

Statement of Faith,
Philosophy of Ministry
and
Mission Statement
of the
First Baptist Church of Lake Orion

This Statement shall apply to any and all ministries of
the ***First Baptist Church of Lake Orion***
which includes ***Lake Orion Baptist School***

First Baptist Church of Lake Orion
255 E. Scripps Road
Lake Orion, MI 48360
248.693.6203

Senior Pastor: *Dr. Juan M Moreno*

The Statement of *Faith and Fellowship*

I. First Baptist Church of Lake Orion subscribes and submits to the following *Statement of Faith*.

A. The Bible

We believe that the words of Scripture are inspired by God (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21) and that all of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, as originally written, are without error (John 10:35; 17:17) and the final authority on all matters of faith and practice (1 Tim. 3:14-15). We believe that God has providentially (not miraculously) preserved His Word for us today as evidenced by the plethora of existing sacred manuscript and translations.

B. The Trinity (Tri-Unity of God)

We believe that the one true God exists eternally in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are equal in essence, yet distinct in personality (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19, 2 Cor. 13:14).

C. God the Father

We believe that God the Father is the First Person of the eternal Trinity, being the Father because of His personal relationship to the Son (2 John 3), whom He sent into the world (1 John 4:10), and Who, together with the Son, sent the Spirit (John 14:26; 15:26). The Father is the ultimate source of all things (1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:9), the sustainer of all things (Neh. 9:6; Acts 17:25, 28), and the controller of all things (Ps. 103:19; 148:8). He enters into a Fatherhood relationship with believers spiritually through the new birth (John 1:12), indwells believers (John 14:23), forgives their sins (1 John 1:9), and answers their prayers (John 16:23).

D. Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the eternal Son of God, that He is both God and man, possessing two natures within one person (John 1:1,14; Heb. 1:8; 1 Tim. 2:5). We believe that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:35), and born of a virgin (Matt. 1:18-25). We believe that Jesus Christ died as a sinless substitute to pay the penalty for mankind's sin (1 John 2:2), was buried, rose again from the dead (1 Cor. 15:3-4), and is seated at the right hand of the Father, interceding for believers (Heb. 7:24-25; 1 Tim. 2:5).

E. Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is an eternal and divine person (Acts 5:3,4; Heb. 9:14), sent from the Father to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-11), bear witness to Jesus Christ (John 15:26; 16:14-15), impart new life to those who put their faith in Christ (Titus 3:5), and transform believers into the image of Jesus Christ through the Word of God (2 Cor. 3:18).

F. Man

We believe that God created man in His own image by a direct act on the sixth day of the creation week (Gen 1:26-31). We believe that man deliberately chose to disobey the expressed will of God and therefore fell under God's condemnation (Rom 5:12). The extent of man's depravity touches every portion of his being—mind, will, and emotions (Eph 4:17-19; 1 Cor 2:14); therefore, man is completely unable to do anything to earn God's favor or contribute to his own salvation (Rom 3:20; 4:5-6; Titus 3:5).

1. Marriage and Human Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. (Gen 1:26-27)

We believe that the only legitimate marriage as defined by God is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen 2:22-25; Rom 7:2; 1 Cor 7:10; Mt 19:4-6; Eph 5:22-23)

We believe that God has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman. Additionally, contemporary thinking, cultural trends, or personal preferences must never establish the

Christian lifestyle if they violate the timeless life liberating truths of God's Holy Word (the Bible).

We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgenderism, bestiality, incest, fornication, and adultery (as well as any other aberrant sexual practices) are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. (Gen 2:24, 18:20, 19:5-7, 13; Ex 20:14; Lev 18:1-30; Dt 23:17; Rom 1:24-32; 1 Cor 5:1, 13; 6:9-18; 1 Thes 4:1-8; Heb 13:4; Jude v.7)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11) We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31) Hatful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are neither in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of First Baptist Church of Lake Orion.

2. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. The family is instituted by God through marriage, the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents. (Gen 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Ex 20:12; Dt 6:4-9; Josh 24:15; 1 Sam 1:26-28; Ps 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Pr 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecc 4:9-12; 9:9; Mal 2:14-16; Mt 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mk 10:6-12; Rom 1:18-32; 1 Cor 7:1-16; Eph 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Col 3:18-21; 1 Tim 5:8,14; 2 Tim 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Heb 13:4; 1 Pe 3:1-7)

G. Salvation

We believe that salvation is by God's grace through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ alone (Rom. 3:22-24; Eph. 2:8-9). Salvation was purchased by the shedding of Christ's blood upon the cross (Rom. 3:25), is applied to individuals by the work of the Holy Spirit using the Word of God (John 16:8-11; I Pet. 1:23), and is received by repentance (Acts 20:21) and faith in the resurrected Son of God (Rom. 10:9-10). We believe that God makes secure and guarantees the final salvation of every true believer (John 10:27-30; Rom. 8:35-39), and that genuine believers must and will persevere in their faith until they meet the Lord (I Cor. 15:2; Col. 1:23).

H. Sanctification

We believe that the will of God for every believer is to be made holy and like Jesus Christ (I Thess. 4:3; Rom. 8:29). At the moment of salvation the believer receives a holy standing before God due to the righteousness of Christ, often referred to as positional sanctification (Heb. 10:10,14). The new birth creates within every believer a new nature which is made after the likeness of God in true holiness and righteousness (Eph. 4:24). There still remains in the believer unsubdued tendencies toward sin which are in constant conflict with the new nature (Gal. 5:16-21). The biblical process of spiritual growth, often called progressive sanctification, requires removing the sinful patterns of the unsaved condition and replacing these with patterns of godly character (Eph. 4:22-24). The Holy Spirit accomplishes these changes as the believer, by faith, yields in obedience to the Word of God (Rom. 6:11-13; 2 Cor. 3:18) and puts to death all sinful practices (Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5). The believer will ultimately be made completely holy when he enters the presence of Jesus Christ, either at death or at Christ's return (Phil. 1:6; 3:21; I Thess. 5:23; I John 3:2).

I. Spiritual Gifts

We believe that spiritual gifts are special abilities used for spiritual purposes (Rom. 12:3-8). They are given by the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:11) to every believer in the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:7; I Pet. 4:10) according to God's design (I Cor.

12:18, 28) and grace (Rom. 12:3, 6). Spiritual gifts are given by the Spirit for use within the context of the local assembly of believers (I Cor. 12:27, 28; 14:12; I Pet. 4:10-11) and for the good of the body (I Cor. 12:7).

J. Church

We believe that the divinely ordained place for the application of God's work in this dispensation is the local church. *First Baptist Church of Lake Orion* has been entrusted with the custodianship of the truth in the Lake Orion and surrounding communities (1 Tim. 3:15). Therefore, the objective of making and maturing disciples must be accomplished under the auspices of the church.

We believe that the Church has both universal and local aspects (explained below):

The church as the Body of Christ, of which He is the Head (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18), is an organism composed of genuine believers in Jesus Christ, the total number of Spirit baptized believers of this dispensation, regardless of location or circumstance (I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 2:11-22).

We believe that the local church is the visible expression of the body of Christ in a particular time and place (Acts 13:1; Rom. 16:1,5), being an organized body of immersed believers (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:41,47), sharing a common doctrinal commitment (Acts 2:42; 2 Thess. 3:6; Jude 3), observing the ordinances of baptism (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:41; 10:47-48) and the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26:26-30; I Cor. 11:23-32), and meeting at regular and stated times (I Cor. 16:2; Heb. 10:25) in order to honor God by making and maturing disciples (Matt. 28:19-20) who are becoming like Jesus Christ (Col. 1:28) through evangelism, edification, fellowship, and worship (Acts 2:41-47).

We believe that the New Testament establishes the local church offices of pastor (I Tim. 3:1-7; Eph.4:11) and deacon (Acts 6:1-6; I Tim. 3:8-13).

We believe that the local church is an autonomous body, solely responsible to preserve its internal unity (Rom.12:16; I Cor. 1:10; Phil. 4:2), maintain pure doctrine and practice (I Tim. 3:15; Jude 3), elect its own officers, leaders, and messengers (Acts 6:1-6; 13:2; 15:3, 4, 22; I Cor. 16:3-4), settle its own internal matters (Matt. 18:15-17); I Cor. 5:4-5,12; 6:1-5), and determine the extent of its cooperation with other churches (Acts 15:2-32; 2 Cor. 8:19).

We believe that the local church is God's ordained instrument for His work and witness in this age (I Tim. 3:15).

