LIVING WORD INTERNATIONAL CHURCH

(LWIC)

Membership LESSON Manual

Connect - Engage - Belong

**Don’t Date Church …**

**Fall in love with the Family of God**

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## WELCOME

It is our hope that this LESSON will enable you to study the teachings of the church, find your place in it, and work together in growing the church. Each lesson describes what the church believes and how we try to live out these convictions. As you learn more about this church, please be praying about how you can become more connected and be of useful service in advancing God’s kingdom here.

Based upon the description of the early church in Acts 2:42-47, we see church membership at Living Word International encompassing at least four interconnected commitments:

1. **We hold to a common confession in Jesus Christ**
2. **We participate in community life**
3. **We covenant ourselves, including time and resources**
4. **We live-out a willing to serve the Lord in the church and in the world**

The church is more than “shared values and resources”; it is the living body of Christ

## Qualifications for Membership

At Living Word International Church (LWIC), the primary qualification for membership is a personal saving faith in Jesus Christ. The Church will hear from each candidate for membership a statement of his or her faith in Jesus Christ -“*Testimonies*” at an appropriate time.

In addition to subscribing to the personal confession of faith, members must also commit to the church’s Covenant of Faith and Government.

We also highly recommend that members be baptized by immersion. If you have not been baptized, please speak with your minister about scheduling your baptism, which can be done in the same month you join the church, depending on other factors.

The other requirements are attending six of seven LESSONes and being presented to the congregation.

## LESSON 1: THE BIBLE

### What we Believe About the Bible at LWIC

Living Word International Church, since its founding in 2010, has held to a “high view” of Scripture. That is, we hold it to be God’s inspired, inerrant word that is sufficient for all matters of faith and Christian living. A person who takes his or her Christian faith seriously would want to give serious attention to the Bible in its entirety. It becomes a matter of life commitment to understand properly what God has said to us as church and individuals.

### The Bible is inspired by God

We believe the bible is inspired by God. The 10 commandments are the first “Bible”: and set the pattern for the rest of the (Exodus 20:1, 31:18, 34:27). First, the moment the commandments were written, they were authoritative; in the same way, the rest of the scripture was authoritative the moment it was written (and not authoritative just because the Church later decided it to be: it is not the church that forms the word, but the word that forms the church).

We know that the Bible is the Word of God from the testimony of Scripture itself. Jesus considered the Old Testament, to be God's Word (Matthew 4:4; Matthew 22:41-44).

* The Bible is inerrant: We believe that the bible is without error (inerrant).
* The Bible is sufficient for all matters of faith and practice.
* The Bible is a Covenant Document that governs our covenant relationship with God.

## Activity:

1. What would be the implication for Christianity and for your own life if the Bible were simply an ordinary book and not inspired by God?
2. Do you have a personal “reading plan” for the Bible? If so, what is it? If not, what can you do to implement one?

## LESSON 2: THE TRIUNE GOD

### What do we Mean by “Trinity”?

God as “three Persons in One” expresses the distinctive Christian understanding of God and reflects our view at Living Word international Church. The Bible speaks of one God, but attributes the characteristics of God to three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God the **Father** created all things and planned the redemption of His people from all eternity (Genesis 3:14-15; Ephesians 123-12); God the **Son** accomplished that redemption on the cross (Romans3:21-24; Galatians 3:13-l4); and God the **Spirit** applies the benefits of that eternal redemption is all believers (John 3:5-8; Titus 3:4-7),The doctrine of the Trinity is a way of describing this biblical revelation of the nature of God. It states that God is one in as essence, but that he exists in three Persons who are equal, eternal, inseparable and interdependent.

### Biblical Evidence for Conceiving of God as a Trinity

* God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are active in Creation (Genesis 1:1-2;)
* Isaiah prophesies that the one born of the virgin would also be Immanuel, God with us (Isaiah 7:14) and later calls the Messiah “Mighty God” and “Eternal Father" (Isaiah 9:6)
* The NT calls the Father God (John 6:27; 20:17; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 1:1
* The NT explicitly declares Jesus Christ to be God (John 1:1; 20:28; Titus 2:13
* The NT writers recognize the Holy Spirit as God (Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11)

### How Should We Address God in Prayer?

In addressing God in prayer it can be helpful to think of praying to God the Father in the name of Jesus and through the power of the Holy Spirit

**Activity:**

1. Why is the concept of God as Trinity so important to our faith? What would we lose if we deny that God is both one and three?

