

Vineyard 101:

Discovering the Kingdom of God and the Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship

We're glad you've chosen to find out more about Doral Vineyard. This class is the basic introduction to God's Kingdom and the Vineyard Fellowship Church. Since we have members from many different church backgrounds, this class was designed to clearly explain who and what Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship is all about.

Where are you at today? You may have gone forward to receive Christ at a church or an evangelistic meeting – or maybe even a Billy Graham, Greg Laurie, or Benny Hinn Crusade. Maybe you prayed with a Sunday school teacher, a parent, or a friend years ago. Or maybe you met Jesus in private crying out to Him for salvation.

Do you know what happened to you at that moment? Something amazing happened – you were delivered from one Kingdom into another – from Satan's Rule and Reign to God's.

When this occurred you probably had no idea what was happening to you. Many times this is not explained clearly to us. We're told that when we receive Jesus we have our sins forgiven, we get assurance of salvation, and if we were to die tonight we'd "go to heaven" to be with Jesus. "So here's your Bible, read the Gospel of John, and good luck!"

All of the above is true and good – your sins are forgiven, you do get "assurance", and you will see Jesus with your own eyes someday in Heaven. But the Christian life is much more than reading your Bible, learning to pray, finding a Church where Jesus is preached, and sharing your faith with others. True conversion includes much more than this.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Colossians about what happened to them when they trusted in Jesus:

"For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son."

(Col 1:13 – NASB)

The Message translates it this way:

“God rescued us from dead-end alleys and dark dungeons. He's set us up in the kingdom of the Son he loves so much.”

(Col 1:13 – The Message)

When Jesus began his public ministry, He announced that the kingdom of God was now within reach – accessible – and He called His listeners to repent and believe in the Good News.

This class is about the discovery of the Kingdom of God and your connection to this wonderful, but mysterious realm.

THE GOAL OF THIS CLASS:

- **To gain a basic understanding of the Kingdom of God**
- That I will commit myself to JESUS CHRIST. His Kingdom Agenda and to the local body, DORAL VINEYARD CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP, to fulfill my role in bringing God's Kingdom to my community.

THE UNITY OF THE DORAL VINEYARD CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

FIVE THINGS UNITE US

Our Theology	(Kingdom Theology)
Our Salvation	(What God has done for us – brought us into His Kingdom)
Our Statements	(Why we exist as a church – to further the Kingdom of God)

- Our Strategy (How we fulfill our purpose – how we do Kingdom Stuff - 201)
- Our Structure (When and where we fulfill our purpose)

SEMINAR OUTLINE

PART ONE: OUR SALVATION

- What it means to be a Christian
- The symbols of salvation: baptism and communion

PART TWO: THE KINGDOM OF GOD

- The Message of Jesus and the Apostles
- A Primer on the Kingdom of God – the Basics

PART ONE: THE SYMBOLS AND ORDINANCES

- What they mean?
- The symbols of salvation: baptism and communion

PART FOUR: OUR STATEMENTS

- Our Purpose Statement
- Our Faith Statement
- Our Lifestyle Statement

PART FIVE: OUR STRATEGY

- The story of the Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship
- Who we are trying to reach
- Four Commitments
- The Vineyard Strategy

PART FOUR: OUR STRUCTURE

- How our church is structured
- Our affiliation
- What it means to be a committed participant
- What now?

Part One:

Our Salvation

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
(Gal 3:26-29 - NKJV)

For He rescued us from the domain (Gk. *exousia* - a place where we were forcefully under subjection) of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom (Gk. *basilea* - a realm of authority) of His beloved Son,
(Col 1:13)

OUR COMMON FAITH

Most people live their entire lives without ever knowing WHY. They exist year after year with no idea of why they live or God's purpose for their lives. The most basic question a person can ask is: *What is the meaning of my life?*

Our Starting Points

A. A Searching Human Heart

“Thou movest us to delight in praising Thee; for Thou hast formed us for Thyself, *and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee.*”

Saint Augustine, Confessions Book One.

For a few moments, focus your attention on these individuals – people considered to be winners: Viscount Castlerough, the British foreign secretary; Lee Ki Poong, Vice President of Korea; Edwin Armstrong, who invented FM radio; Arthur Chevrolet, the designer of the automobile built by General Motors; Lester Hunt, the governor of the State of Wyoming; James Forrestal, the American Secretary of State. And to this group you can add Ernest Hemingway, Marilyn Monroe, Kurt Cobain, just for a start.

What do they all have in common?

Two things: they were successful and they were also suicidal.

Clearly, by the World's standards they were successful. But were they really? Perhaps that depends on how you define this nebulous world. IF reaching the top is success, they made it; but considering the way Dr. Charles Malik, the Lebanese statesman and former president of the U.N. General Assembly defined success, they fell dismally short. “Success,” said Malik, “is seeking and knowing and loving, and obeying God; and if you seek you will know; and if you know, you will love; and if you love, you will obey.”

Everyone wants to be happy. People try many ways:

- Some look for happiness by **ACQUIRING POSSESSIONS.**
- Some look for happiness by **EXPERIENCING PLEASURE.**

- Some look for happiness by **GAINING PRESTIGE AND POWER.**
- But real happiness comes from knowing God doing His Will.

Who I am and what I was made for

II. The Reality of God

Is there a Heavenly Father who gave us life?

Is there a purpose for my life that comes from Him?

- The Real God is **personal.**

(Genesis 3:8 - NASB)

"They heard the sound of the LORD God (Jehovah Elohim) walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden."

(Exodus 3:13-15 - NASB)

"Then Moses said to God, 'Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" God, furthermore, said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations."

The "I AM" – the independent, absolute, unchanging, and eternal being defines Himself as the God of real people – wanting to communicate with them personally.

- The Real God is **powerful.**

(Genesis 17:1 - NASB)

Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD (Jehovah) appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty (El-Shaddai) ; Walk before Me, and be blameless."

(Isa 37:16)

"O LORD Almighty (Jehovah te-sabah), God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.

- The Real God is **perfect.**

(2 Samuel 22:31)

"As for God, his way is perfect (complete, nothing missing); the word of the LORD is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him."

What can be known about God is known because it has been revealed to us:

First, in **Creation.**

(Romans 1:19-20)

"...since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."

- Generalities about God
- Viewed through nature
- "Rumors of Glory" Romans 8

Secondly, in **Scripture.**

(2 Peter 1:19)

"And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts."

- Specifics about God and Man
- Viewed through History
- Progressive and Complete

God's revelation in Scripture gives us answers to life's most important questions

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

"30 Days to
Understanding
the Bible in 15
Minutes a
Day"

by Max
Anders

ISBN:
0785214232

Who Is God?

1. God is the **creator** of all life.

(Genesis 1:1,27; Isaiah 40:26-28; Amos 4:13; Malachi 2:10; Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 1:13)

2. God is the only **Savior** of broken lives.

(Exodus 15:13; Job 19:25; Psalms 103:4; Isaiah 43:11; John 4:42; I John 4:14)

3. God is the **judge** of every man.

(2 Chron. 19:7; Deut. 10:17; Psalms 9:8; Isaiah 33:2; Acts 10:42; Romans 2:6; 1 Peter 4:5)

4. God is one in three persons: **Father**, **Son**, and **Holy Spirit**.

(Deut 6:4 – the “shema” - Jehovah, Elohim, Jehovah)
Mat. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Ephe 2:18; 1 John 5:7

5. God is **merciful**, **loving**, and **just**.

(Deut 4:31; Dan 9:9; 1 John 4:8,16)

6. God is **Holy**.

(Psalms 99:9; Isaiah 43:3; Hosea 11:9; 1 Peter 1:16; Rev. 15:4)

Want to Know More?

If you want to find out more about God, try this book:

“Knowing God”
(J.I. Packer)

ISBN
0830816518

III. WHY AM I HERE?

1. God made me to share His **LIFE** and **LOVE** with me!

- *[God says,] I have loved you with an everlasting love!* “ Jeremiah 31:3b (NIV)
- *“In love he predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will.”* Ephesians 1:4-5 (NRSV)
- *“This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.”* 1John 4:9 (NIV)

2. We were created to **ENJOY** a personal relationship with God and to **MANAGE** all of the rest of God's creation!

This makes us special!

