

DOCTRINES OF THE FULL GOSPEL CHURCH OF GOD



THE FULL GOSPEL CHURCH OF GOD

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ARTICLE 2

DOCTRINES

THE DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH

The members of The Full Gospel Church of God shall accept the whole Bible as the Divinely inspired Word of God : 11 Timothy 3:16, particularly the New Testament, as an all-sufficient rule for faith, practice, government and discipline: and shall therefore believe the following :

SECTION 1 - THE DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

We believe in the Divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures as the revelation of the mind and will of God. On the authority of Jesus Christ, we accept them in their original form as the Divine Word, which, when heaven and earth are passed away, shall yet endure: Matthew 5:17,18; 24:35; 1 Timothy 3:16,17; 11 Peter 1:19-21; Revelation 22:19.

SECTION 2 - THE GODHEAD

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons, namely : Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

(A) Terms Defined

The terms **“Trinity”** and **“Persons”** as related to the Godhead convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ, respecting the being of God as distinguished from **“gods many and lords many”**. We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is one Lord as a trinity, or as one Being in three persons, and still be absolutely Scriptural: Hebrews 1:1-8; Colossians 2:9; 1 Timothy 3:16; Acts 5:3,4; Matthew 3:16,17; Hebrews 9:14.

(B) Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead

Christ taught a distinction of persons in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship; as to its mode, it is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained; Matthew 11:25-27; 28:19; Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 1:24; 11 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 1:3,4.

(C) Unity of the One being of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

Accordingly therefore, there is that in the Son which constitutes Him as the Son and not the Father or the Holy Spirit; and there is that in the Spirit which constitutes Him as the Holy Spirit, and not either the Father or the Son. Therefore, the Father is the begetter, the Son is the begotten, and the Holy Spirit is the one proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty, and His Name is one : Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 48:16; Zechariah 14:9; John 1:18; 15:26; 17:11, 21; Hebrews 9:14.

(D) Identity and Co-operation in the Godhead

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are never identical as to person, nor confused as to relation nor divided in respect to the Godhead, nor opposed as to co-operation. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son; as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son; as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father; as to authority. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son; as to nature, relationship, co-operation and authority. Hence, neither person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others: John 5:17-30; 8:17,18; 15:10.

(E) The Title: "The Lord Jesus Christ"

The appellation, "**Lord Jesus Christ**", is a proper name. It is never applied in the New Testament either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God: Romans 1:1-3,7; 11 John 1:3.

(F) The Lord Jesus Christ: "God with Us"

The Lord Jesus Christ as to His Divine and eternal nature, pre-existent and future (**Micah 5:2**), is the proper and only begotten Son of the Father but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore, acknowledged to be both God and Man, who because He is God and Man, is "**Emmanuel**", "**God with us**". Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:23; John 4:2,10,14; Revelation 1:13,14,17.

(G) The Title: "Son of God"

Since the name "**Emmanuel**" embraces both God and man in the one person, namely: our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title "**Son of God**" describes His proper **deity**. The title "**Son of God**" belongs to the order of eternity, and the title "**Son of Man**" to the order of time, and the title "**Son of Man**" describes His proper humanity : Matthew 1:21,23; John 3:18; Hebrews 1:1-13; 7:3; 11 John 3.

(H) Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ

Therefore, it is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title "**Son of God**" solely from the fact of incarnation, or because of His relationship to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son; is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the being of God; a denial of the Father and the Son, and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh: John 1:12,14,18,29,49,51; 8:57,58; Hebrews 2:3,4; 1 John 2:22,23, 4:1-5.

(I) Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord

The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; angels and principalities and powers having been made subject to Him. Having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit, that we in the name of Jesus might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord unto the glory of God the Father; until the time when the Son Himself shall subject Himself unto the Father, that God (**the triune Godhead**) may be all in all : Acts 2:32-36; Romans 14:11; 1 Corinthians 15:24,28; Ephesians 1:10-22; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3-13; 1 Peter 3:22.

(J) Equal Honour to the Father and the Son

Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgement unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on the earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of deity. To give Him all the honour and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the Godhead, excepting those that express relationship. **See paragraph 2; 3 and 4**, thus honouring the Son as we honour the Father: Matthew 28:18; John 5:22,23; Hebrews 1:3; Revelation 4:8,11; 5:6-14; 7:9,19.

