

PRINCIPLES OF BEING CHRISTIAN
AND
DOING CHURCH AT SUCH A TIME AS THIS

September 4, 2012

William D. Watley, Ph. D., New Seasons Press, All Rights Reserved

1. Basic understanding of church as a community of faith whose primary business is spirituality with an understanding of worship as primary
2. Importance of teaching the Word/word of God without apology, even if such teaching is politically inexpedient and goes against social acceptance:

What We Believe

WE BELIEVE in a God who is infinite and eternal, omniscient (all knowing), omnipotent (all powerful) and omnipresent (everywhere at the same time), who has been manifested and revealed in Jesus Christ and still lives among us as the Holy Spirit.

WE BELIEVE that Jesus Christ is the final and fullest revelation of God and that he is both fully human and fully divine (Heb. 1:1-3).

WE BELIEVE that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners (I Tim. 1:15) and that having conquered death he now reigns as Lord of all (Rev. 11:15).

WE BELIEVE that if we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in our hearts that God raised him from the dead, we shall be saved (Romans 10:9).

WE BELIEVE that Jesus died for our sins (I Cor. 15:3) not because he had to, but because he loves us and that each of us is important, really important, in the eyes and in the heart of God (Jn. 15:13).

WE BELIEVE that once we confess Jesus as Lord, the Holy Spirit becomes a permanent presence in our lives (Jn. 14:16-17).

WE BELIEVE that the Holy Spirit fills (Eph. 5:16) anoints (Luke 4:18) empowers (Acts 1:6) and bestows gifts upon us (I Cor. 12:4-6) to equip the saints for ministry, to edify the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12) and set the captives free (Luke 4:18).

WE BELIEVE that the Bible is the inspired word of God written by fallible human beings who were under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and that it contains all things necessary for salvation (II Tim. 3:14-17).

WE BELIEVE that the Lordship of Jesus Christ mandates that we tithe, which means giving 10 percent of our gross income to the church, and that the failure to tithe is flagrant disobedience to the word of God (Mat. 23:23-24).

WE BELIEVE that because Jesus was resurrected from the dead, we too, shall live eternally in a body that is immortal and incorruptible (II Cor. 5:20-23).

WE BELIEVE that according to God's Word and promise, Jesus is coming back in glory and that we shall live with him forever (I Thes. 4:13-18).

WE BELIEVE that until the time of Christ's return or our departure, God wants us to grow and grow and keep on growing until we reach full maturity as followers of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Vision that respects denominational loyalty but has a kingdom emphasis and vision
4. Understanding that while the African American experience is who we are; we are called to be multi-cultural and multi-ethnic in our vision and ministry, particularly if our local context reflects ethnic diversity and change
5. Embrace technology as intrinsic to evangelical outreach and as a means of financial support for ministry
6. Be intentional about young people's ministry, rather than developing it as an afterthought
7. Embody sound biblical stewardship that emphasis the tithe as the basis of giving and money management as core to Christian praxis
8. Be sensitive to reality of church culture and take the time and have willingness to examine church culture (how we do things around here, what constitutes protocol and why, how do we learn what is and is not acceptable and why) to see when it needs to change and whether or not it is hindering or helping the kingdom to expand and the church to grow.
9. The importance of friendliness and a welcoming spirit as necessary ingredient of church culture and the development of process of integration of new members and ministries into the body of Christ.
10. Do not be afraid of risk taking change and embrace failure and mistakes as invaluable learning tools
11. Be clear about core values and ones rationale for existing as a distinct body of Christ or community of faith
12. Develop strong, loyal, competent leadership team. While the spiritual leader/pastor is key, a pastor is only as effective as leadership team.