- So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. **Rule over** the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Genesis 1:27-28
- God... richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. **1 Timothy 6:17** (NIV)
- [Jesus said,] "I have come in order that you might have life -- life in all its fullness! **John 10:10b** (GN)

3. When we know and love God, and live in harmony with his purpose for our lives, it produces tremendous benefits in our lives:

<u>Forgiveness</u>	Ephesians 1:7
<u>Clear conscience</u>	Romans 8:1; 1 Peter 3:16
<u>Life and peace</u>	Romans 8:16; 2 Peter 1:2
<u>Security</u>	Romans 8:39
<u>Power and strength</u>	Phil. 4:13; Ephesians 1:19
<u>Freedom</u>	Romans 8:32; Ephesians 3:12

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

"The Search for
Significance"
(Robert McGee)

ISBN 0849940915

(Recommended by
Billy Graham as a
book every Christian
should read)

This is the kind of lifestyle God intends for us to live.

Why then aren't most people really happy?

IV. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

1. Man has a natural desire to **BE THE BOSS** & to ignore God's principles for living.

"Look out for number one. Do your own thing."

"If it feels good, do it -- regardless of what God says about it."

"It's my life and I'll do what I please!"

Our deepest problem is that we foolishly set ourselves up as judge over God.

"For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools"
(Romans 1:21-22)

2. The Bible calls this attitude **SIN**.

"All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, and each of us has turned to his own way."
Isaiah 53:6a (NAS)

"If we say that we never sin, we are only fooling ourselves, and refuse to accept the truth."
1 John 1:8 (LB)

"For the director of music. Of David. The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one."
Psalm 14:1-3 (NIV)

Sin breaks our close relationship with God. It causes us to run from God and try to live our lives outside of his will. We violate the basis of that relationship – faith and love.

- ...the trouble is that your sins have cut you off from God. **Isaiah 59:2a** (LB)
- ...all have sinned and fall short of God's glorious ideal. **Romans 3:23** (LB)

When our relationship to God is not right, it causes PROBLEMS in every area of our lives -- marriage, career, relationships, finances, etc.

When people have problems, they often try many different ways of coping before turning to God.

- There is a way that SEEMS right to a man, but in the end it leads to death. **Proverbs 16:25** (NIV)

Even when we know that our deepest need is God, we often try wrong ways of getting to know him:

- "My mother was a Christian so..."
- "It doesn't matter what you believe, just be sincere."
- "I'll give up all my bad habits."
- "I'll work real hard to earn it."
- "I'll be religious and go to church."

V. WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

- Jesus answered, "I AM THE WAY and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except THROUGH ME!" **John 14:6** (NIV)

God himself came to earth as a human being to bring us back to himself. If any other way would have worked, Jesus Christ would not have had to come. The way is a person!

Jesus has already taken care of your sin problem!

- "the wages of sin is death, BUT the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Romans 6:23** (NIV)

God did this for us because he loves us and wants us to know him.

- God demonstrated His love for us in that while we were still separated from God by sin, Christ died for us. **Romans 5:8**
- God is on one side and all people are on the other side, and Christ Jesus is between them to bring them together, by giving His life for all mankind. **1 Timothy 2:5**

God has already done his part to restore our relationship to him.

He took the initiative.

Now he waits for each of us to individually accept what he has done for us.

VI. WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO DO?

John 3

“DISCERN THE KINGDOM OF GOD.”

“ENTER THE KINGDOM”

HOW? “BE BORN OF THE SPIRIT”

“BE BORN AGAIN!

“BELIEVE IN THE LIFTED UP SON”

HOW TO BE BORN AGAIN

1. **ADMIT** that God has not been first place in your life and ask him to forgive your sins.
 - If you confess your sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from every wrong. **1 John 1:9**
2. **BELIEVE** that Jesus died to pay for your sins and that he rose again on Easter, and is alive today.
 - If you confess that Jesus is your Lord, and you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. **Romans 10:9**
 - Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name (Jesus) by which we must be saved. **Acts 4:12**
3. **ACCEPT** God’s free gift of salvation. Don’t try to earn it.

- For it is by grace you are saved, through faith -- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not by works, so that no one can boast. **Ephesians 2:8-9**

Our relationship to God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did for us!

4. **INVITE** Jesus Christ to come into your life and be the director (“Lord”) of your life.

- To all who receive him, he gives the right to become children of God. All we need to do is to trust him to save us. All those who believe that are reborn! -- not a physical rebirth...but from the will of God! **John 1:12-13**
- Jesus says, Listen! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in... **Revelation 3:20**

YOU CAN TAKE THESE STEPS BY PRAYING A SIMPLE PRAYER OF COMMITMENT TO GOD:

Dear Jesus, thank you for making me and loving me, even when I've ignored you and gone my own way.

I realize I need you in my life and I'm sorry for my sins.

I ask you to forgive me.

Thank you for dying on the cross for me.

Please help me to understand it more.

As much as I know how, I want to follow you from now on.

Please come into my life and make me a new person inside.

I accept your gift of salvation.

Please help me to grow now as a Christian.

- Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. **Romans 10:13**

Part Two:

The Kingdom of God

- Jesus' message was always about the Kingdom of God

(Jesus said), "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

(Mark 1:15)

“God’s rule is eternal and universal in the sense that He is, He was and He always will be the supreme ruler of all things. He rules the heavens, the angels, the planets, nature, history and all reality, yet we do not necessarily experience his rule in our lives. *The coming of the kingdom involves God’s intervention in the course of human history.* His power breaks into the affairs of men, confronting the forces that withstand him and imprison people, and interrupting the normal course of society.”

—Derek Morpew, *Breakthrough*

KEY TRUTHS:

1. A follower of Jesus needs to have a **CLEAR UNDERSTANDING** of the what the Kingdom of God is.
2. The Church is **NOT** the Kingdom of God – the Church is the **CONDUIT** through which the Kingdom comes to Earth.
3. The Church is an **OUTPOST** OF THE KINGDOM on the Earth.
4. The Church exists to **BRING THE KINGDOM** TO EARTH
5. The Church is the **BODY OF CHRIST** and a **FAMILY OF BELIEVERS**

THE GOAL OF THIS SECTION:

- To gain a basic understanding of the Kingdom of God
- That I will commit myself to JESUS CHRIST. His Kingdom Agenda and to the local body, DORAL VINEYARD CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP, to fulfill my role in bringing God's Kingdom to my community.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

A BASIC INTRODUCTION

I. The Kingdom of God was Jesus' Central Message

B. Read Mark 1:9-15

C. Most Christians **do not understand** what the Kingdom of God is.

D. The meaning of the word in the original languages:

1. Hebrew *Malkuth* – an active rule and reign.
2. Greek *Basilea* – A rule and reign of a sovereign power

- E. When Jesus said “The Kingdom of God is at hand”, He was saying that God’s **rule and reign** had come to earth and that it had come ***in Him!***

(*at “hand” or “near” doesn’t refer to physical or chronological distance.

Hebrew word is karav – which means intimately close. Used in Isaiah 8:3 when the prophet “came near” to his wife and she conceived him a son. How much nearer could Isaiah get than that?)

- F. The Jewish nation anticipated that when the Kingdom of God came to earth, it would solve all the **problems** in human society, wipe out evil and usher in peace, safety and security forever.

1. Read Isaiah 11:1-9

- G. The Old Testament prophets were actually prophesying **two different comings!**

1. The First Coming of Messiah
 - a. Isaiah 53 – read part
2. The Second Coming of Messiah (which hasn’t happened yet).
 - a. King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
 - b. Revelation 21:4
 - c. C. Thessalonians 4:13-5:6

- H. We are living today between the two Comings!

1. The Kingdom of God is here, but not like it will be at the 2nd Coming.
2. We are living in the presence of the future!

a. 1 Corinthians 10:11

“These things happened to them as examples and were written for our instruction, ***on whom the ends of the ages have come.***”

The idea is that the End of the Age has come down on believers in Christ like a curtain. (A.T. Robertson – from Word Pictures in the New Testament)

b. Hebrews 6:4-6

“For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have ***once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy***

Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they then fall away, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.”

