

# The Lighthouse Church's Core Values

Christians / disciples need to have some core values if they want to grow and help those they lead to grow. Clearly stated values of the church to which the people belong can help the leader and the led clarify their personal values.

## Affirmation 1, WE LOVE GOD. Therefore, we value and stand for . . .

### 1. A Worshiping Community

A Christian community is first and foremost a worshiping community of believers. Nothing more important ever happens on earth than the worship of God. Worship characterizes and identifies a faith community. It is the Christian's primary privilege and duty. Praise to the Lord is expressed when the community gathers for church services, in private devotional moments in homes, or in small group settings. Read Psalm 95:6-9, *"So come, let us worship: bow before him, on your knees before GOD, who made us! Oh yes, he's our God, and we're the people he pastures, the flock he feeds. Drop everything and listen, listen as he speaks: "Don't turn a deaf ear as in the Bitter Uprising, As on the day of the Wilderness Test, when your ancestors turned and put me to the test"*.

We believe that both private and corporate worship are utterly necessary.

In one sense, worship is the only task of the Christian. That is to say, everything the believer does is an expression of worship; Regardless of the form, manner, setting, or time, worship, for the followers of Jesus, is both first priority and magnificent obsession.

### 2. A Biblical Faith

Our faith is grounded in the Christ of Scripture. Therefore, we take seriously the entire Bible, believing it to be the written revelation of God, the written revelation of our Heavenly Father. The Lighthouse Church neither hesitates to affirm nor apologizes for its emphasis on the Scriptures or the requirement that a member of the congregation should take care to better understand God's written revelation to His people.

The Scriptures reveal to us the Living Word—Jesus Christ: His life, death, and resurrection; His relationship to the Father; and His relationship to us before our creation. They teach us to walk with Him daily and to anticipate life with Him eternally.

Our faith will not be shaped by embracing "false gods" or "world religions"; rather, we affirm with the Scriptures that *"there is only one God, and one mediator between God and man, the person, Christ Jesus"* (1 Tim 2:5).

### 3. A Christlike Lifestyle

A biblical faith will result in Christian action. *"They will know that we are Christians by our love"* echoes the old chorus. Followers of Jesus increasingly seek to live like Jesus. Christlikeness should increasingly characterize the lives of those who profess faith in Him.

Jesus is remembered as one whose primary orientation was toward giving, not getting. In this, He is our prototype. Read again the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5—7 to catch a glimpse of the way Jesus intends for us to live. Jesus concludes, *"But seek first his (God's) kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well"* (Mt 6:33).

Our attitudes regarding the sacredness of life, even of the unborn, the stewardship of our possessions, the perils of homosexuality, and the beauty of sex within the marriage bond are shaped by the teaching of Jesus.

His attitudes must increasingly become our attitudes—He loved, served, taught, confronted, and forgave. His actions must increasingly become our actions—He *"came to do the will of his Heavenly Father."* And Jesus said to His disciples, *"As the Father has sent me, so send I you"* (Jn 20:21).

### 4. A Holiness Ethic

A Christian "wholly" committed to loving God will follow a trail not traveled by non-Christians. Decisions will be made that flow from biblical convictions. The integration of faith and life becomes increasingly important to the maturing Christian.

- Some things are done, others are not done.
- Some words are spoken, others are not spoken.
- Some actions are taken, others not, because of who we are as devoted followers of Jesus, because of what we

stand for, because of scriptural commands we affirm, and because of prohibitions in scripture we avoid. The holiness ethic is both individual and social.

The basis for decision-making for the believer wholly committed to following Jesus will be radically different from the one whose faith is culturally or parentally passed on.

*“Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hopes fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘be holy, because I am holy.’”* (1 Peter 1:13-15)

## 5. A Global Mission

“Red and yellow, black and white, all are precious in His sight” goes the chorus we often sang as children. And it is true. The world—the whole world—is the arena of God’s love and concern.

To experience people of other cultures, individuals who differ from us in color, race, culture, and language, confronts us with the narrowness of our own cultural blinders. To affirm that God loves “them” as He does us is to broaden our vision of God’s love and concern beyond “our” city, state, region, or country.

Individuals in the poorest of countries and farthest from us geographically are loved by God and in need of the gospel of forgiveness and grace.

Christian musician Steven Green reminds us that

*“To love the Lord our God is the heartbeat of our mission,  
The spring from which our service overflows,  
Across the street and around the land, the mission’s still the same,  
Proclaim and live the truth in Jesus’ name.”*

The mission of committed Christians gives focus to our activities, behavior, thoughts, and action. An evangelistic zeal drives us with passion to tell others of the saving grace of Jesus.