K. Satan

We believe in the personality of Satan (I Chr. 21:1; Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; Matt. 4:1-11), that he is the unholy ruler of this age (John 12:31; 2 Cor. 4:3-4), and the prince of all the powers of darkness (Matt. 12:24; Eph. 2:2; 6:12). He is the leader of a countless army of spirits who rebelled against the will of God (Rev. 9:11; 12:3-4, 7). These spirit beings, called demons, now seek to hinder the work of God (Gen. 3:4-5; Matt. 4:1-11; 2 Cor. 11:13-15), but will face ultimate defeat and condemnation with Satan in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10).

L. The Second Coming

We believe in the literal return of Jesus Christ that will take place in two stages. The first stage is the Rapture, or His personal (I Thess. 4:16; I Jn. 3:2), imminent (Rom. 13:12; I Cor. 1:7; I Thess. 5:6), and pretribulational (I Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 3:10) coming for all saints of the church age (Jn. 14:1-3; I Thess. 4:16-17). The second stage is the Revelation, or the Second Coming in Glory, which is His personal and public coming at the close of the Tribulation to establish the messianic, Millennial Kingdom on earth (Dan. 7:9-14; Zech. 14:1-4). At this time, Israel will be restored to covenant favor with God (Jer. 30:31-34; 31:28; Rom. 11:25-27) and to her land in faith (Gen. 13:14-17; 15:18; Deut. 30:1-11; Zech. 10:9-10) and the Church will reign with Christ for a thousand years (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 3:21; 20:1-6). After the Millennium, there will be a new heaven and a new earth wherein God will dwell eternally with His people (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-3).

M. The Resurrection

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, though occurring at separate times (Dan. 12:2; Jn. 5:28-29; I Cor. 15:21-24). The souls of those who trust in Christ go immediately into His presence at death (Acts 7:59-60; 2 Cor. 5:8) where they remain in conscious enjoyment of heaven until the resurrection of the just, at which time they will receive their glorified bodies (Rom. 8:11, 23; I Cor. 15:22-24, 35-38; Phil. 3:20-21) and will spend eternity in the presence of God, worshiping and serving Him with joy that knows no sorrow (I Cor. 13:13; Rev 21:1-7; Ps. 16:11). The souls of unbelievers go immediately at death to a place of conscious punishment and separation from God (Deut. 32:22; Luke 16:23-25) where they will remain until the resurrection of the unjust and will be cast into the Lake of Fire as the eternal

retribution for their sin (Matt. 8:12; 18:8; Mark 9:43-48; Rev. 20:14-15; 21:8). The resurrection of the just begins at the Rapture of the Church and is completed at the conclusion of the Tribulation (Dan. 12:2; I Cor. 15:23; I Thess. 4:16; Rev. 20:4-5). The resurrection of the unjust occurs after the Millennium (Rev. 20:5, 11-15).

N. Separation

We believe in both personal and ecclesiastical separation, both of which are grounded in the character of God. God's holiness makes Him separate from all that is unlike Him (Ps.99:1-3; Isa. 57:15), and His demand that we be holy calls us to separate from anything which contradicts His holy will and character (Matt. 5:48; Eph. 1:4; I Pet. 1:15-16).

We believe that personal separation is a Christian's determined effort to walk in the light as God is in the light (Rom. 13:12-14; I Jn. 1:5-7). God's people are not to participate in the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph. 5:7-14), nor can they allow the world to become the object of their affection (I Jn. 2:15-17) or the mold for their thinking (Rom. 12:1-2). The world is the transient system of evil which is in rebellion against God (Eph. 2:1-3; Jas. 4:4; I Jn. 2:15) and is ruled by Satan (Jn. 12:31; 2 Cor. 4:4; I Jn. 5:19). The world lures believers to live according to the lusts of men rather than the will of God (Eph. 4:17-19, 22; I Pet. 2:11; 4:24).

We believe that holiness in the ecclesiastical realm is evidenced by separation from those who deny biblical truth (Matt. 7:15; Gal 1:8-9; I Jn. 4:1-6; 2 Jn. 9-11) or walk in disobedience to it (2 Thess. 3:6, 14). Therefore, we believe that Bible-believing ministries, particularly local churches, should not collaborate with a church, ministry, or religious leader who does not hold to the fundamental doctrines of the Faith (i.e., liberalism). We further believe that God's Word warns us not to associate with those who consistently fail to practice biblical separation (i.e., new evangelicalism).