## LESSON 3: SALVATION

### What is “Salvation”?

Salvation is a broad term that expresses God’s provision for the predicament of his people. The Gospel or “*good news*” is that God has finally accomplished salvation for his people through the life death and resurrection of Christ.

### Jesus is the Focal Point of Salvation History

The truth of salvation is revealed progressively throughout the Bible. God created us to be in relationship with Him, but from very early on that relationship was broken by sin. The only way God could forgive sin yet remains true to His holy character was to send Jesus to pay the punishment that all His people from being the beginning to the end of time deserve for their sin (Romans 3:25-26). The redemptive work of Christ then is the center of history. God’s people of all time (both OT and NT) have their salvation secured in the same way by Christ’s sacrifice on the cross.

It is helpful to think of salvation as encompassing regeneration and justification: (past and present) sanctification (present) and glorification (future). The salvation of our souls includes each of these works of God and more. We must **not** think of “salvation” simply as the moment that we profess faith in Christ.

**Activity**

1. Define “Salvation” in your own words. Why do we hold to the exclusivity of Christ (i.e., that Jesus is the only way of salvation)?
2. For whose salvation are you currently praying? In what ways are you enabling others to hear about God’s salvation? Read the “**Window into Living Word: Missions**” on the next page. Pray for God to guide you in your involvement in missions.

## LESSON 4: THE HOLY SPIRIT

### The Primary Work of the Holy Spirit

As we saw with the Trinity, God reveals the person of the Holy Spirit progressively throughout Scripture. Wherever he appears*, the Holy Spirit creates and inhabits the temple of God*. The Temple is the place where God dwells and shows forth His glory. The very first “temple” created was the universe, and so the Holy Spirit first appeared at creation. When the Spirit hovered over the waters (Genesis l:2), He was creating a natural revelation of the supernatural glory of heaven. Heaven and earth were established as a holy palace, or a macrocosmic royal residence, of the Creator King. This is why the Psalmist tells us that *the heavens declare the glory of God* (Psalm 19), and God says, “Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool” (Isaiah 66:1) After creating the universe as his “*macrocosmic temple*”, God created the Garden of Eden as “*microcosmic temple”,* and it was the focal point of God's presence to man until the fall.

### The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

During the ministry of Moses, the people of God built the tabernacle and the Holy Spirit came and filled this temple of God (Exodus 40:34-35), showing that this was the place where God dwelled and showed forth His glory. During the reign of Solomon, a stationary temple was built, and the Spirit of God descended and filled the temple in the same way (2 Chronicles 5:11-6:22; 7:1-3). The prophets looked forward to the restoration of God's people along with a promise of a magnificent temple where the Spirit would come to dwell in an unprecedented way (Ezekiel 39:27-29; 43:1-9) and would be poured into the hearts of all God’s people (Ezekiel 36:26-27; Joel2:28-29).

*“We believe the Holy Spirit has led us to repent of all our sins and to turn from them, and to obey Christ where he says ‘if anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and fellow me”*

### The Holy Spirit in the New Testament

At the baptism of Jesus, the Holy Spirit descended to earth for the first time since before the exile, because Jesus was the temple of God par excellence (Mark 1:9-11). After His death, resurrection and ascension Jesus poured out the Spirit upon His followers, fulfilling the promise of the prophets that God Would pour out His Spirit in an unprecedented way upon His people (Acts 2:1-21).

### The Work of The Holy Spirit In Salvation

Since the Holy Spirit creates and inhabits the temple of God, and since we are that temple the Spirit is the primary mover throughout the process of our salvation.

. He works to bring about unity in the Church among the individual “pillars” of the “temple" through the manifestation of fruit and gifts.

**The fruit of the Spirit**

Since all Christians have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them (Romans 8:9-10), all Christians will inevitably bear His fruit. The extent of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives will be most evident in the way we treat our brothers and sisters in the body of Christ.

