taught in the Scriptures to focus on the inner man, not the outward. We are called rather to cultivate the inward graces of salvation and spirituality, and to adorn ourselves with love, kindness, meekness, longsuffering, patience, forgiveness, the “fruit of the Spirit,” and good works. And these are cultivated in us through prayer and pious devotion.

But listen! It is surely the biggest joke in the world--- a contradiction of true piety and spirituality---to emphasize this

negative aspect of our faith (to discourage cosmetics and jewelry), yet otherwise not be dedicated and devoted followers of the Lord in the positive aspects of our faith; for example, to be slack in our efforts to win souls—to be negligent of going out “into the highways and hedges” and bringing into the house of the Lord the “halt, blind, and maimed.” Surely we are missing the mark when we emphasize negative things, yet seldom, if ever, visit those incarcerated in jails and prisons; or when we fail to give ourselves—our energy, time and finances to relieve the oppressed and care for orphans. We are not advocating, of course, to leave the other “undone,” but surely the positive aspects of our faith are weightier and more important and deserve our greater emphases. I believe the success of this restoration depends upon this—upon these positive things!

Now let us return to the theme of this section—“the right line.” I don’t believe that denying entire sanctification in this present world is “the right line.” For the Bible says, “This is the will of God, even your sanctification” (1 Thessalonians 5:22, 23). And that “God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth” (2 Thessalonians 2:13). The proclamation and real experience of sanctification is the only way to realize Jesus’ promise that we might be “free from sin.”

I don’t believe that confession without the fruit of true repentance is “the right line.” Jesus and the apostles did not accept confessions without sufficient evidence of true spiritual regeneration. Jesus said many shall say (or confess) “Lord, Lord” but that He will reply, “Depart from Me, I never knew you.” Paul said, “No man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost.” Peter refused to accept Simon Magnus into the fellowship of the church—even though he had been baptized—because he manifested a false and unregenerate spirit. Said Peter: “Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right with God” (Acts 8:21). John the Baptist turned people back from his baptismal services—refused to baptize them—because they did not bear the fruit of true repentance.

I don't believe denying that the church is a visible body formed by covenant is "the right line." Plain as day, the Scriptures teach that one is added to the church, not born into it, and this addition is made by pledging ourselves to live under the authority of the Holy Scriptures and the government of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:47; John 14:6, 8, 14; 2 Corinthians 11:2). The church is a "gathered body"—a body "called out" and ordained by Christ through which He might continue to work and accomplish His mission in the world. It is not an abstract spiritual or mystical body. The passage that is so often misinterpreted to support the "invisible church" idea, the "born into the church" theory, is 1 Corinthians 12:13. A little exegesis of the original language in this passage, however, may be helpful to better understand it. Almost all Greek scholars admit that the proposition in this passage, *eis*, translated in this passage "into," would be better rendered "toward" or "unto," because the verb, *baptizo*, that this preposition modifies, is in motion. The passage may be better understood, therefore, to mean that we are saved (or regenerated) "toward" being formed into the body of Christ, not that the new birth automatically "adds" one to a spiritual or invisible church.

Now, you who are here today, and in fact everyone that comes under the sound of our voices in Zion Assembly, must judge for yourselves if this fellowship—Zion Assembly—is "on the right line." You must decide if this communion of faith (or else the one you are in!) can guide you, and carry you forward, to fulfill what God has called the church to be, and to do. Ask yourselves, "Can the fellowship of which I am now a part fulfill the prophetic mission that Christ gave to the church?" Can it bring me with other believers into the "unity of the faith?" Can it fulfill the divine call to become "a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing?" Is it able to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus?" Does it teach "all things whatsoever" that Jesus taught? Now, if your answer to these questions is "no," then I suggest that you seek another fellowship that you believe can fulfill these prophetic expectations. For us who have united with Zion Assembly, we believe that God has raised up this body for this very purpose!

But if you do not believe this, then by all means seek another fellowship. But, in any case, do not remain in the state of limbo that the vast multitudes are in today, "halted between two opinions," as Israel was in Joshua's day. Joshua challenged the people in his day, saying, "choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15). Be single-minded! Decisive! Get out of limbo! Commit yourselves at least to something—to a fellowship—that you can believe in, and to which you can commit your all, and through which you can work to fulfill the great commission. "Shake yourselves," as Isaiah says, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come."

When a minister says that it doesn't matter what you believe, but what you feel that matters—that is not "the right line!" That is not the line from God to us. When ministers tell you that it's all right when one minister believes one thing and another minister believes something else—that it just doesn't matter—that is not "the right line!" When pastors and overseers tell you that one church can believe one thing and another church another thing, and that it's all right, you may be sure that is not "the right line." When ministers or churches tell you that "foot washing" does not have to be observed, that it is merely the sentiment that matters, that is not the "right line." For Jesus said, "If I your Lord and Master have washed feet, ye ought also to wash one another's." When preachers, like Pat Robertson, teach you that there is no such thing as the rapture, you should know that this is not "the right line." And when others, like Kenneth Copeland, deny that salvation is in the atonement, that is not "the right line." When the majority teach that you can be saved by ingesting into your body a Communion wafer, I don't believe that is "the right line." Rather, we are born again purely by grace through faith in the shed blood of Christ and by regeneration in the Spirit! The observance of the Lord's Supper is the outward sign of this inward work!