II. First Baptist Church of Lake Orion subscribes and submits to the following *Statement of Fellowship*.

First Baptist Church of Lake Orion is an Independent, Separatist Church

A. Independent

By independent we mean that this church is to carry on its ministry in an entirely autonomous fashion and is not to be controlled by any group or individual outside the membership of this church.

B. Separatist

By separatist we mean that: (a) this church is governed by and seeks to conduct its ministry according to the Word of God which we acknowledge to be inerrant and infallible in the whole and all of its parts; (b) as individuals, the members purpose and practice a life that is separated unto the Gospel and separated from the world, this latter term signifying all those practices and associations that are contradictory to the Christian life taught by the Bible *in practice and principle*; (c) as a church, the members purpose and practice a ministry that is separated from all forms of ecclesiastical activity that contradict or compromise the Word of God *in practice or in principle*.

Philosophy of Ministry & Mission Statement

I. Mission Statement Defined

First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Exists to Make God's Name Known in Honor and Glory by Making and Maturing Disciples Who Are Becoming like Jesus Christ.

II. Mission Statement Delineated

A. The Place of Application—*First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Exists*, (i.e., the local church).

The divinely ordained place for the application of God's work in this dispensation is the local church. *First Baptist Church of Lake Orion* has been entrusted with the custodianship of the truth in the Lake Orion and Oxford communities (1 Tim. 3:15). Therefore, the objective of making and maturing disciples must be accomplished under the

auspices of the church.

B. The Purpose for Our Existence—*First Baptist Church of Lake Orion exists To Make God's Name Known...*

At the heart of the church's responsibility is the proclamation of God's name. The message of God's salvation is the message of the Father's reconciling work through His Son (John 12:27-28; cf. 2 Cor. 5:18-19). Believing that Jesus Christ came to make the Father's name known in life (John 5:43; 14:13-14; 17:6, 26), and in death (John 12:27-28), and understanding that the concept of a "name" is rooted in the idea of character and fame (Exod. 9:16; Ps. 106:7-8; Neh. 9:10; Dan. 9:15), First Baptist Church of Lake Orion exists to Make God's Character and Name Famous by Proclaiming His Reconciling Work in Christ Jesus (Matt 28:19-20; Act 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20-21).

C. The Posture in Our Application—*First Baptist Church of Lake Orion exists To Make God's Name Known In Honor and Glory...*

Believing that our salvation was provided (Eph. 1:12), and that the church was established (Eph. 3:9-10, 21), and that all things were created (Rev. 4:11) for His honor and glory, the proper posture of the First Baptist Church of Lake Orion is first and foremost doxological. That is, God has called out this church to be a demonstration of His honor and glory to glorify Himself. Therefore, any activity, program, methods, means, etc., must be theocentric (God-centered), not anthropocentric (man-centered). All ministry activities must seek to please God, not appease man, and must be subservient to the purpose of glorifying Him.

First Baptist Church of Lake Orion has been called to make God's name famous in a manner that does not compromise His honor and glory. Believing that God is concerned with the message, as well as with the motive and method behind all church activities, the message, method, and motive must conform to God's greatness and goodness. Furthermore, First Baptist Church of Lake Orion will not employ unbiblical means for accomplishing her goals and objectives, especially in a day when evangelism is exalted to the primary position and unbiblical means are implemented in order to accomplish the noble goal of winning souls.

*I Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink,
or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

D. The Plan in Our Application—*First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Exists to Make God's Name Known in Honor and Glory by Making And Maturing Disciples...*

The mandate that is given to the disciples which outlines God's marching orders for the church is found in Matthew 28:18-19. In this simple directive, the disciples were instructed to be doing three things. They were to be continuously going (v. 19), baptizing (v. 19b), and teaching (v. 20) all nations about Christ. As the New Testament disciples, the church is to engage in the same directive.

1. *First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Is to Be Going and Making Disciples!* "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations." NASB

This call to "go" is a call to action. It carries with it a two-fold responsibility for the church. First, the church is not to wait for disciples to come in to the body; but rather, she must go out seeking for disciples. Secondly, the church's responsibility does not end in the proclamation of the salvation message, but continues in the development of those who accept the gospel to full maturity. This call to "go," although addressed to the church collectively, is really addressed to the individuals who make up the church. Hence, individuals are called to engage in the discipleship process which includes edification as well as evangelism.