I. So what is the Kingdom of God?

The rule and reign of God upon the hearts and lives of the people.

II. Why is this important to us as Christians?

A. We are the people of the Kingdom of God

We are, first of all, to make sure God is ruling us!

1. Romans 12:1-2
2. Psalms 139:23-24

B. As the people of His Kingdom, we are thrust into a war with God's enemies!

1. Ephesians 6:12
2. God's enemies are mainly Satan and his demons, but also everything they cause: sin, guilt, fear, condemnation, disease, poverty, hunger, and death.

C. We are called to be disciples of Jesus Christ!

Disciple = *Mathetes* (Gk.) = Learner

1. Learn to do! Caught not taught.
2. John 14:12

D. We are on a mission from God, first of all, to proclaim and witness to the fact that the Kingdom of God has come in Jesus Christ.

People can experience the presence of the Kingdom of God by surrendering their lives to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Lordship means to be under the rule and reign of a King.

E. But then we are to demonstrate the power of the Kingdom of God by doing the powerful acts of God!

1. 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

2. Luke 4
3. Healing, casting out demons, raising the dead, etc.
4. Matthew 10:1; 7-8
5. Luke 10:1, 17-20

III. We have been given a mission by God...Do what Jesus Did.

- A. **Proclaim** the Kingdom of God is here and the prove it!
- B. That's a disciple of Christ!

(Read from preface to “Signs, Wonders, and the Kingdom of God” by Don Williams (xi –xii))

Part Three:

Basics on Baptism and Communion

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..”

(Jesus, from the Gospel of Matthew 28:19)

“In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

(Paul, 1 Corinthians 11:25)

The following section details the two symbols –
Or sacraments and ordinances of Jesus Christ -- of our salvation

At Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship
believe and practice baptism of the believer
and communion open to all believers.

There are two ordinances which Jesus Christ has instituted and established for His Church. An ordinance is a "prescribed practice." It is something that has been prescribed and ordered by Jesus Christ and practiced by the Church. An ordinance is something that the Church practices because Jesus Christ has told her to do so. The New Testament makes it very clear that the early Church practiced and observed two ordinances –
Baptism and Communion.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING BAPTIZED

I. WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

1. To follow the example set by **JESUS**.

- At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river. **Mark 1:9**

2. Because Christ **COMMANDS** it.

- Jesus said, Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. **Matthew 28:19-20**

3. It demonstrates that I really am a **BELIEVER**.

- ...Many of the people who heard Him believed and were baptized. **Acts 18:8**
- We know that we have come to know Him, if we obey His commands. **1 John 2:3**

II. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

1. It illustrates Christ's **BURIAL** and resurrection.

- Christ died for our sins...He was buried...and He rose again. **1 Corinthians 15:3-4**
- For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ. **Colossians 2:12**

2. It illustrates my **NEW LIFE** as a Christian.

- When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun! **2 Corinthians 5:17**
- By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead...so also we may live a new life. **Romans 6:4**

Baptism doesn't make you a believer -- it shows that you already believe.

Baptism does not "save" you, only your faith in Christ does that.

Baptism is like a wedding ring -- it's the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

- For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith... it is the gift of God -- not by works, so that no one can boast. **Ephesians 2:8,9**

III. WHY BE BAPTIZED BY IMMERSION?

1. Because **JESUS** was baptized that way.

- As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water. **Matthew 3:16**

2. Every baptism in the **BIBLE** was by immersion.

- ...then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water... **Acts 8:38-39**

3. The word: "baptize" means "to **IMMERSE** in water."

The Greek word: "baptizo" means "to immerse or dip under water."

IT BEST SYMBOLIZES A BURIAL AND RESURRECTION!

What various Christian leaders have said about baptism through the ages:

Martin Luther	"I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies."
John Calvin	"The word "Baptize" signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church."
John Wesley	"Buried with Him, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church."

IV. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

1. Every person who has **BELIEVED** in Christ.

- Those who believed and accepted His message were baptized... Acts 2:41
- Simon himself believed and was baptized... Acts 8:13
- But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News...and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Acts 8:12

At Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship, we wait until our children are old enough to **believe** and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them.

Some churches practice a baptism of confirmation for children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his own personal confession of Christ. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed.

This is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible which was only for those old enough to believe. The purpose is to publicly confess your personal commitment to Christ

At the Doral Vineyard, we teach and encourage every participant to be baptized the way Jesus demonstrated, even though many of us were "confirmed" as children.

V. WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

AS SOON AS YOU HAVE BELIEVED!

- Those who believed....were baptized...that day! Acts 2:41
- Then Philip began with the scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the man said, "Look, here is water! Why shouldn't I be baptized right now?" Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The man answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, So they went into the water and Philip baptized him. Acts 8:35-38

There is no reason to delay.
As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life,
you can and should be baptized.
If you wait until you are "perfect," you'll never feel "good enough!"

DO I HAVE TO BE RE-BAPTIZED AT THE VINEYARD?

No. The only Biblical test for a "genuine" baptism is the faith of the believer being baptized. It is a covenant between Jesus and the believer, not an initiation ritual to a particular denomination or fellowship.

CAN MY FAMILY BE BAPTIZED TOGETHER?

Yes! If each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Christ for salvation, we encourage families to be baptized at the same time. It is a wonderful expression of commitment. Young children who wish to be baptized should discuss the matter carefully with their parents and a pastor or small group leader prior to baptism.

However, it is important to remember that baptism is a personal statement of faith, not a family tradition. It is usually not wise to delay your baptism while waiting on other family members to accept Christ, particularly children. This puts an undue pressure on them, and delays your obedience.

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR WHEN I AM BAPTIZED?

Modesty is really the only guideline. Don't forget to bring a dry change of clothes, a towel, and a plastic bag for your wet clothes.

WILL I HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING?

Only if you want to. At the beginning of the service, the attending pastor or small group leader will briefly explain the meaning of baptism. You'll be introduced, and asked to affirm your faith in Christ. You will then be briefly lowered just under the water. Then you can leave the pool (or lake, river, hot tub, etc.), dry off, and watch the others. We encourage you to invite all your relatives and friends to attend your baptism.

THE MEANING OF COMMUNION

Jesus never asked his disciples to remember his birth. But he did instruct them to remember his death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (called ordinances or sacraments) as reminders of his death. There is baptism and communion, also called the Lord's Supper. Communion is an object lesson that represents a great spiritual truth for believers.

I. WHAT IS COMMUNION? (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

1. It is a **SIMPLE ACT, NOT A CEREMONY**.
 - The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread... vs. 23
2. It is a **REMINDER**.
 - ...and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, This is my body, which is for you; eat it in remembrance of me. vs. 24
2. It is a **KINGDOM IN-BREAKING EVENT** – it allows us to experience the power and glory of the Cross of Jesus Christ
 - In the same way, he took the cup, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood; drink it to remember me. vs. 25
4. It is a **STATEMENT**.
 - For whenever you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes back. vs. 26

II. WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

1. Only those who are already **BELIEVERS**. Mark 14:22-26

- For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself. 1 Corinthians 11:29

III. HOW DO I PREPARE FOR COMMUNION?

- Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A person ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. 1 Corinthians 11:27-28

By...

Self-examination
1 Corinthians 11:27

Confessing my sins
1 John 1:9

Recommitment
Romans 12:1

Restoring relationships
Matthew 5:23-24

IV. SOME WAYS WE TAKE COMMUNION

Different churches have differing traditions for taking the Lord's Supper. The Bible does not spell out exact details on how communion is to be done; rather the emphasis is on why, and matters of the heart. Here at Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship, we celebrate communion in a variety of ways and settings.

Our custom is to station pre-selected ministry team members around the auditorium, each supplied with bread (usually some sort of cracker) and grape juice. One by one, or in families, those receiving communion make their way to a serving team. We dip a piece of bread into the cup of juice while those who are serving pray for and bless the partakers. Because communion is such a precious and meaningful occasion, we do all we can to guard against it becoming merely a routine ritual. A Celebration is the usual setting where we share communion. Some small groups choose to share communion together, as well.

Part Five:

Our Statements

Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.