**The Gifts of the Spirit**

All Christians will also manifest the gifts of the Spirit, though in varying ways. The gifts of the Spirit are something we manifest, not something we possess. We manifest the gifts of the Spirit as we carry out ministry and service within the body of Christ.

LWIC fully agree with, encourage, welcome, and submit to all the service, revelation, and power, and vocal gifts as revealed in scripture. We particularly believe that speaking in tongues is necessary for believer and is the visible initial evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Your presence and ministry in and through the church is therefore vital to our ability to be the living temple of God.

**Activity**

1. As you consider your relationships with others in the body of Christ, where do you see the most room for growth in your bearing the fruit of the Spirit?
2. How can you develop your spiritual gifts at LWIC? Read the “Window into Living Word”

## LESSON 5: THE CHURCH

### The Nature of The Church

As we observed in our study of the Holy Spirit, God creates his Church by pouring out his Spirit to inhabit his people, both individually and corporately (Acts 2). By the working of the Spirit, the Church is the body of Christ, made up of individual members who serve one another through diverse gifts and ministries with a view to being built up in unity and love (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:11-16). Therefore, to be a Christian is to be in an interdependent relationship with other Christians, reflecting the interdependent relationship of the members of the Trinity. We might say that there are two things that one cannot be alone: being married or being Christian. God has designed it so that we need one another to hold unswervingly to our faith, to be encouraged in bearing the fruit and gifts of the Spirit and have our needs provided for.

Since Christians need one another to be the Church that God intends, the writer of Hebrews exhorts us not to give up the habit of regularly meeting together (Heb. 10:23-25).

**Living Word International Church is Protestant**

Even though all Christians are part of one universal church, the church has divided into different groups and denominations according to particular theological and organizational beliefs over the centuries. The first Protestants viewed themselves as those who “witnessed forth” to the truth of Scripture and the beliefs of the early church.

**Living Word International Church is Evangelical**

Beliefs essential to Evangelicalism are the centrality and exclusivity of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the inerrancy and sufficiency of Scripture. Fundamentalism holds these two beliefs as well; however, Evangelicalism may be distinguished from Fundamentalism by the following five concerns:

(1) to do greater justice to the social implications of the Gospel without compromising the priority of the message of eternal salvation; (2) to avoid moralistic legalism, without neglecting to promote true holiness and Christ-like wholeness of character in the life of the believer; (3) to avoid anti-intellectualism. which at times has characterized Fundamentalism; (4) not to be literalistic with the biblical text, since the types of literature found in the Bible indicate various reading strategies; and (5) to “major on majors” and so not isolate ourselves from fellow Christians with whom we may not entirely agree;

**Living Word International Church Is Non-Denominational**

Besides being Protestant and Evangelical, LWIC is also Nondenominational. While Protestantism and Evangelicalism primarily reflect theological distinctions, non-denominationalism primarily reflects organizational distinctions. A Nondenominational church is a form of congregational church, except that it is primarily overseen by a visionary leader in consultation with a board of trustees.

### The Structure of Living Word International Church

LWIC is a vision based on the instructions of God to our founder, Pastor Blaise Tintong. The overall structure of the church could be illustrated as follows:

* Jesus Christ as Head
* The Executive Council and Board of Trustees
* The Membership of Living Word International Church
* Ministries of The Church
* Deacons, Appointed and Elected Committees
* The Worshipping Congregation

**Activity**

1. If someone were to approach you and say, “I can be a perfectly good Christian and not go to church.” how would you answer?
2. In your own words, explain what it means to be Protestant? to be Evangelical? to be Non-denominational? Can you whole-heartedly identify yourself with each group? Why or why not?

## LESSON 6: THE SACRAMENTS

Tertullian, a 2nd century Christian adopted the term *Sacramentum* to signify the means by which Christians swear allegiance to God and Christ, the Captain of the Army of God. We consider a sacrament to be a visible sign of an invisible grace; that is, it is a visual aid of the grace we have received through Christ. At LWIC, we recognize two sacraments (as do most Protestant churches): baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Both sacraments were instituted by Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 22:14-20), and are specifically for the covenant community of faith.