The Bible says, "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse"---the church---but, by no means, support a fellowship in which the preachers and teachers are compromising and contradicting the Word of God. Do not pay

preachers to preach false doctrine---and thereby encourage people in their sins! Do not support institutions that compromise the teachings of Jesus and the apostles! I know this challenges us, but it seems to me that we have arrived at the time when every believer will have to declare plainly where he or she stands! As Elijah said unto the people in his day, when they were divided between the worship of God and Baal: “How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him” (1 Kings 18:21). Paul says under the covenant, that we should all “walk by the same rule, mind the same thing, and have the same judgment.”

Now somebody said to me recently, “Oh, you think your church is right, and mine is not.” I said, “Yes, I do. I believe my church is right and your particular church is not.” I said, “Don’t you feel that way?” He said, “No, I don’t. I am not a bigot!” I said, “Well, then, why don’t you join my church!” He said, “Because I don’t believe in it!” I said, “Do you believe in yours?” He said, “Yes, I do.” I mention this rather humorous self-contradiction and confusion in this person only to emphasize the point that we should be in the church that we are in because we believe in it! And that all the thousands of churches with their contradictions of one another cannot be all right. We all must decide which church is truly biblical and prophetic, and ordained to fulfill the great commission.

Now listen! You must determine also if this leadership represented here today in Zion Assembly is best suited to lead the church toward its prophetic goals. If you do not believe this leadership is ordained and equipped by the Holy Ghost to do this, I suggest that you find other leaders. After all, everyone is following someone. The Bible teaches that God has ordained it this way! The apostle Paul admonished the New Testament churches to follow him, as he followed Christ, and for all believers to be followers [imitators] of the churches of God (1 Thessalonians 2:14). But if you don’t believe Zion Assembly is a true restoration of the church, then where will you go? As already mentioned, the vast majority out there do not teach the Cross has the ability to entirely sanctify you in this present world. They deny that there is enough power in the

Gospel to keep you holy and blameless before God in this life—to preserve you in Him without sin! Is this the kind of preaching you desire to hear? Is this the kind of leadership you want? The great majority twists the Holy Scriptures to make an excuse for remarriage (while one’s first spouse is still living), and thereby they encourage divorce and remarriage. Is this the quality of fellowship you desire? The vast majority teaches that it doesn’t matter what you wear, or how you dress. A few years ago, two leading bishops in a fellowship well known to you told me in a particular meeting that such teachings as entire sanctification and tongues-speaking as evidence of Spirit-baptism were non-issues to them, and therefore that believers do not have to confess these truths necessarily as a basis for fellowship in the church. They denied also other teachings that we have held sacred and important in our tradition of the faith (still do in Zion Assembly!), and as a necessary condition for full fellowship and communion. Certainly, this is not the faith and practice espoused by our fathers and mothers in this great tradition of the faith. And certainly it is not what A. J. Tomlinson meant by “the right line.” Let us therefore continue to labor for the true Gospel in all of its power and purity! Let us hold fast to the traditions of the faith as we have been taught and that are plainly revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

### **Section III “Keeping the Covenant”**

God’s people are a covenant people, and therefore a “peculiar people” (Exodus 19:5-8; 24:7-8; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:5-9). They are formed spiritually by the Holy Ghost and outwardly into a visible body by the Word of God (John 17:6, 8, 14; Acts 2:41, 42; Ephesians 5:25-27). The Bible is the constitutional basis of the church. This is an important teaching in Zion Assembly—especially important for us to understand—because more than eighty-five percent of all professing Christians in the world today do not believe that the Bible is their final rule for “faith, practice, government, and discipline.” They believe, rather, that whatever they determine in their

religious councils, traditions, or private convictions is their rule of faith. It is whatever seems right “to me” or “to us.” But that’s democracy, not theocracy! We teach in Zion Assembly what the apostles taught under the terms of the New Testament, namely, that our doctrine and practices must “[seem] good to the Holy Ghost”—and “to us” only as they are manifestly pleasing to the Holy Ghost (Acts 15:28).

To keep the covenant means to obey the Word of God and to have no “fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.” It means to refuse to eat the Lord’s Supper or to participate in the Lord’s business with known fornicators, adulterers, thieves, murderers, liars, drunkards, extortioners [people who steal money from their employers or churches], slanderers, whisperers, and backbiters (1 Corinthians 5:4-11; 6:9-11; 2 Corinthians 12:20, 21; 13:1, 2; Romans 1:28-32; Acts 8:13-23).

The word “fellowship” is taken from the Greek word, *koinonia*. It is a strong word; it means to be in partnership with others. It is thus the word used to define the relationship between Peter, James, and John in their fishing business (Luke 5:7, 10). It binds you to other persons with whom you have engaged in some partnership. Thus for one to suffer, the others in the partnership must suffer also; for one to prosper, so will the others—because they have bound themselves together in “part-ner-ship.” Paul said members of the church are “members one of another.”