1 Corinthians 1:10 (NASB)

OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT

WHY WE EXIST AS A CHURCH

The purpose of our church is summarized in a single sentence based on two key scriptures:

The Great Commandment: Jesus said, Love the Lord your God with all your heart...soul...and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and Prophets hang on these two commandments. Matthew 22:36-40

The Great Commission: Jesus said, Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19-20

In order to live this out THE GREAT COMMANDMENT MUST BE RESTORED TO **FIRST PLACE**.

Many Churches have **elevated** the Great Commission above the Great Commandment.

A. Cultivating love for God is the first **priority** to God and the first emphasis of the Holy Spirit.

³⁷ *You shall love the LORD...* ³⁸ *This is the first and great commandment. (Mt. 22:37-38)*

C. Jesus did not call it the first **option**, but the first **command**.

Jesus makes it clear that cultivating love for Him is the first emphasis of the Holy Spirit. God has everything, yet He is searching for something that He still wants first.

What does God search for?

What does He want most and first?

It is love that He is after. He is after our heart. The mystery of our life is found in this truth.

D. Love for God must be **CULTIVATED** – Cultivating implies work, preparing the soil, the land for growing something. In relational terms it is used when we speak of developing an acquaintance or intimacy with somebody – a person.

Cultivating love for God has the greatest impact on God's heart and our heart. Anyone who loves Jesus will love others much more. It is the greatest calling. Some who seek to know God's will for their life focus on knowing what they are supposed to do instead of what they are supposed to become.

When they speak of wanting the greatest calling, they refer to the size of their ministry instead of the size of their heart. The greatest grace we can receive is the anointing to feel God's love and to express it. It brings the greatest freedom and has the greatest reward.

- To love the Lord your God with all your heart is **worship**.
- To love your neighbor as yourself is **ministry**.
- To go and make disciples is **evangelism**.
- To baptize is to incorporate into **fellowship**.
- To teach is **disciple the nations and teach about the Kingdom of God**.
- God has called us to be **faithful** to these things - not necessarily **successful**.

DORAL VINEYARD CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP EXISTS:

1. To **CELEBRATE** God's presence by fostering an atmosphere of unbridled worship.
2. To **DEMONSTRATE** God's Kingdom Power (ministry)
3. To **COMMUNICATE** God's word – teaching and preaching the gospel (evangelism)

4. To **ENCOURAGE** Prophetically speaking God's family (fellowship)
5. To **EDUCATE** God's people (discipleship)

Or, in other words, "To know God and make Him known."

I. WE EXIST TO **CELEBRATE** GOD'S PRESENCE

WORSHIP:

- Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only. **Matthew 4:10**
- ...The Father seeks worshipers...and His worshipers must worship Him in spirit and in truth. **John 4:23-24**

EXPRESSIONS OF WORSHIP:

Singing
Ephesians 5:19

Commitment
Romans 12:1-2

Praying
Psalm 95:6

Hearing the word
John 17:17

Giving
1 Corinthians 16:1-2

Baptism
Romans 6:3-4

Meditating
Habakkuk 2:20

Communion
1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Dancing
Psalm 150:4

DORAL VINEYARD WORSHIP STYLE

"Celebrative"
Psalm 122:1

"Inspirational"
Isaiah 40:31

"Intimate"
Ephesians 4:11-12

II. WE EXIST TO **DEMONSTRATE** GOD'S LOVE

MINISTRY:

- By this shall all men know that you are my disciples -- that you have love for one another. **John 13:35**
- This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?
1 John 3:16-17
- “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ “The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’ **Matthew 25:34-40**
- So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?” **Hebrews 13:6**
- Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality. **Romans 12:13**
- Now God gives us many kinds of special abilities...and there are different kinds of service to God (ministry)...All of you together form the one Body of Christ and each of you is a separate and necessary part of it. **1 Corinthians 12:4-5, 27 (LB)**

AT THE DORAL VINEYARD CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP...

Every believer is a **MINISTER**.

Every task is **IMPORTANT**.

Every believer is a "10" in **SOME AREA**.

III. WE EXIST TO COMMUNICATE GOD'S WORD

EVANGELISM:

- “His intent was through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known...” **Ephesians 3:10**
- “Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But who can ask Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells them?” **Romans 10:13-14**

WHY OUR CHURCH MUST NEVER STOP GROWING:

1. Because **GOD LOVES PEOPLE.**

- The Lord...is patient, not wanting anyone to perish, but wants everyone to come to repentance. **2 Peter 3:9**
- For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. **2 Corinthians 5:14**
- “He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore... When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.” When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish... When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man... Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will catch men.” **Luke 15:3-10**
- Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” **Matthew 9:12-13**

2. Because **GOD COMMANDS IT.**

- Go out into the country... and urge anyone you find to come in, so that my house will be full. **Luke 14:23 (LB)**
- ...you will be my witnesses... **Acts 1:8**

3. Because **GROWTH IS GOD’S WILL.**

- Under Christ's control, the whole Body is nourished...and grows as God wants it to grow. **Colossians 2:19 (GN)**
- Jesus: I will build my church. **Matthew 16:18**

IV. WE EXIST TO ENCOURAGE GOD'S FAMILY

A. IN FELLOWSHIP: (GREEK WORD “KOINONEA”)

- “Koinonea” means:

“It properly denotes “having things in common, or participation, society, friendship.” It may apply to anything which may be possessed in common, or in which all may partake. Thus, all Christians have the same hope of heaven; the same joys; the same hatred of sin; the same enemies to contend with. Thus, they have the same subjects of conversation, of feeling, and of prayer; or they have communion in these things. The word here may apply to either or to all of these things to their conversation, their prayers, their dangers, or their property; and means that they were united to the apostles, and participated with them in whatever befell them.”

(From Robertson’s Word Pictures in the New Testament)

- Let us not give up the habit of meeting together... Instead, let us encourage one another all the more... Hebrews 10:25 (GN)
- So let us concentrate on the things that make for harmony and the growth of our fellowship together. Romans 14:19 (Ph)

WAYS WE FELLOWSHIP:

- CELEBRATIONS
- SMALL GROUPS
- SPECIAL EVENTS

WHY WE FELLOWSHIP:

1. Fellowship provides **STRENGTH** from others.

- Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2

2. Fellowship provides **ENCOURAGEMENT** from others.
 - You should be like one big happy family, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds. 1 Peter 3:8 (LB)
3. Fellowship provides **LOVE** from others.
 - We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers... 1 John 3:14

B. IN PROPHETIC MINISTRY

1. Prophecy in the Church is not an **option**. 1 Corinthians - the Book
2. Prophecy in the Church is not something we hide because it might be **inconvenient** or **messy**.
3. We don't **relegate** it to the backrooms – or to an “afterglow” meeting.
 - a. Prophecy is largely despised (meaning it isn't done much – or at all) by the church. It has been surrounded by misunderstanding, confusion, and fear.
 - b. But - from the standpoint of the Scriptures, the gift of prophecy is the most important spiritual gift. Paul considers it vital to the up building of the church.

Just what is the role of prophecy for the church today?

- c. Prophecy has been **despised** before.

“Do not despise prophecies.” (1 Thessalonians 5:20 NKJV)

- Moses, finally convinced that God wanted to delegate his governing authority to a larger number, called seventy elders to a "committee meeting" at the tabernacle. Two failed to show up. The Spirit of God fell on the sixty-eight who attended. But the Spirit also came upon the two who remained in the camp who began to prophesy as well. Every one wanted them to stop, uncomfortable at the direct voice of God and jealous for Moses' uniqueness as God's prophet.

They reported the incident to Moses and demanded that he stop them. You can imagine Moses – he was probably laughing – because he knew how important the gift of prophecy was in his own life, so he just burst out this response that celebrated the Spirit's presence in his own life:

"Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them!" (Numbers 11:29).

- Moses' dream began to be fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit fell on the infant church and prompted them to speak out in tongues the "wonderful works of God."
- Peter, under the inspiration of the Spirit, interpreted as a fulfillment of Scriptures:
 "This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; yea, and on my menservants and my maidservants in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy...." (Acts 2:16-18 quoting Joel 2:28-29)

Amazingly, Peter classifies the Pentecost expression of tongues as a variety of the prophetic gift. The New Testament Scriptures make it clear that the Spirit is a universal gift to the church, and that prophecy is the characteristic gift of the Spirit.