**OT Parallels to Baptism and The Lord’s Supper**

The Old Testament correspondence to the sacrament of baptism is circumcision (Exo.14:1-31, 1 Cor. 10: 1-4), and the correspondence to the Lord’s Supper is the Passover Meal (Exo. 12:1-27). Baptism and the Lord’s Supper go hand-in-hand: the former as a once-for-all identification with Christ’s burial and resurrection into the covenant community and the latter as the continual renewal of the covenant based upon this understanding, the LWIC minister who administers the Lord’s Supper to the congregation invites all who are in Christ to participate.

**Activity:** Know two church sacraments meaning and significance?

## LESSON 7: VISION AND MINISTRIES OF LWIC

**Living Word International Church Vision**

LWIC wants to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, and we model ourselves after the early church described in the Book of Acts. In Acts 2:41-47, we read about the activities and commitments of the first Christians. First, these Christians were committed to the Apostles' teaching as the foundation for their unity (vs. 42). Second, they were committed to corporate worship as an expression of their unity, as they met together regularly to break bread (the Lord's Supper), pray and praise God (vs. 42, 46). Third, they had a desire to be together in close fellowship, which is how their oneness and love was developed (vs. 44: 46-47). Fourth, they had a deep desire to meet each other's needs, displaying their love for and interdependence upon one another (vs. 45). We can follow in the footsteps of these early Christians by being thoroughly grounded in God's Word (where the Apostles’ teaching is preserved for us); being committed to corporate worship; longing to be together and gather regularly in one another’s homes; and becoming more interdependent upon one another and seeking to meet each other’s needs. As we practice and display this kind of unity and love, we hope that our story will be that of the early church: “*And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved*” (vs. 47).

We are proud of the short history of our church and how we have faithfully proclaimed the gospel of grace over the past years. However, we are always seeking to grow and improve.

### The Call

***“Go until the knowledge me cover the earth as the water covers the sea. Behold I have anointed you to take my word and power to your generation. I will manifest Myself and My Power through you and in you, the Word and Spirit working together to effect change on the earth”*** - September 21st, 2006

***‘It is time to start planting church and making live count in meaningful ways” -*** May 25th, 2010

### The Vision

Our vision is to invade and make every life count for the kingdom of God, one life at a time.

### The Mission

1. To bring the lost to the kingdom of God through the preaching of the Good News of the Kingdom of heaven.

2. Liberate people, families, neighborhoods, cities, and nations from the power of Satan through the power of the Holy Spirit.

3. Empower people to become active and productive members of their local churches and communities through discipleship and holistic teaching of the Word of God.

4. Awaken, mobilize, equip, and engage Christians in the end time harvest

### Core Values

1. Proclaiming the realities of the new creation in Christ

2. Declaring the Good News about the Kingdom of heaven

3. Demonstrating the character and nature of the Holy Spirit

### Obligations

**Giving of Your Resources: Tithes and Offerings**

One way you may give of your resources is through financial gifts. As is the case with almost all churches, Living Word International Church depends upon the faithful giving of the people of God to sustain the work to which we believe Christ has called us. Tithing was established by God to help his people acknowledge his ownership and provision of everything they had (1 Chronicles 29:14; Malachi 3:6-12). A tithe was 10% of a person’s yearly increase and was set aside as an offering holy to the Lord (Leviticus 27:30-34; Deuteronomy 14:22-23,28). In the New Testament giving is affirmed by Jesus (Matt 23:23; Luke 11:42). Paul speaks about giving in 2 Cor. 8:1-15 as he describes the example of the Macedonian church.

**Giving of Your Time: Opportunities for Ministry**

Since we are all ministers to one another, we encourage you to give of your time to your brothers and sisters in Christ so that you may be a means by which the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to our church.

**Activity**

1. Do you think we are living up to our Vision at LWIC? Why or why not? What room do you see for improvement? How can you be a part of the solution?
2. In what ways can you be a better steward of your time and resources as a member of LWIC? If you are not serving in ministry already, in what area of ministry would you be interested in becoming involved?