The covenant is not therefore a private thing; it is by nature a social agreement. Neither it is not simply between you and God; it is rather between “you all” and God (Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Peter 2:9). We participate as “many members” together in one body and one covenant (Romans 12:4, 5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-26). We are formed together as “one flesh” in Christ. Alone, we are merely an ear, an eye, a hand, or a foot. Not one of us sins therefore without affecting other members of the body. We cannot become defective without also affecting in a negative way the rest of the body—that is, the fellowship in which we are “united.” The body will therefore either cure the defect, or the defect will affect the

whole body! Some of you here today are in danger of becoming infected with sins that are spreading through our former fellowship as a whole. To be sure, if these sins are not corrected, they will eventually corrupt you as a particular member in that same body!

In the Old Testament, a particular sin in the camp affected the whole camp. God judged the whole nation for it (Joshua 7:10-26). Israel [all twelve tribes] was one nation under God. What affected one tribe therefore affected the others. God judged the nation as a whole; so also the church [or churches] in the New Testament. This is why Paul is so urgent about the purity of the church at Corinth. The sin of one person was beginning to infect the whole church. It was a cancer that was spreading through the whole body—like yeast through dough. Or to put it in the language of the King James Version: “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” Purge out therefore the old that ye may be a new lump; so also with false or erroneous doctrine. Allow it place, and soon the whole church will be affected by it.

You see, then, why it was necessary for us to take the action that we took in April 2004. We were being pulled into and forced to participate in—to fellowship in—practices that are contrary to the Word of God! To continue on in that fellowship was to become unfaithful to our solemn pledge to God and one another! We were corporately participating in the very things that we said we did not believe in! In flagrant self-contradictions, we were approving of the very things that we were otherwise denouncing. We finally had to admit to ourselves that to remain in that fellowship was the same thing as confessing to all that fellowship was corporately standing for and practicing (or not standing for and not practicing). We were guilty by association—accessories to the crimes! Frankly, we were breaking our covenant! Our only alternative was, therefore, to reorganize ourselves under a new government and administration that would teach and practice the faith consistent with the light that we had on the Gospel. We had to take this action to keep a clear conscience—to remain faithful to our solemn pledge and commitment!

## International & Regional Appointments

### Administrative:

Presiding Bishop.....Wade H. Phillips  
 Assistant Presiding Bishop.....E. A. McDonald, Jr.  
 Managing Editor–*Voice of Zion*..... Joseph Steele  
 International Treasurer..... E. A. McDonald, Jr.  
 International Youth Director.....Zachary Snyder  
 International Sunday School Director.... Jeannie Quillen

### Regional Overseers:

#### United States

- Southeast Region..... E. A. McDonald, Jr.
- Mideast Region..... Ron Massey
- Western Region.....A. B. White

**East Africa**.....Joshua Amara

- (Includes Kenya, Tanzania)

### List of Ministers

#### Bishops

Joseph O. Amara	E. A. McDonald, Jr.
Harold Butts	Kenneth Merritt
William Crook	Patrick Onyango
Charles L. Fields	Wade H. Phillips
Ricky Graves	Joseph A. Steele
Clifford Kelton	Arlynn B. White
Jesse W. Jernigan	
Ronald D. Massey	

#### Deacons

Ray Dickson	William Reid
Earl Dorris	Edward Reitler

Robert Llanaeza  
 Sam Monday  
 Alfanyo Odoyo  
 James Opany Oombo

Ray Sanders  
 Phillip Tingler  
 Tom Villers  
 George Ware

### Male Evangelists

Michael Alanya  
 Charles D. Barker  
 Tom Brown  
 J. J. Davis  
 Dewey Gibson  
 David Nathaniel Gomba  
 Trevor Graves  
 C.R. Gregory  
 Gary L. Larsen  
 Earl L. Linn  
 Juan Lopez  
 Jim Melton  
 Antonius Mingira Masese  
 Jacinto Norriega  
 John Norton

Patrick Ochola  
 Alex Ochudho  
 Ezra Ochola Ogira  
 Saba Saba Oluoch  
 Daniel Chama Ooko  
 Gary Perdue  
 Buddy Quillen  
 Richard Reagan  
 Adam Reid  
 Waldo Reid  
 George W. Solomon  
 Zachary Snyder  
 Jerry Tingler  
 Bruce Wilcox

### Female Evangelists

Dorothy Clardy	Ofelia McKee
Linda Ferre	Jeannie Quillen
Shirley Kimble	Linda Williams

### Churches & Pastors:

#### United States

Adolphus, KY.....	C.R. Gregory
Akron, OH.....	Jim Melton
Bayou La Batre, AL.....	Charles Fields
Butte, MT.....	Gary Purdue
Cleveland, TN.....	E.A. McDonald, Jr.
Clinton, TN.....	Ray Dickson

Crab Orchard, TN.....	Ricky Graves
Dallas, OR.....	Kerry Bryant
Greenville, SC.....	Harold Butts
Hermiston, OR.....	Earl Linn
Metz, WV.....	Tom Brown
Lompoc, CA.....	A. B. White
Murphy, NC.....	Joseph Steele
Oilsdale, CA.....	Linda Williams
Portland, TN.....	William Crook
Pulaski, TN.....	William Crook
Rialto, CA.....	Danny Ramierz
Roanoke, VA.....	Dewey Gibson
Salisbury, MD.....	Jeannie Quillen
Sheridan, WY.....	Gary Larsen
Vallejo, CA.....	George Solomon
Wilmington, NC (also Leland).....	Robert Llaneza

**Missions**

Columbia, SC.....	Wanda Busbee
Dawes, WV.....	Ron Massey
Hundred, WV.....	J.J. Davis
Milton, WV.....	Shirley Kimble

**Kenya** (13 churches, 5 missions)

**Tanzania** (5 churches, 2 missions).....Joshua Amara

**Assembly Attendance: 348 Registered**

***ABSTRACT OF FAITH***

**INTRODUCTION**

Zion Assembly Church of God is a Spirit-filled body of believers who have covenanted themselves together with God to accept and obey the teachings of Christ and His apostles (Exodus 19:3-6; John 14:6, 8; Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:24-32). This commitment is firm, even in this present time of apostasy, when so many are “falling away” and “[departing] from the faith” (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Peter 2; 3:1-12; Jude 3-19).