The great commission says to go unto the entire world, *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”* (Matthew 28:19-20)

## 6. A Creation Vision

The Scriptures affirm that *“The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof”* (Ps 24:1, KJV). We are challenged and commanded in Scripture to take care of God’s creation.

In the past few years enormous changes have taken place in our thinking about environmental issues. We are increasingly aware of and concerned about conservation and protection. The Christian stewardship of creation begins with the affirmation that God has “loaned” the earth to us, and it is our responsibility to protect it for ourselves as well as for future generations.

## 7. A Spirit-Empowered Devotion

To live with a focused mission demands that we set aside quality time each day to spend alone with God. The devotional life must be nurtured each day through prayer, Scripture, words of Christian hymns, silence, and solitude.

Most of us need another individual to whom we can be accountable to insure that these sacred moments are not squeezed out by other “good” things. Use Christian music, the written prayers of others, the Bible, a spiritual journal to focus attention daily on *“God who was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.”*

Talk to God as you talk to your closest friend.

His very Spirit within us prompts and enables us to quiet our hearts before God each day—in your homes, in church, in some corner, with others, or alone with God. Make time to nurture daily your growing relationship with God.

*“Be still and know that I am God;”* (Ps 46:10)

*“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth,”* (2 Timothy 2:15)

## **Affirmation 2, WE LOVE OTHERS. Therefore, we value and stand for . . .**

### **1. A Magnanimous Spirit**

Committed Christians are big-spirited. They give others the benefit of the doubt. They recognize that mistakes can be made, even by themselves. They believe the best, not the worst, in others. They want others to succeed, not fail. They are happy when others receive attention, awards, and accolades. They don't "put people down" in order to build themselves up or have a healthy self-image. They freely forgive, even before forgiveness is asked.

Jesus taught us an unforgettable lesson about forgiveness. He said, *"Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."* It's ironic. His "enemies" had not asked for forgiveness, nor did their behavior toward Jesus change when Jesus extended forgiveness to them. What difference, then, did forgiveness make? Not in outward circumstances, for sure. They continued to kill Him. However, His words of forgiveness made all the difference inwardly. He would not permit what others said or what they did to create anger, resentment, and bitterness within Him. His relationship to the Father was so much more important. Others' behavior toward Him would not be permitted to rupture the relationship with the Father. "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." A magnanimous, forgiving spirit. And this must be our spirit.

Magnanimous – 1. Courageously noble in mind and heart

2. Generous in forgiving; eschewing resentment or revenge; unselfish

### **2. A Servant Mentality**

Christians embracing the lifestyle of Christlikeness are challenged to find tangible, concrete ways to serve others in Jesus' name and say to fellow believers within the fellowship, "I love you. I care for you. You are my brother or sister in Christ."

In its briefest and most general understanding, ministry is service to others in Jesus' name. Certain words help us understand the various dimensions of Christian ministry—words like caring, sharing, growing, relating, teaching, and confronting. Ministry in New Testament perspective takes the form of holding the hand of a person engulfed in fear, listening intently to a person in trouble, crying with a person who is hurt, or embracing the individual who is grieving. It may include taking friends to the store for groceries, sharing your talents with others, or confronting in love the lack of discipline or careless habits. Ministry encompasses the sharing of the Christian faith or a verse of scripture with another in time of need.

Christian ministry is the extension of Jesus in our world, incarnating the healing, guiding, sustaining, reconciling work of Jesus in the lives of those with whom we work and live. If you are a Christian, you are called to Christian ministry.

Ministry understood in this broadest sense is the context for our specific ministry. We may be specifically called and gifted for pastoral ministry, teaching ministry, evangelism ministry, music ministry, or leadership ministry. But it is futile and self-defeating to seek to function within our particular calling while ignoring the broader calling to serve others in Jesus' name.

*"After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples feet, drying them with the towel that he wrapped around Him."* (John 13:4)

### **3. A Trustworthy Character**

"Character is what you are," someone said, "when no one is looking at you." Character is the sum total of our values, priorities, commitments, and decisions. Increasingly, Spirit-filled Christians develop a Christlike character as they grow and mature in Christ.

Ephesians 4:25 exhorts us not to lie. "Put off falsehood," one translation states. The specific reference is to "speaking the truth" within the Body of Christ, the fellowship of believers.

Increasingly, our *word* must become our *bond*. What people "see" is what they should "get." Our lives should assume an authentic, transparent, and genuine nature. Our character is trustworthy, in all areas of life.

We want people with whom we live, work, and worship with to see us as honest, not just with facts, dates, and figures, but with our emotions—particularly negative emotions that tend to divide and separate the Christian fellowship.

### **4. A Positive Influence**

*“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful to others, that it may benefit those who listen.”* This admonition in Ephesians 4:29 puts most of us under conviction. Our words tend to be self-serving rather than for others.