The Apostle Paul indicated that the gift of prophecy was for every believer: "For you can all prophesy one by one..." (1 Corinthians 14:31; see also vss. 5, 24). As we desire the renewal of the church this expectation of the universality of prophecy among God's people fills us with hope.

If we take Paul's letter to the Corinthians seriously, we must come to the conclusion that the gift of prophecy is indispensable to the church.

When we try to build churches without this gift being active, it is like trying to walk across America on crutches: it can be done, but it is certainly the hard way. The importance of the gift of prophecy is seen from Paul's urgency for it.

- He commands the Corinthians to "earnestly desire to prophesy" (1 Corinthians 14:39; see also 12:31 and 14:1).
- In all the various lists and discussions of the gifts in Paul's letters the only constant gift is prophecy.
- Whenever Paul makes an attempt to classify the gifts in terms of importance, prophecy is given preference over all the rest (1 Corinthians 14:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:19f).
- Only in the two passages where Paul speaks of gifted men (prophets) rather than of the gift (prophecy) do prophets fall into second place behind apostles (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11; cf. Ephesians 2:20).

As God led me in my study of the gift of prophecy, I was convicted by the Apostle's command: "Earnestly desire to prophesy" (1 Corinthians 14:39; see also 12:31; 14:1).

My zeal (Greek zeloo) to prophesy or encourage prophecy in the church certainly was not conformed to the Word.

But as I discovered what God intends prophecy to do for His church, my desire and faith for the gift increased. Why is prophecy so important? Just what is its purpose?

Its several functions may all be subsumed under the purpose of building up the Church. Since love for the brethren is to be the motive for desiring the spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 13), the purpose is to build up the brethren. The Greek word *oikodome* was first used of building houses, temples, and pyramids, but quickly moved to a figurative sense in secular Greek.[4] In the context of spiritual gifts it means "building" as a process, "construction" and is "figurative of spiritual strengthening, edifying, edification, building up."

The Spirit of Christ is fulfilling Jesus' promise, "I will build (*oikodomeo*) my church ..." (Mt 16:18).

The Spirit is in the business of constructing people and the community.

The ways in which prophecy builds up the body are spelled out in detail in 1 Corinthians 14.

CONCLUSION:

We cannot afford to despise the gift of prophecy.

Nor can we allow its capacity for misuse and misunderstanding prevent us from embracing it.

Rather we must diligently seek to curb its abuses by the guidelines of Scripture and "test all things" (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21), so that the great constructive value of prophecy may be experienced by our churches.

Through this unique spiritual gift the church is enabled to grow, mature and move forward according to the will of God.

"Make love your aim, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy ... so that the church may be edified" (1 Corinthians 14:1, 5).

When Jesus came announcing the Kingdom of God – He made a prophetic declaration. It is important that we make prophetic declarations.

1. I follow after love and earnestly desire spiritual gifts –especially that I may prophesy. (1 Corinthians 14:1)
2. People are energized under by my ministry because of the encouragement and prophesy that regularly flows from me.
3. I give identity to the fatherless through my prophecies.
4. I remember other people's prophetic words because it helps me see them the way God sees them.

5. I wage a good and victorious warfare through the prophecies that have been given to me (I Timothy 1:18)

V. WE EXIST TO **EDUCATE** GOD'S PEOPLE

DISCIPLESHIP:

- Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity... **Hebrews 6:1**
- Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **2 Peter 3:18**
- (God has given)...some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of ministry, so that the Body of Christ may be built up until we all...become mature...like Christ. **Ephesians 4:11-13**

There is an expansion to this purpose – will be covered in:

Vineyard 201:

Discovering The Personal Habits of a Fully Devoted Follower of Jesus

Decisions That Define Us

“The whole assembly of the Israelites gathered at Shiloh and set up the Tent of Meeting there. The country was brought under their control, but there were still seven Israelite tribes who had not yet received their inheritance. So Joshua said to the Israelites: “How long will you wait before you begin to take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you?”

Joshua 18:1-3

“When Joshua was old and well advanced in years, the LORD said to him, “You are very old, and there are still very large areas of land to be taken over.”

Joshua 13:1

There is still so much “more land to be taken.”

We continue to comprehend the high cost and great value of each of the following declarations of purpose, while remaining humbly aware that Jesus paid the price that made possible the events of the Gospels and the Book of Acts—then and now.

So, then, here are the Decisions that Define Us:

- **We have decided** that teaching the gospel without demonstrating the gospel is not enough. Good preaching, good doctrine, and being good people are not enough.
- **We have decided** that having a good church club is not enough, good fellowship is not enough, and just being a member of that club is not enough.
- **We have decided** that having good Bible studies is good, but not good enough, that just making it to heaven is not our goal, and that knowing about God without truly knowing and experiencing God is meaningless.
- **We have decided** that having good programs is not enough, that change without transformation is intolerable, and that staying where we are is not an option.
- **We have decided** that gifting without character is futile. The fruit will not remain unless the two are present.

- **We have decided** that singing songs without worshiping is empty, and having meetings without God showing up is pointless.
- **We have decided** that having faith without works is not enough and having works without love is not acceptable—that our function comes out of our relationship first with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and second with each other.
- **We have decided** that reading about the book of Acts without living the book of Acts is unthinkable. To say that the things described in the Book of Acts ended with the death of the last Apostle is to read a theology into the text.
- **We have decided that when Jesus said:**

*“Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the **evidence of the miracles themselves**. I tell you the truth, **anyone who has faith in me** will do what I have been doing. **He will do even greater things** than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.”* John 14:11-14

He meant it...He meant “miracles.” He meant “anyone.”
He really meant “greater things.”

To conclude that these things have passed with the Apostolic Age is bad exegesis and theology. This is a theology of unbelief – theologies based on Westernized, Enlightenment inspired rationale and not faith.

We believe that Miracles, Signs, and Wonders still occur and have never stopped occurring. We have witnessed some here and desire to see more – not for our glory for God’s alone.

We believe that when we pray for miracles we will see some. We believe that if we don’t pray for miracles, God will still do some in His Sovereign Grace – but if we continue to “cry out at midnight”, continue to “knock, ask, and seek”, we will see more! Luke 11 and 18.

“Praise be to the LORD my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle.” Psalms 144:1.

David’s war was against “flesh and blood” – our war is against “powers and principalities.” We do not wrestle against flesh and blood. Miracles, Signs, and Wonders are God’s weapons against the powers of darkness. David was trained by God for warfare. We need to be too.

- **We have decided** that confident faith is good and bold faith is better.
- **We have decided** that hearing about the Holy Spirit without experiencing Him is silly, that believing in His presence without seeing it manifested in signs and wonders is pretense, that believing in healing without seeing people healed is absurd, and that believing in deliverance without people being delivered is absolutely unreasonable.

- **We have decided** to be Holy Spirit filled, Holy Spirit led, and Holy Spirit empowered—anything less doesn't work for us.
- **We have decided** to be people who tell the stories of God's power because we experienced them—not the ones hearing about them.
- **We have decided** that living saved but not supernatural is living below our privilege and short of what Christ died for.
- **We have decided** to be radical lovers and outrageous givers.
- **We have decided** that we are a missional outpost of the Kingdom and not a museum.
- **We have decided** that it is better to fail while reaching for the impossible that God planned for us than to succeed settling for less.
- **We have decided** that nothing short of His Kingdom coming and His will being done in our world as it is in Heaven will satisfy.
- **We have decided** not to be satisfied until our world cries out, “those who have turned the world upside down have come here too!” Acts 17:6

Pastors Ralph and Cathy Gomez
 Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship
 Adapted from Pastor David Crone's book

Our Statement of Faith

WHAT WE BELIEVE

IN ESSENTIAL BELIEFS -- WE HAVE **UNITY**.

- There is one Body and one Spirit...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us all... Ephesians 4:4-6

IN NON-ESSENTIAL BELIEFS -- WE HAVE **LIBERTY**.

- Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters.. Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls...So then each of us will give an account of himself to God...So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Romans 14:1, 4,12,22

IN ALL OUR BELIEFS -- WE SHOW **LOVE**.