The ministers and members of Zion Assembly have committed themselves to live and worship together in this “most holy faith,” to walk in truth, to “endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,” “and to cultivate among themselves the graces of love and holiness.” They seek for the perfections of Christ in their fellowship, and by His grace and power to conform to the image of Jesus Christ so completely that when He appears they shall be like Him (Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:1-17; 1 John 3:32).

Besides this internal disposition to cultivated mutual love and care within the household of God, the ministers and members of Zion Assembly have committed themselves to labor for the unity of all believers, until all “see eye to eye,” “speak the same thing,” “walk by the same rule” (Isaiah 52:8; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Philippians 3:16). In this manner, they seek to carry forward the apostolic vision: “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13).

Zion Assembly has further obligated itself to publish and to proclaim the full gospel into all the world in obedience to Christ’s commission to the church (Matthew 28:19).

## Church Membership

Membership in Zion Assembly Church of God is open to all believers whose testimony is evidenced by the fruit of the new birth, and who are willing to covenant themselves together with Christ and the church to walk in the light of the gospel. Candidates become members by the following solemn obligation:

Will you sincerely promise in the presence of God and these witnesses, that you will accept this Bible as the Word of God, believe and practice its teachings rightly divided, with the New Testament as your rule of faith and practice, government and discipline, and agree to walk together as one body in the light of the gospel to the best of your knowledge and ability?

In response to this covenant formula, the candidate answers, “I will by the grace of God.” The minister then lays hands on the new member and offers prayer for divine guidance and strength; the congregation follows with an affectionate welcome, and extends the right hand of fellowship.

### Prominent Teachings in the Scripture

**Note:** The following statements are not meant to form a creed, or to be thought of as an exhaustive statement of beliefs upon which the church is built. They are simply an abstract of some of the important and fundamental teachings and principles set forth in the Holy Scriptures, which form an essential part of the church’s Rule of Faith.

**The Trinity**—The Bible teaches that the one eternal God exists in three persons: namely the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three have distinct identities, yet they form one undivided Godhead, subsisting in the same nature (Romans 5:5; 15:16, 30; 2 Corinthians 1:20; 5:19; John 3:5; Ephesians

2:18; Titus 3:5). The Father is God (Ephesians 4:6), the Son is God (John 1:1-3; 10-1; Hebrews 1:8; Revelation 1:8), the Holy Spirit is God (John 14:17; 16:13; Acts 5:3; 1 Corinthians 2:10), yet there are not three gods, but one God (Deuteronomy 6:4). The three persons of the divine Trinity work together in perfect unity for the salvation of man (John 3:5; 6:44; 14:6, 16, 17; 2 Corinthians 5:19).

**Jesus Christ**—Jesus Christ is the “image of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15), and God’s “only begotten Son” (John 3:16). Through Him, God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received into glory, and now sits on the right hand of God to make intercession for us (Acts 7:55; 1 Timothy 3:16). Through Him alone do men have access unto the heavenly Father. It is through His sacrificial and atoning death on the cross that we are saved. “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). He is the spotless “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). He is also the head of the church and the savior of the body (Ephesians 5:23).

**The Bible**—The Holy Scriptures—both Old and New Testaments—reveal God and His will for man. They are inspired, inerrant, infallible, and unchangeable (2 Timothy 3:14-16; 2 Peter 1:16-21). The truths of the Scriptures are revealed by prophecy, type, precept, and example, illuminated through the power of the Holy Spirit. The teachings of the Bible, particularly in the light of the New Testament, are the Church’s final rule for faith, practice, government, and discipline (Acts 2:42; 2 Peter 3:1, 2). Walking in the light of God’s Word is the guiding principle and commitment of Zion Assembly Church of God. “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105).