Spirit filled Christians increasingly make a positive rather than a negative difference in the people with whom they associate and in the situation wherein they find themselves.

A good question to ask is this: Do people with whom I associate feel better or worse about themselves, their work, life, and God as a result of my involvement with them? Determine to be a positive, rather than a negative, Christian—someone who builds up others instead of tearing them down, a person whose words “benefit” those who listen, not undermines, belittles, or destroys them.

As Christians mature in Christ, the focus must be on building up others, not tearing them down; on encouragement, not discouragement; on supporting, not undermining; on healing, not hurting; on caring, not indifference; on others, not on ourselves.

## **5. A Courteous Response**

The way of Christlikeness is a path whereby committed Christians “are being renewed in the attitude of their minds.” The Ephesians 4:23 passage is given in the context of a contrast between ways Christians and non-Christians live their lives and respond to others.

Core attitudes of the heart found in Ephesians 4:23 that should increasingly characterize Spirit-filled Christians and Christlike leaders include the following:

1. I love you—you are my brother/sister in Christ.
2. I need you—you have strengths and gifts I do not have.
3. I accept you—you are being changed by Christ as I am being changed.
4. I respect you—you are different, yet we are one in Christ.
5. I trust you—you desire to serve the same Christ as I serve.
6. I serve you—I want to minister grace to you.

These are key attitudes for the Christian who seeks to nurture faith and life in the persons he or she leads. From these basic attitudes, specific goals can be derived for the people we serve.

These attitudes of the heart enable us to respond courteously to others, even within the Christian fellowship, who do not reflect the same attitudes and behavior toward us.

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you” (Eph 4:32, NRSV).

## **6. A Giving Motivation**

The biblical reference to giving we have heard throughout our lives: *“It is more blessed to give than to receive”* (Acts 20:35). And the usual context in which we focus this admonition is in reference to money.

Money, for sure, must be included in the discussion. Another equally strong biblical principle states, *“to whom much has been given, much will be required”* (Lk 12:48b, NRSV).

But “giving,” if it relates only to money, permits us to get off the hook and allows us to miss the principle.

A commodity just as rare as money is time. And the giving of our time is included in the biblical injunction.

Time is needed to greet a new comer to church, to get acquainted with them, assist them in adjusting to a new, if not strange, environment, bring them into our friendship loop, invite them to be apart of your life. Remember your first days in a new church? Anxiety? Fear? Outsider? Rejected? Pain?

“Christ died while we were yet sinners.” We did not deserve the gift of eternal life He gave to us. Look around, often, and see people in need of something you can give. You give, like Christ, not because the other person “deserves” the gift

necessarily, but because you desire to love others as Christ loved us.

## **7. An Appreciative Attitude**

The contemporary song asks the question, “How can I say a million thanks for the things You have done for me—things so undeserved . . . the voices of a thousand angels cannot express my gratitude. All that I am, or ever hope to be, I owe it all to Thee.” The refrain of the song continues with thanksgiving to God for all that He has done.

Holiness people are grateful people. Grateful to God, through His unmerited grace, for saving, sanctifying, and establishing them firmly in the way of holiness. A spirit of thanksgiving must be the continuous response of the committed Christian to the goodness of God in his or her life.

Yet, our expressions of appreciation should extend to others who help us along the journey.

Songwriter and musician Ray Boltz shared the background for writing one of his top hits at that time. He wrote the song for Pastor’s Appreciation Day in his local church. The heart of the song expresses gratitude to his pastor. “Thank you for giving to the Lord, I’m a life that’s been changed . . . Jesus took the gift you gave. That’s why I’m here today.”

In addition to expressing praise and thanksgiving to God, find another person, daily, to whom you can say—honestly and genuinely—

I thank you.

I’m grateful to you.

I appreciate you.

And be as specific as you can in expressing your gratitude to the other person. You may have to look hard each day for someone to whom you can express gratitude. But keep looking . . . you will find someone.

And when you find it . . . discipline yourself to express appreciation. Develop an appreciative attitude. It is healthy for you physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Find someone each day to whom you can say . . .

I thank you.

I’m grateful to you.

I appreciate you.

*“We give thanks to You, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign.” (Rev. 11:17)*

## **In conclusion:**

We believe that these core values are a result of a maturing and growing Christian/Disciple of Jesus Christ. We believe that through the power of the Holy Spirit we have the power to change the world around us and the people that live in it.

We believe that it is our calling at The Lighthouse Church to see that people have the opportunity to grow in to the fullness of God through the work of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, to give opportunities of service and to educate people in the truths that are found in the scriptures.

We pray that you will allow the power of God to want to strive for these core values as you worship, work, fellowship and pray here at The Lighthouse Church.