2. *First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Is to Be Baptizing Disciples!* "Baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit," NASB

Believing that baptism is the next step of obedience (Acts 2:37-38), and that it is an outward symbol of the believer's inward union with Christ (Rom. 6:3-5), First Baptist Church of Lake Orion views believer's baptism by immersion a part of the discipleship process, and therefore, a part of spiritual growth and sanctification process.

Although it is not necessary for salvation, baptism by immersion is expected for local church membership and service in the body.

3. First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Is to Be Teaching Disciples! "teaching them to observe all that I commanded you," NASB

In Matthew 28:20, Jesus not only gives the call to teach all nations, but He also gives the content of what is to be taught - "teaching them to observe all that I commanded you." Consequently, First Baptist Church of Lake Orion is called to be a Word-centered ministry. Since the words of Scripture are inspired by God (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:20-21), and all of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, as originally written, are without error (John 10:35; 17:17), it stands as our final authority on all matters of faith and practice (1 Tim 3:14-15).

Christ's plan for the church is the making and maturing of disciples. The membership is, therefore, engaged to make disciples by:

- 1) **Developing Redemptive Relationships.**
- 2) **Giving a Clear Verbal Witness of Salvation.**
- 3) **Introducing the Unsaved to the Body of Believers.** (*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another-John 13:35*)

In her relationship to other believers, the membership is encouraged to:

- 1) **Develop Loving Relationships Within the Context of the Body for the Purpose of Mutual Accountability.**
- 2) **Establish Mutual Relationships that Are Word-Centered.**

The promise given by Christ to His disciples and to the church is His unending presence- "*lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*" Because of His power, His plan for the building of His church will not fail (Matt. 16:18).

E. The Product Desired—*First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Exists to Make God's Name Known in Honor and Glory by Making And Maturing Disciples Who Are Becoming More Like Jesus Christ.*

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul admonishes them to develop the servant mind-set of Christ (Phil 2:3-8).

First Baptist Church of Lake Orion is committed to the exercise and development of the servant mind-set as part of the maturing process. Understanding that the maturing process will never be completed until we are fully glorified, and that each believer is at a different point in the process, nevertheless, the church is to commit herself to a process that emphasizes and exemplifies Christlikeness. This process must include a strategy for growth in the Word, fellowship, prayer, and stewardship. It must also embrace the full utilizations of the gifts God has given to each member of the body (1 Cor. 12:18; Eph. 4:7-16).

The Application of Our Statement of Faith and Philosophy

The strategy for executing the mission statement of the First Baptist Church of Lake Orion is delineated in the following commitment statements.

A. First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Will Maintain a High Visible Presence in the Lake Orion and surrounding communities so as to be recognized as a place where God and His Word are taken seriously as the key to a life of joy—now and eternally.

B. First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Will Develop Harvest Events for children, teens, and adults which will attract the unsaved and unchurched so as to provide events and programs which can be used by our church family as evangelistic tools.

C. First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Will Uncompromisingly Worship God with an earnest desire for a fresh and evident display of the Spirit's power so as to be known as a place where God's presence is tangible and where believers are transformed and unbelievers are converted.

D. First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Will Aggressively Take the Gospel to those who initiate contact with our church so as to go through the doors that God opens with boldness and clarity.

E. First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Will Equip its members to engage effectively in relational evangelism so as to enable every member to be active in fulfilling the Great commission.

F. First Baptist Church of Lake Orion Will Disciple Believers to Full Maturity so as to equip believers to do the work of the ministry and to edify the body of Christ.

A Fully Devoted Follower fo Jesus Christ is Defined as:

1. Someone who has trusted Jesus Christ as his/her master, Romans 10:9-10.
2. Someone who has become a member of a local body of believers, Acts 2:42-47; 1 Tim 3:15.
3. Someone who is committed to spiritual growth and maturity, Eph 3:19; 4:15; cf. Rom 8:28-29.
4. Someone who is engaged in gift-based ministry, 1 Pet 4:10-11.
5. Someone who has a heartbeat for missions, John 17:18; Luke 19:10.
6. Someone who longs to magnify the Lord among His People, John 4:23-24.

First Baptist Church of Lake Orion is committed to a God-centered ministry. This commitment is rooted in the fundamental conviction that the mission of the Church is not *decided by any man*, but rather, *discerned from the Scripture*.