**The Church**—The church is a visible body of believers formed and incorporated by covenant with God to keep His

commandments (Exodus 19:5-8; 24:3-8; Psalm 119:57; John 14:15; 17:6, 8, 14; 1 Peter 2:9). It is theocratic in form and function, providing order and government through the Spirit and the Scriptures for God's people (Isaiah 2:2-4; 9:7; Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 12:28). The church is presently imperfect, spotted with backsliders and "false brethren" (1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 2:4; Jude 4). It is thus distinguished from the kingdom of God, the latter being the spiritual realm of all born again believers (John 3:3-8; Romans 14:17; Colossians 1:13). One is "born" into the kingdom; he/she is "added to the church" (John 3:3-8; Acts 2:47). The church will succeed to proclaim the gospel into all the world (Matthew 24:14; 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16); will be perfected "with the washing of water by the word," and will be presented to Christ glorious in holiness (Ephesians 5:26, 27). The General Assembly is the highest tribunal of authority in the church of the interpretation of the Scriptures (Acts 15; 16:4, 5). The purpose of the General Assembly is to promote unity and fellowship among the saints, to search the Scriptures for additional light and understanding, and to resolve differences in interpretations, which tend to be divisive among the ministers and churches. All matters of faith, government, and discipline are discussed before the entire body of the church assembled, and resolved in one accord with the manifest approval of the Spirit (vv. 12, 22, 28), based on the precedent: "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." All male members in good standing have an active voice in the Assembly. Women are a vital part of the church's life and ministry. In matters dealing with church authority, however, they voice their opinions through their husbands and church elders (1 Corinthians 11:3, 7-9; 14:34-36; 1 Timothy 2:12; 3:1-17).

### Salvific Work of Grace

**Conviction** is a revelation to man by the Holy Ghost of the righteous judgment of God. Through conviction, unregenerated souls see themselves as sinners before God, experience guilt, and realize their separation from Him who is holy, just and

good (Isaiah 6:1; John 6:44; Acts 2:37, 38). True repentance can be made only through the work of the Spirit in conviction (John 16:7-15; 1 Corinthians 12:3; see also John 8:32; 14:6).

**Repentance** is the act of confessing one's sins before God, being willing to forsake them and to turn to Christ with all of one's heart, mind, soul, and strength. True repentance can be made only in the spirit of godly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:9, 10). Repentance is manifested by certain fruit "meet for repentance" (Matthew 3:8; Romans 6:2). The act of repentance should be followed by water baptism [see below] (Mark 1:4, 5, 15; Luke 13, 3; Acts 3:19; 5:30, 31; 1 John 1:9). Repentance is a prerequisite experience for justification.

**Justification** is the state of being void of offense toward God. It is made possible through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. It is the act of God in forgiving the transgressions of a penitent sinner. Justification is the result of repentance and faith (Romans 8:1, 2; 3:23-26; 1 John 1:7). The genuinely justified person has "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (5:1, 2). Justification signifies the pardon (forgiveness) aspect of the new birth.

**Regeneration** is the act of God in creating new life in the heart of the believer through the Holy Ghost. It is a definite and instantaneous experience. Man is dead in sins and trespasses through Adam, and can be quickened or regenerated only through faith in Christ and His atoning sacrifice (Ephesians 2:1, 4, 5; Colossians 2:13, 14; John 5:24). Regeneration is the same as the new birth ("born again" experience).

**Born Again** is another term for the new birth. The result of this experience is a new creation, in which the believer becomes a child of God. It is through this new birth that one becomes a part of the Kingdom of God (John 1:29). Jesus said: "Ye must be born again" (John 3:3-8; 1 Peter 1:23). The new birth is a prerequisite condition for the experience of sanctification.

**Fruit of the Spirit** is of divine origin. It is the very life of God poured into the heart of the regenerate believer. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (Galatians 5:22, 23). We are admonished in the Scripture to walk in the Spirit and not to fulfill the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 5:9; Philippians 1:11).

**Divine Healing** is provided for all in the atonement. Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross provides healing for the whole man, including his body. Divine healing is effected by faith without the aid of medicine or surgical skills. In cases where one is healed through the assistance of physicians, medicine, herbs, etc., God is still to be praised: for it is God who heals in any case. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm 103:2, 3; Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matthew 8:17; 2 Peter 2:24; James 5:14-16).

### Subsequent Grace

**Sanctification** is the second definite work of grace wrought in the regenerated heart by faith. In sanctification, the carnal nature is eradicated ("the old man is crucified") so that the believer no longer has the inclination or propensity to sin; that is, in sanctification the desire to sin is removed (Hebrews 10:10; 13:12, 13; Romans 6:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2). Sanctification enables the believer to bring his/her body under subjection to Christ, and to live a life consistent with the spirit of holiness and in accordance with the Word of God. Sanctification is a prerequisite condition for the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

**Holiness** is the result of sanctification. It is a state of grace and purity in which perfect Christlikeness is desired and pursued (Matthew 5:48; 2 Corinthians 7:2). God has called us unto holiness (Thessalonians 4:7). "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15, 16). "Follow peace with all men, and holiness,

without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14; see also Luke 1:74, 75; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Titus 2:11, 12; Eph. 1:4; 4:13, 24). Paul expressed his desire to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28). Christ is returning for a church that is glorious in holiness: "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Ephesians 5:27; see also Psalm 45:9-13).

### Practical Graces

**Restitution** is the act of restoring something wrongfully taken, or the satisfying of one whom otherwise has been wronged (Matthew 3:8; Luke 19:8, 9). This act alone does not save, but it gives evidence of a heart that has truly repented. Restitution glorifies the grace of God and supports the testimony of the believer. It also gives opportunity to reconcile with those who have been wronged. It is the fulfillment of the law of love (Romans 13:8). Some restitutions should be made only with great care and with pastoral guidance, in order to avoid further offense or injury.

**Sabbath** means rest. Observance of the Sabbath in the Old Testament (the seventh day) was instituted to point to the believer's spiritual rest in Christ under the New Covenant. The Old Testament requirement to keep the Sabbath holy is now superseded by the commandment: "Be ye holy," for in Christ the believer is enabled and required to live holy every day. Sunday is not the Sabbath, but is a day set aside by the church to give special attention to the worship of God and the fellowship of the saints (Hosea 2:11; Colossians 2:16, 17; Romans 14:5, 6; Hebrews 4:1-11).

