

## Core Value 1: The Bible

Now we will walk through our core values for our church for us as a church. We have a constitution and bylaws and core values that are formally adopted by the church. And so we will talk through these core values together.

### Core Value 1: God's Word

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**Doctrine (truth)** We believe that God has spoken, Historical

**Devotion (relationship)** and continues to speak, Ongoing

**Duty (action)** to all of His people through the Bible.

Not just priests

Challenges: Interpret Apply

Beneficial

Active work of God

Spirit speaks to us today when Bible is read  
*Hebrews 10:15-18*

*2 Timothy 3:14-17; Hebrews 4:12-13*

So the first one focuses on God's Word. We believe that God has spoken, and that He continues to speak. And He does this to all of His people through the Bible. And so in this sense, we believe in the historical speaking of God and the ongoing speaking of God. And this is through the Bible. So historically He communicated through people in His Word, and this happened in the historical settings.

And yet, even though that was in history, it continues on today. And so this passage in Hebrews 10 highlights that the Spirit speaks to us today when the Bible is read. And so it is significant to us that the Spirit speaks even though in the past is when He spoke. So there is a historical speaking, and then the ongoing speaking through His Word.

And it is through the Bible to all of His people. And so this is not just to a certain class of people. So it's not just to priests or people like that. God speaks to all of His people through the Bible. Certainly there's an important difference between the historical speaking and the ongoing speaking. In the historical speaking, these are fixed words that they don't change.

The ongoing speaking is something that is dynamic, that is active today. 2 Timothy 3 highlights that the Bible is beneficial. It is useful for teaching us, for guiding us, for shaping us. And so all

of Scripture is of value to us. Hebrews 4 highlights that there is the active work of God through Scripture, so that the Spirit is working. And of course, the fact that there is historical speaking of God and the ongoing speaking of God presents to us some important challenges and one is to interpret, so when we read the Bible, we have to understand what it means. And in some ways the greater challenge is to apply. Once we know what it means, we need to know how we need to take action, to put it into practice.

## Core Value 1: God's Word Page 2 of 2

**Doctrine**  
(truth)

**Devotion**  
(relationship)

**Duty**  
(action)

So the Bible and its teachings are central to our ministries and gatherings as a church.

We encourage all of our people to read and study the Bible, whether it is individually, in small groups, or as a church, using the languages and tools that are best suited to them while also being accurate and clear in the expression of God's message in His Word. Acts 17:10-12

*Handwritten notes:*

- Renewal of our minds* (next to Doctrine)
- Kids, Life Groups, Fellowship* (next to central)
- Know God Together* (next to Devotion)
- Study & Apply* (next to Duty)
- Indifferent ways* (next to small groups)
- helpful* (next to best suited)
- Hebrew & Greek → translations: God speaks* (next to languages and tools)

So that has implications for us. We now believe that, because of this, the Bible and its teachings are central to us, that the Bible is very important, because it is this authoritative expression of God to his people. And so it's central to all of our ministries and gatherings as a church. And so this is true for kids. Our kids ministry has a big emphasis on the Bible and understanding it. Our life groups and in many ways, our fellowship. This means that there are times that we meet together and don't specifically open the Bible. There are certainly times like that. But this is central to who we are. And so we encourage all of our people, whatever category in life we're in, to both read and study the Bible.

We recognize that some of us are very word oriented, and others have different ways of knowing and understanding things, and so we believe that this will look differently, so this will happen in different ways for different people. For some people, it will look very academic. For others it'll look very creative. For others it might be very action oriented. However it happens, we encourage all of our people to read and study the Bible. And we'll do it individually. It's an important thing for people to be listening to the Word, reading the Word. This will happen in our small groups, in our gatherings, and of course, when we gather as a whole church.

We want people to read and study the Bible using the languages and tools that are best suited to them. So it is significant that the Bible was originally written primarily in Hebrew and Greek,

and yet these, as they were written, are not active languages, and we aren't people who regularly speak or know these languages. And so it's very significant that we believe, that in the translations, God speaks.

And to me the most dramatic illustration of this is that the Old Testament, written primarily in Hebrew, had a translation in Jesus' day, called the Septuagint that was a Greek translation of the Hebrew. Many times, our New Testament includes quotations from the Greek Old Testament and saying, "This is God speaking. So this was a declaration, from the beginning, that God continues to speak, even in translations. And so we encourage people to use translations and tools that are best suited for them, in other words, things that are helpful. And so there are there are many different translations in different languages, and we encourage people to find the translations that are helpful while also being accurate and clear.

We believe in the objective message of God's message in his Word, in the Bible, and so we want that to be expressed clearly and accurately and in a way that is meaningful for people. For some people, that means studying the Bible in English or perhaps another language. It means using study Bibles or commentaries or dictionaries or other resources that might be helpful.

So when we think about God's Word and our belief in its power and significance for us, we do have a duty to study and to apply. And this is an important part of our responsibility in the church. Yet it's not just academic.

And so in devotion, in relationship, our goal in studying the Bible, a key goal is to know God, in a relationship, to hear from God, to know him better. And we want to do this together. So much of our time in understanding the Bible is so rich when it is with other people. So we build a relationship with God and with each other.

And our hope in understanding the Bible better and studying it, is the renewal of our minds. We want our thinking to be shaped by the ideas of the Bible, by the words of the Bible, so that our lives as well will be transformed. So we believe that God's Word is powerful, because God has spoken and continues to speak to all of His people through His Word.

### **Reflection Questions**

- Often we think of “studying” the Bible in very academic ways. What might be some risks of an academic approach? What are other ways that people can “study” the Bible?
- What are some difficulties of translation in our interconnected world? How might those difficulties also occur in translations of the Bible? What can be done about those difficulties?
- Why is important to highlight both the historical and ongoing communication of God? How are they similar? How are they different?
- What helps you be aware of God’s ongoing communication? What makes it challenging?

- In what sense does God speak to all of His people through the Bible?