- ...If I hold in my mind not only all human knowledge but also the very secrets of God, and if I have the faith that can move mountains -- but have no love, I amount to nothing at all. 1 Corinthians 13:2

THE ESSENTIALS WE BELIEVE:

WE BELIEVE that there is ONE LIVING AND TRUE GOD, eternally existing in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, equal in power and glory; that this triune God created all, upholds all, and governs all.

WE BELIEVE that the SCRIPTURES of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, fully inspired, without error in the original manuscripts, and the infallible rule of faith and practice.

WE BELIEVE in GOD THE FATHER, an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love; that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men; that He hears and answers prayer; and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

WE BELIEVE in JESUS CHRIST, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles and teachings, His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people and personal, visible return to earth. We believe, in His first coming, Jesus inaugurated the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God.

WE BELIEVE in the HOLY SPIRIT, Who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify and empower for ministry all who believe in Christ; we believe the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Jesus Christ and that He is an abiding Helper, Teacher, and Guide. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit and in the exercise of all the Biblical gifts of the Spirit.

WE BELIEVE IN THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, we should ask, seek, and knock to receive the Holy Spirit who will come and empower us to do the works of the Kingdom. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is accompanied by evidence of speaking in tongues.

WE BELIEVE that all PEOPLE are sinners by nature and choice and are therefore under condemnation, that God regenerates and baptizes by the Holy Spirit those who repent of their sins and confess Jesus Christ as Lord.

WE BELIEVE in the universal CHURCH, the living spiritual body, of which Christ is the Head and all regenerated persons are members.

WE BELIEVE that the Lord Jesus Christ committed two ORDINANCES to the church: baptism; and the Lord's Supper. We believe in water baptism and communion open to all believers.

WE BELIEVE also in the laying on of hands for the empowering of the Holy Spirit, for ordination of pastors and elders, for receiving gifts of the Spirit, and for healing.

WE BELIEVE in the personal, visible, APPEARING OF CHRIST to earth and the consummation of His Kingdom; in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment and eternal blessing of the righteous and endless suffering of the wicked.

WE BELIEVE in what is termed "The Apostle's Creed" as embodying fundamental facts of Christian faith, and endorse the historic orthodox creeds of the church.

Our Lifestyle Statement

WHAT WE PRACTICE

Beliefs are not worth much unless they are translated into actions. Based on what the Bible teaches, we feel very strongly about the following seven practices:

1. THE BIBLE AS OUR SOLE **AUTHORITY**.

We believe the Bible is the inspired word of God and is the infallible standard under which we must live our lives. It serves as our anchor as we try to learn to hear from God, thus keeping us in balance.

We believe that the Scriptures must be interpreted in their historical/cultural context to discern the meaning of the original authors who wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we teach expositively from the Bible an effort to let its message transform our lives.

We affirm that the purpose of the Bible is to lead us to a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ and to teach us how to facilitate the coming of his kingdom. To know the Bible is not an end in itself. We diligently study in order to know him and do his works (JOHN 5:39-40, 2 TIMOTHY 3:15-16). We fear becoming so enamored with the menu that we forget to eat the meal! Let's do the Bible and partake of him.

- The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us to do what is right. 2 Timothy 3:15

2. THE AUTONOMY OF EACH _____ CHURCH.

Christ is the recognized head of our church, not any person, group, or religious organization. While recognizing the value of cooperating with the Association of Vineyard Churches and other groups of Christians, each Vineyard fellowship is essentially self-governing and independent from "denominational" control. In relating to "daughter" churches that we will eventually sponsor, we will encourage each congregation to determine its own strategy, structure, and style.

- Christ is the head of his Body, the church. He is the source of the Body's life... Colosians 1:18 (GN)

3. THE MINISTRY (OR PRIESTHOOD) OF EVERY **BELIEVER**.

The Bible teaches that every Christian is called to "full-time" Christian service, regardless of his or her vocation. We practice the truth that every believer is a minister by encouraging every member to find a place of service and ministry. Every believer has direct access to God through prayer and Bible reading.

- Christ loves us, and by his death he has freed us from our sins and made us a kingdom of priests to serve God. **Revelation 1:6** (GN)

4. TITHING AS A NEW TESTAMENT **PRACTICE**.

We practice tithing for the support of Christ's Body, the church, as God commands. We recognize giving 10% of our income as the Biblical standard.

- One the first day of each week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money *in keeping with his income*... **1 Corinthians 16:2** (Also see **Matthew 23:23**)

5. **WATER BAPTISM**

We practice baptism by immersion under water -- the way Jesus was baptized, and the way the Bible commands.

- For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ... **Colossians 2:12** (GN)

6. **SPIRIT-LED LIVING**

We believe the only way possible to live the Christian life is by God's power within us. So we seek to practice a daily dependence on God's Spirit to enable us to do what is right. (PHILIPPIANS 2:13; EPHESIANS 5:18)

- Jesus said, I am the Vine, you are the branches. If you abide in me and I in you, you will bear such fruit; but apart from me you can do nothing. **John 15:5**

7. **SHARING CHRIST WITH OTHERS**

It is the responsibility of every Christian to share the Good News with those God brings us into contact with. We practice personal sharing about Christ and inviting friends to church.

- Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. **1 Peter 3:15**

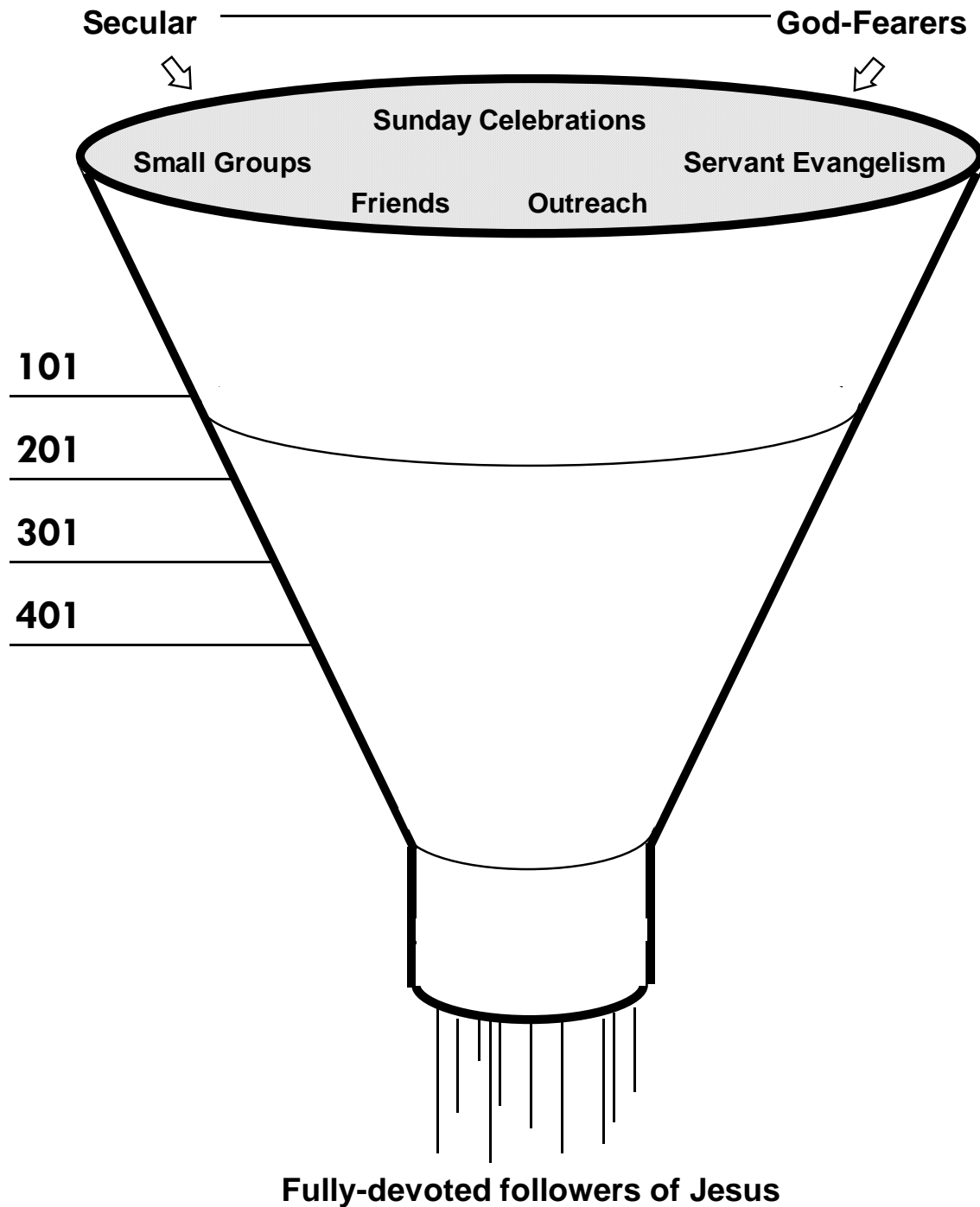
Part Five:

Our Strategy

Paul: I have been all things to all sorts of people
that by every possible means I might win some to God.
I do all of this for the sake of the Good News.