**Meats and Drinks**—The prohibitions against certain meats and drinks in the Old Testament were not extended into the New Testament church. These ceremonial aspects of Mosaic legislation were "nailed to the cross" of Christ, and done away with in the covenant of grace (Colossians 2:13-17; Ephesians 2:15; Hebrews 9:8-11). What one eats and drinks (with the

exception of intoxicating beverages) is now a matter of conscience, and does not violate the nature and principles of the kingdom of God (Romans 14:17). However, one should be mindful of the Scriptural injunction: "...whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (See also: Romans 14:2; 1 Corinthians 8:8; 1 Timothy 4:1-5).

**Tithing and Giving**—Tithing is the giving of one tenth of one's increase to Christ, our High Priest. It began as a voluntary act with Abraham, was required under the Mosaic law, and carried forward by Christ as a discipline for the New Testament church (Matthew 23:23). Tithes are to be brought to the house of God and properly distributed by the ministers having the charge of the treasury (Malachi 3:10). Freewill offerings are to be encouraged and regarded as a gift from the heart. Tithing and giving into the church are part of God's plan to finance His work through the church on earth. We are required in the Scriptures to be good stewards of that which God has entrusted in our care (See also: Genesis 14:18-20; Luke 11:42; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-9; Hebrews 7:1-21).

**Swearing and Profanity**—Taking an oath is contrary to the spirit of the New Testament. "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation" (James 5:12). Jesus said, "But I say unto you, Swear not at all . . . But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (Matthew 5:34, 37; see also Exodus 20:7). An affirmation of the truth is sufficient; it is acceptable even in secular courts. Similarly, the use of profanity reflects an impure heart and has no place in the life of a child of God (Matthew 15:18, 19; Philippians 1:27; 3:20; 1 Peter 1:15; 2 Peter 2:7; James 3:8-10).

**Intoxicating Beverages and Drugs**—"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1). The Scriptures teach against the consumption of alcohol or other intoxicating beverages because God has called us to perfect sobriety (1 Peter 5:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:6; Timothy 3:2; Titus 2:2). Believers are admonished not to "...give place to the devil." So-called moderate or social drinking certainly gives place to the adversary and thus believers should totally abstain (Ephesians 4: 27; see also: Isaiah 28: 7; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 6:10; Galatians 5:21). Much of what is said about intoxicating beverages is true also of drugs. The use of drugs such as tobacco, marijuana, opium, cocaine, etc. impairs the body and is not in keeping with the teachings and principles of Christ and the Scriptures. These things defile the body and are inconsistent with God's call to soberness (2 Corinthians 7:1; Isaiah 55:2; 1 Corinthians 10:31, 32; Ephesians 5:3-8; James 1:21). Drugs used for medical purposes should be taken only under the care and direction of a physician, and then only in good conscience.

**Unequal Yoke**—The Bible teaches against the children of God being unequally yoked with unbelievers. Binding ourselves with unbelievers in organizations and secret orders with an oath is contrary to the Spirit of Christ and the plain teaching in the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 6:14-17). As the espoused bride of Christ, we have covenanted ourselves to give undivided loyalty to Christ. "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:2; Jeremiah 50:5). Membership in organizations which require an oath of secrecy should be dissolved before becoming a member of the church. "Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing" (John 18:20).

## Spirit Baptism and Spiritual Gifts

**Baptism with the Holy Ghost** is an instantaneous experience wrought in the life of the believer subsequent to entire sanctification. In this baptism, Christ is the agent; the Spirit is the element (Matthew 3:11). The baptism with the Spirit on the sanctified life is accompanied with speaking in tongues: “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:2-4; see also: 10:44-47; 19:1-6). The baptism with the spirit is a baptism of spiritual empowerment for service in the kingdom of God (Luke 24:49; John 15:26; Acts 1:8); it also enables one to minister effectively within the church for the self-edification of the body (1 Corinthians 12:12-28; Ephesians 4:11-16).

**Speaking in Tongues** always accompanies the baptism with the Holy Ghost. The believer speaks in “unknown tongues” as “the Spirit gives utterance” (Acts 2:4). “Unknown tongues” is distinguished from speaking by the gift of the Spirit in “diver’s tongues,” that is, in languages that are known to man (Acts 2:6; 1 Corinthians 12:10; 14:2). In either case (“unknown tongues” or languages known to man), the manifestation of tongues (and interpretations) is always consistent with the Word of God (1 Corinthians 14:26). The gift of tongues is a sign to unbelievers (vv. 14:21-23), but serve also for the self-edification of the believer (v. 4).

**Gifts of the Spirit**—There are various gifts and operations of the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). The gifts of the Spirit were in operation in the New Testament church, but thereafter the church began to “fall away,” and the manifestations of the spiritual gifts began to wane. After the apostasy in the fourth century, and the ensuing “dark ages” of Christian history, the manifestation of spiritual gifts (particularly tongues-speaking) were almost non-existent (manifested on occasion mainly among so-called heretics and unorthodox Christians). In these last days (particularly since early in the twentieth century) God

is again pouring out His Spirit “upon all flesh” according to prophecy, in order to fulfill His eternal purpose through the church (Joel 2:28-32; 3:16-18; Acts 2:38, 39).

**Signs Following Believers**—Signs in the New Testament were mainly for the purpose of confirming the Word of God and Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah. As believers went forth preaching the Word in Jesus’ name, the Lord worked with them and confirmed the Word with signs following (Mark 16:15-20). Miraculous signs follow believers in order to confirm the proclamation of the Word of God, to convict sinners, and to edify the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12-14).

## Ordinances

**Water Baptism** is the act of being immersed in water by the minister of the gospel in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It is commanded by Christ and represents His death, burial and resurrection, which is experienced in the life of the believer (Romans 6:3-5). This ordinance has no power to wash away sin, but is the answer of a good conscience toward God (1 Peter 3:21). Water baptism is valid only when the candidate is actually born again (Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:8-10; 16:15, 16; John 3:22, 23; Acts 10:47, 48; 16:33). Water baptism is identified with spiritual regeneration; it is not the door into the church.

**Lord’s Supper** is a memorial meal, which calls to remembrance the sacrifice of Christ, who shed His blood for our sins. Jesus commanded that this sacred meal be observed “in remembrance of me” (1 Corinthians 11:24). The broken, unleavened bread represents His body; the fruit of the vine (unfermented grape juice) represents His blood. This sacred ordinance should be observed with holy reverence, only after careful self-examination (1 Corinthians 10: 16, 17; 11:23-30). It is the outward sign of Christ’s covenant with the church (Luke 22:20).

**Feet Washing** is an ordinance in the church. Following the institution of the Lord's Supper, Christ girded himself with a towel, washed the disciples' feet, and said: "If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14). This ordinance is distinguished from the cultural practice of feet washing in the Middle East; it has spiritual significance and is commanded to be observed by believers (1 Timothy 5:10). The purpose of feet washing is not fulfilled through charity and good works. It is to remind us that we have one Master and Lord, who is the head of the church, and we are all His servants, and servants of one another.

### **Divine Sanctities**

**Sanctity of Life**—Human life is sacred because it is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). Taking of innocent life is thus strictly forbidden in Scripture, including abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, genocide, and suicide (self-murder). "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:13). Whosoever sheddeth innocent blood will not be held guiltless before God (Genesis 9:6; Numbers 35:30, 31; Romans 13:8-10; Revelation 21:8).

**Sanctity of Marriage**—Jesus said, "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matthew 19:4-6). Accordingly, marriage is between a male and female until death (Mark 10:2-12; Romans 7:2); as such it is a divine institution that should be held in the highest esteem among all men and women (Hebrews 13:4). Adultery, fornication, divorce and remarriage are sinful practices that violate the laws of God, and injure the home and family. Nevertheless, unfaithfulness (sexual relationships outside of

marriage) is not grounds for divorce and remarriage, for "whosoever marrieth her which is put away committeth adultery" (Matthew 19:9). Therefore, those who remarry while their first companion is alive are not eligible for membership in the church (see Exodus 20:14, 17; Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 5:32; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 6:15-20; 7:2, 3).

**Sanctity of the Body**—Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and we are admonished to glorify God in our body (1 Corinthians 6:20-21). "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy" (3:16-17). We are also admonished to present our bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Romans 12:1, and "...whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31b). Incest, same sex unions, and all homosexual and lesbian relationships are strictly forbidden by the Scriptures. These practices are an abomination to God, though they may be sanctioned by a state or religious institution (Romans 1:24-28; Leviticus 18:22, 23; 20:10-21). Practices such as "body piercing," tattooing, mutilating and disfiguring the body are of pagan origin and contrary to the spirit of holiness and biblical principles. These practices should have no place in the lives of believers (Cf: Timothy 2:8-10; Romans 12:1, 2; Isaiah 3:16-22; 1 John 2:15-17).

### **Eschatology**

**Pre-Millennial Second Coming of Jesus**—Christ is coming again in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matthew 24:27, 28). "The dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; see also 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52). All who are caught up in the first resurrection will attend the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9). Christ will then return to earth and reign with the saints for a thousand years (vv. 4, 6; see also

Zechariah 14:4, 5; 1 Thessalonians 4:14; Jude 14, 15; Revelation 5:10; 19:11-21).

**Resurrection**—There will be a resurrection for both the righteous and the wicked. The righteous will be raised at Christ's first appearance in the clouds of glory. The resurrection of the wicked will occur after the thousand year's reign of Christ on earth. "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15; see also Daniel 12: 2; Revelation 20: 4-6; John 5: 28, 29; 1 Corinthians 15:12-23, 41-58).

**Eternal Life for the Righteous**—The reward of the righteous is everlasting life in the presence of God. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46; Luke 18:29, 30; John 10:28; Romans 6:22; 1 John 5:11-13).

**Eternal Punishment for the Wicked**—Those who reject or disregard the call to repentance and salvation are doomed to eternal damnation (John 3:15-21). In hell there is no escape, no liberation, and no annihilation. Hell is the "the second death," and is a place of eternal torment. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8; see also: 20:10-15; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Jude 14:15; Matthew 25:46; Mark 3:29).