1 Corinthians 9:22-23

The Drawing-in Process at Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship



The Five E's

EXALT

- Exalt Jesus through authentic, spiritual worship.

EQUIP

- Equip believers to do what Jesus did through training and impartation.

EVANGELIZE

- Evangelize various ethno-linguistic groups throughout the world in addition to targeting non-churched pre-Christians in central Indiana.

ENCOURAGE

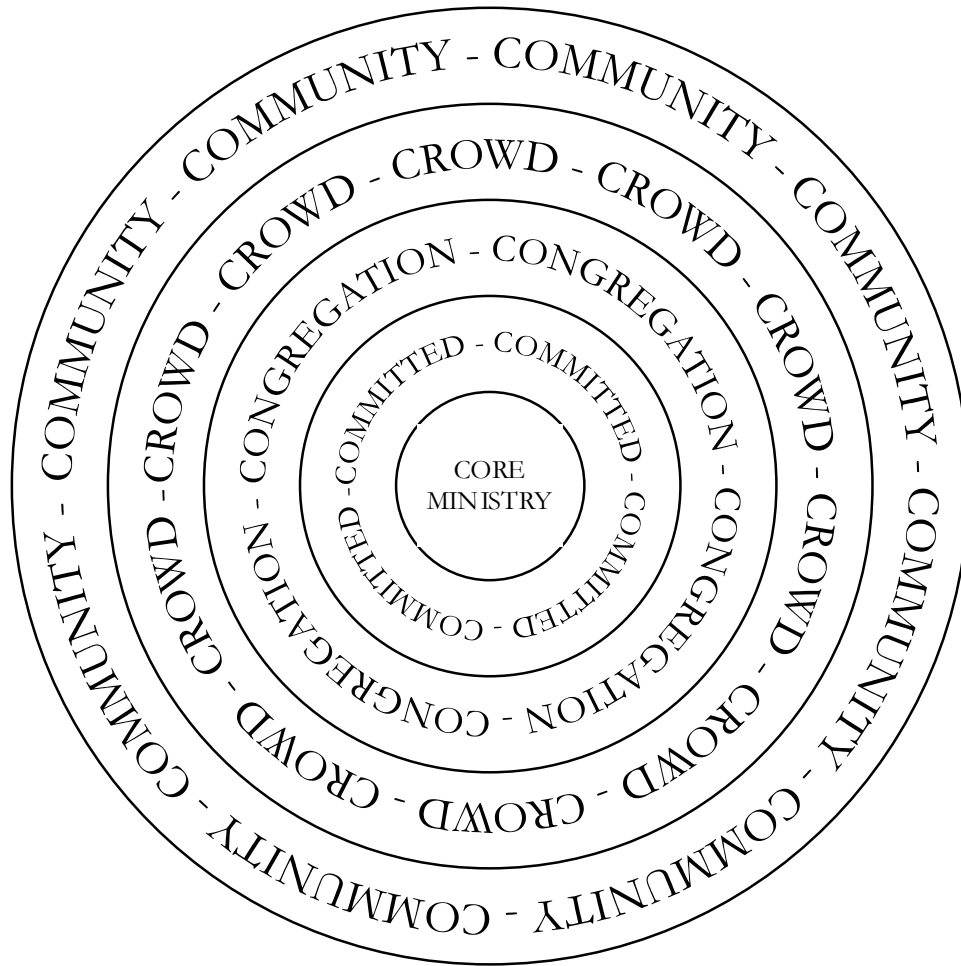
- Encourage the discouraged, the lost, lonely, sick, and the poor.

EMPOWER

- Edify believers by teaching the Bible so people can both know *and* do what the Scriptures say.

All 5 of the above are to be done in an atmosphere enveloped by prayer.

5 Circles of Commitment



The Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship objective is to keep moving people toward the center by encouraging personal spiritual commitments. Specifically, we call people to four basic commitments:

THE FOUR PERSONAL COMMITMENTS

1. THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENT (V101)

is a commitment to **JESUS** and **TO DORAL VINEYARD CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP** .

- You are members of God's very own family... and you belong in God's household with every other Christian. **Ephesians 2:19 (LB)**
- We are all parts of Christ's Body, and it takes every one of us to make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So we belong to each other and need all the others. **Romans 12:4-5 (LB)**

2. THE MATURITY COMMITMENT (V201)

is a commitment to the **HABITS** necessary for spiritual growth.

- Continue to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **2 Peter 3:18**
- Take the time and trouble to keep yourself spiritually fit. **1 Timothy 4:7**

3. THE MINISTRY COMMITMENT (V301)

is a commitment to discovering and using my God-given gifts and abilities in **SERVING** God and others.

- God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other... **1 Peter 4:10 (LB)**
- There are different kinds of service to God...together you form the Body of Christ and each one of you is a necessary part of it. **1 Corinthians 12:5, 27 (LB)**

4. THE MISSIONS COMMITMENT (V401)

is a commitment to **SHARE** the Good News with others.

- ...you will be my witnesses for me...to the ends of the earth. **Acts 1:8 (GN)**
- Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do it with gentleness and respect... **1 Peter 3:15**

WHY DO WE HAVE THESE COMMITMENTS?

We become what we are COMMITTED TO.

Some Elements of Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship Strategy

Passionate, Unbridled Worship: John 4:24; Luke 10:27

Presence -focused: Exodus 33:15

Revival- focused: Hab: 3:2

Simplicity: 1 Corinthians 9:22-23

Acceptance: Acts 5:42

Ministry of every believer: Ephesians 4:13-15

Encouraging preaching: Romans 12:5-6

Continued growth: Luke 5:37

Church planting: Matthew 28:19

Part Six:

Our Structure

For God is not a God of disorder, but of peace...
Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly
way.

1 Corinthians 14:33, 40

How Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship is Structured

The structure of the church should not be determined by culture, business practices, or even denominational traditions.

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH DETERMINES ITS STRUCTURE

1. The Church is a **FELLOWSHIP**.

- They continued steadily learning the teaching of the apostles, and joined in the fellowship... Acts 2:42

A top priority in a fellowship is **HARMONY** and **UNITY**.

- Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:3
- So let us concentrate on the things that make for harmony and the growth of our fellowship together. Romans 14:19

ANY attitude that causes disunity is sin

Colossians 3:15	1 Corinthians 1:10	2 Timothy 2:14
Proverbs 17:14	2 Corinthians 13:11	Philippians 1:27, 2:1-3
Colossians 2:2	Philippians 4:2	1 Peter 3:8
1 Corinthians 14:33	John 13:34-35	2 Timothy 2:23
Romans 15:5-6	Romans 12:16-18	Colossians 3:13-14
Psalm 133:1		

1a. Implication: a good structure promotes unity and downplays **DIFFERENCES**.

- (Often)...your meetings do more harm than good because I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you... 1 Corinthians 11:17-18

"Voting" tends to **CREATE LOSERS**.

2. The Church is a **FAMILY**.

- You should be like one big happy family, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds. **1 Peter 3:8**
- Galatians 6:10, Hebrews 2:10-12, 2 Peter 4:17

2a. So we operate on the basis of **RELATIONSHIP** not **RULES**.