### **Principles for Practical Christian Living and Discipline**

The following guidelines are explicitly revealed in the Scriptures, or else shown to be consistent with biblical teachings. They are brought to our attention to enhance our

relationship with Christ and one another, and to encourage us to live in a way that will bring glory and honor to the name of Christ, and to support the witness of the church. We are admonished in the Scriptures: "...be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12b). Jesus instructs us: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

**Prayer**—Jesus' admonition to "watch and pray" (Matthew 26:41a) has never been more urgent than today. We live in "perilous times," and Christ and the apostles warned that the times will only worsen as we approach our Lord's return. Therefore, daily prayers and family devotions should be a priority in every church home. Maintaining a prayerful attitude is a key to spirituality for every individual and local congregation. Again Jesus said, "...men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1a), and the apostle encouraged believers to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). We are also enjoined to "...pray one for another..." (James 5:16a). Special prayers should be made for those in authority and for those who have given themselves in service to God and to the ministry of the Word (1 Timothy 2:1-3). Prayer is so essential to the life of the church that the church is called "the house of prayer" (Isaiah 56:7; Matthew 21:13).

**Bible Study**—Reading and studying the Scriptures are invaluable to the spiritual welfare of the child of God. Every member of the church is encouraged to be a faithful student of God's Holy Word. Paul instructs us to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God..." (2 Tim 2:15a), for "the holy scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (3:15). Further, he says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (v.16). The importance of the Word of God is eloquently expressed by Psalmist: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto

my path.” And again, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Psalm 119:105, 11).

**Church Attendance and Worship**—Worship and fellowship with believers of “like precious faith” is a vital part of the Christian life. Worship should be heartfelt in the Spirit, and in harmony with the Word of God (John 4:23b; Ephesians 5:19). Each member of the church is a part of the body of Christ, and thus the body will be hindered to the degree that one member fails to actively participate in its life and mission. Accordingly, members should actively support every function of the church, and participate as much as possible. The exhortation of the Hebrew writer is worthy of our careful attention: “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some; but exhorting one another: and so much more as we see the day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25). Children should be instructed at home, and taught by precept and example to respect the house of God. Ministers and their families should be examples in their lifestyles and conversations. “And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane” (Ezekiel 44:23a). A prayerful attitude creates an atmosphere conducive for worship and the ministry of God’s Word. Believers should therefore be prayerful as the minister delivers the message, lest Satan come and steal the Word of God from their hearts (Mark 4:4, 15). God’s love “shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost” should fill the atmosphere of our worship services. Love should govern our every action and be shown to everyone without partiality (1 Corinthians 13). We should take special care to show love to visitors. Jesus said, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35).

**Walking Circumspectly**—Children of God should “walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time for the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:15, 16). Living a consecrated life at home and abroad will give no place for anyone to justly think or speak of you as a hypocrite. Our

manner of life and conversation should be holy in word and deed, as becoming to a child of God. As representatives of Christ in this world, and members of the Church of God, we should fashion ourselves with modesty and sobriety (Psalm 1:1-3; Philippians 1:27; Thessalonians 5:15-23).

**Entertainment and Worldly Attractions**—Christians should never participate in worldly attractions and entertainment where the principles of holiness may be compromised. Believers should participate in activities with unbelievers only with a guarded disposition, lest one becomes entangled or entrapped in the snares of Satan. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8; see also 2 Peter 2:19-22).

**Illicit Relationships**—Paul admonishes us to “give no place to the devil” (Ephesians 4:27). Forming too close an intimacy with the opposite sex, even if they are brothers and sisters in the Lord, creates an environment for temptation and gives opportunity for the “wiles of the devil.” Samson is a classic case of this unwise behavior, which led to his fall from grace (Judges 16); whereas Joseph wisely fled from a similar situation (Genesis 39). Paul perhaps had Joseph in mind when he exhorted, “Flee fornication” (1 Corinthians 6:18). The words of James, the Lord’s brother, also come to mind: “Lust when it is conceived bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death” (James 1:13-15). In view of these solemn admonitions, great care should be taken to avoid associations and situations, which could reflect upon one’s character and bring reproach upon Christ and the church.

**Outward Adornment**—Christians are ambassadors (representatives) for Christ in this present world (2 Corinthians 5:20). As such they should be careful to adorn themselves as befitting their Lord’s plainness and purity. Adorning oneself after a worldly fashion with facial paint, gold, pearls, costly apparel, etc. is inconsistent with the

testimony of one professing a life separated unto God. “Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel...But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price” (1 Peter 3:1-6; see also 1 Timothy 2:8-10; Isaiah 3:16-24; 61:10).

**Corporate and Self-Discipline**—Self-examinations to evaluate one’s own faith and spirituality are healthy (1 Corinthians 11:28). Sincere concern for others is also good and to be encouraged. We are our brother’s keeper. Counsel should be given only in the spirit of love and with godly wisdom, and according to the rule of discipline outlined in the gospel (Matthew 18:15-20). (A harsh spirit of criticism is detrimental to the spiritual welfare of both the critic and the one receiving the criticism: Matthew 7:1-5; 2 Corinthians 2:1-11; Galatians 5:14, 15; Ephesians 4:30-32). Discipline should be administered only as a last resort, and always through prayerful counsel and with the ultimate good of the erring brother/sister in mind (1 Corinthians 5:1-7; Galatians 6:1-5).