- Don't reprimand a senior member of the church, appeal to him as a father. Treat the young men as brothers, and the older women as mothers. Treat the younger women as sisters. **1 Timothy 5:1-2**
- (A Pastor) must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. If anyone does not know how to manage his family, how can he take care of God's church? **1 Timothy 3:4-5**

3. The Church is a **BODY**.

- 1 Corinthians 12:27, Ephesians 5:23 & 1:22-23, Colossians 1:18 & 2:19

We are a body -- not a business! We are an organism -- not an organization!

3a. Therefore we function on the basis of **SPIRITUAL GIFTS** not **ELECTED OFFICERS**.

- Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We each have different gifts according to the grace given us. **Romans 12:4-6**

In an organization, "Maintenance" becomes the focus.

But in an organism, "Ministry" is the focus.

3b. We have a simple structure here so we can maximize **MINISTRY** and minimize **MAINTENANCE**.

- God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up... **Ephesians 4:11-12**

4. The Church is a **instrument** to bring the Kingdom of God to the World

OUR STRUCTURE

The people are **MINISTERS**.

The pastors are **ADMINISTERS**.

Most ministry in the Vineyard is done by participants, not pastors.

4. The Church is a **FLOCK**.

(Jesus' favorite description of the Church)
John 10:1-30, Matthew 26:31 & 25:33

4a. Therefore, it is cared for and led by **SHEPHERDS**.

- Jesus asked Simon Peter, 'Do you really love me?' 'Yes Lord,' said Peter. 'Then take care of my sheep.' John 21:16-17

Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the same church leaders:

Poimen

Presbuteros

Episcopos

- To the elders I say...be shepherds of God's flock, serving as overseers... 1 Peter 5:1-2
- Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived he said to them... Guard yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be pastors of the church of God... Acts 20:17-18, 28 (See also Titus 1:5-7, 1 Timothy 5:17)

OUR AFFILIATION

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VINEYARD

In 1974, a home Bible study group began in Los Angeles. It grew quickly, necessitating the beginning of other home groups and the start of a Sunday service which they called the Vineyard. In the following few years, thousands of people received Christ in small groups and large meetings. Many went out and started other Vineyards in California, growing churches quickly with priorities of worship, relationship, healing, training and giving.

In the spring of 1982, John Wimber and several other pastors led their churches into relationship with the Vineyard. It was obvious God had called Wimber to pastor the pastors -- to train and encourage, and to plant churches internationally. As a result, the Vineyard has an extensive and fruitful relationship with American denominations, churches in Europe and Africa, World Vision, seminaries such as Fuller, and underground churches in Asia.

Each of the Vineyards in the US and the world is autonomous and independently incorporated, but is joined to other Vineyard churches by shared values, priorities, and vision. We are, of course, joined by God's Spirit and love to all other churches who confess Jesus as Lord and are seeking God.

For the sake of mutual submission, training, fellowship, and in order to fulfill our common mission, there exists the Association of Vineyard Churches which has a Board of Directors. The Board has divided up the United States into regions and each region into areas. This breakdown intends to facilitate care for Vineyard pastors, the planting of 2,000 churches by the year 2000, and opportunities to bless the whole Body of Christ.

Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship is a member of the Association of Vineyard Churches.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A COMMITTED MEMBER

At Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship we recognize the value of making a formalized commitment. We ask you to commit to Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship for 4 reasons:

1. A **BIBLICAL REASON**: Christ is committed to the church.

- ...Christ loved the church, and he gave his life for it. Ephesians 5:25

2. A **CULTURAL REASON**: It is a witness to our community.

We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything -- a job, a marriage, our country. This attitude has also produced a generation of church shoppers and church hoppers. Commitment swims against the current of America's "consumer religion." It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

3. A **PRACTICAL REASON**: It defines who can be counted on.

Every team has a player roster. Every school has a student enrollment. Every business has an employee payroll. Every army has an enlistment of soldiers. Commitment identifies our family.

4. A **PERSONAL REASON**: It produces spiritual growth.

The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you're not committed to any specific church family.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF MEMBERS?

At Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship we never ask members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We only expect you to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These responsibilities are spelled out in the **Member's Commitment**.

Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship Member's Commitment

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior, and being in agreement with the Vineyard's statements, strategy, and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other participants to do the following:

1. I WILL **PROTECT** THE UNITY OF MY CHURCH

- By acting in love toward other members
- By refusing to gossip
- By following the leaders
- So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together. **Romans 15:19**
- Live in complete harmony with each other -- each with the attitude of Christ toward the other. **Romans 15:5**
- Have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts. **1 Peter 1:22**
- Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs... **Ephesians 4:29**
- Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you. **Hebrews 13:17**

2. I WILL SHARE THE **RESPONSIBILITY** OF MY CHURCH

- By praying for its growth
- By inviting the unchurched to attend
- By warmly welcoming those who visit
- To the church...we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly. **1 Thessalonians 1:2**
- Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that My House will be full. **Luke 14:23**
- So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified. **Romans 15:7**

3. I WILL SERVE THE **MINISTRY** OF MY CHURCH

- By discovering my gifts and talents

-- By being equipped to serve by my pastors

-- By developing a servant's heart

- Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given to you... 1 Peter 4:10
- Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ...who took on the very nature of a servant... Philippians 2:3-4, 7

4. I WILL **SUPPORT** THE TESTIMONY OF MY CHURCH

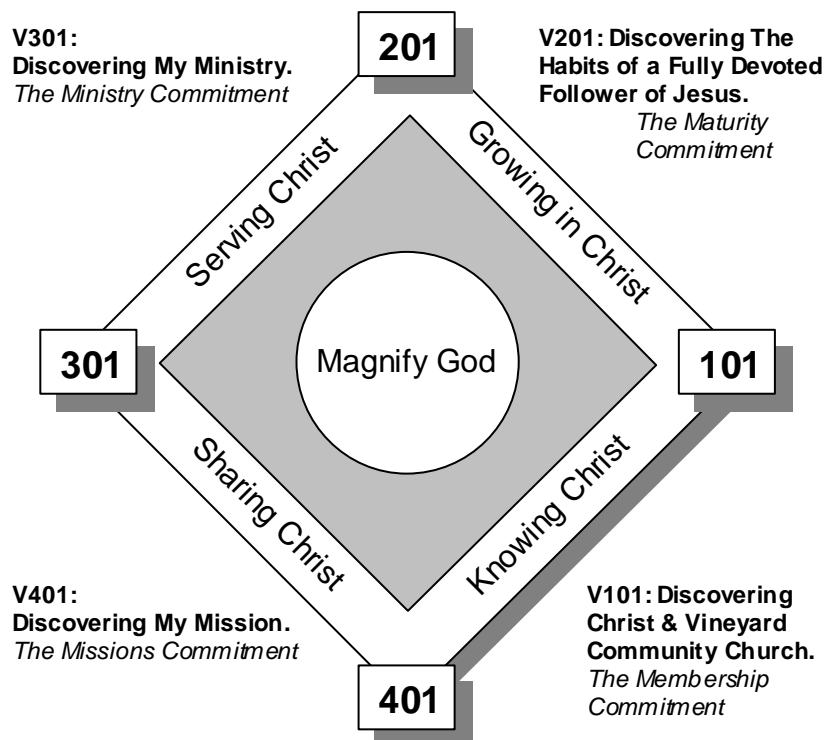
-- By attending faithfully

-- By living a godly life

-- By giving regularly

- Let us not give up the habit of meeting together...but let us encourage one another. Hebrews 10:25
- But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ. Philippians 1:27
- Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering. 1 Corinthians 16:2
- A tenth of all you produce is the Lord's, and it is holy. Leviticus 27:30

What Now?



Doral Vineyard Christian Fellowship's classes to help you

GO ON TO SECOND BASE!

AN OVERVIEW:

100 Level Classes: To lead people to Christ and the Kingdom of God – by participation at the Doral Vineyard.

200 Level Classes: To grow people to spiritual maturity. FSM

300 Level Classes: To equip people with the skills they need for ministry.

400 Level Classes: To enlist people to the worldwide mission of sharing Christ.
(FSM- Forerunner School of Ministry)