(K) The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit (**the third person in the trinity**) proceeds from the Father and the Son, and is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son: Matthew 3:16; John 14:16,17; 15:26; Acts 13:2-4; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:8; Acts 5:3,4.

SECTION 3 - THE INCARNATE CHRIST

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of the Father conceived of the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary; that this same Jesus was crucified, buried, and raised from the dead; that He was taken up into Heaven and is today at the right hand of the Father, as the Intercessor.

SECTION 4 - SATAN OR THE DEVIL

We believe in the personality of the devil, who, originally a created angelic being, exercised authority in the presence of God, and who as a result of his transgression was cast down: Ezekiel 28:11-19. He later, by his influence, brought about the fall of man, and now seeks to destroy the faith of every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ: Genesis 3:1-5; Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8; John 8:44; 13:2.

The Scriptures moreover teach that other angelic beings shared his downfall, being cast down to hell (**Tartarus: 11 Peter 2:4**), awaiting future judgement. Under his subordination and control are demons, who seek to afflict mankind with diseases of mind and body: endeavouring to oppress, obsess, harass, and enter into the bodies of mankind. The believer, however, has been given mastery over them in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Mark 16:17; Matthew 25:41; Luke 4:32; 9:42; Acts 10:38.

SECTION 5 - SIN AND THE FALL OF MAN AND HIS LOST ESTATE BY NATURE

We believe that sin is any lack of conformity in a free moral agent to the character, nature, and will of God; whether it be in act, disposition, state, thought or will. It came into existence in heaven as the result of the abuse of free moral agency by an unfallen being; that it entered the human family through the fall of our first parents, Adam and Eve, bringing spiritual death upon the human race. Further, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and repentance of sin are commanded of God for all, being necessary for the forgiveness of, and cleansing from sin: Genesis 3:1-5; Romans 3:23; 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Galatians 3:22.

SECTION 6 - REPENTANCE

We believe that repentance is a godly sorrow for sin, brought about in the heart of the individual by the Holy Spirit, resulting in a turning about in submission to God and His Will; Acts 26:18-20. It is the gift of God: Acts 11:18; 11 Corinthians 7:10. The repentant sinner should confess his sins to God and not to man.

SECTION 7 - REGENERATION OR THE NEW BIRTH

We believe that regeneration is the imparting of the Divine nature into the heart of the repentant believer by the Holy Spirit, bringing about the new creation: John 1:12,13; 11 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 1:1,4,5; Titus 3:5-7; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 5:1.

SECTION 8 - RECONCILIATION

We believe that reconciliation is the bringing together of God and man on the grounds of Christ's redemptive work, into the state of fellowship and communion as children of God: 11 Corinthians 5:18,19; Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 1:21; 1 John 1:3 and Romans 5:11 (**where correct translation of "atonement" in A V is the word "reconciliation".**)

SECTION 9 - REDEMPTION

We believe that redemption is the act of God whereby through the death of His Son, He paid that price which His own holiness demanded for the release of the sinner: Luke 1:69; Romans 3:25; 1 Corinthians 6:20; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18,19; Revelation 5:9,10.

SECTION 10 - JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

We believe that justification is an act of God's free grace whereby the sinner is absolved from the guilt of his past transgressions, and receives a free pardon and the forgiveness of all his sins, on the sole grounds of repentance and saving faith in Christ and Him crucified; the righteousness of God being imputed unto him, whereupon he enters into peace with God : Romans 5:1; 5:9; 8:30; Galatians 3:24.

SECTION 11 - WATER BAPTISM

We believe that the Scriptural mode of water baptism as practised by the apostles, is single immersion in the Name (not names) of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and should be obeyed as a command of the Lord Jesus Christ: Matthew 28:19; and as an act of faith after the experience of regeneration through saving faith, and repentance: Mark 16:16; Luke 7:29,30; Acts 2:38,39; 10:48; 22:16. It is a symbol of the burial of the old nature, the body of sin, and of our death and resurrection with our Lord Jesus Christ: Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12; Galatians 3:27; 1 Peter 3:20.

SECTION 12 - RESTITUTION

We believe that our conscience is made void of offence toward God through faith in the blood of Christ; but toward men we must always have a conscience void of offence by adjusting and making right all that is wrong between us and them wherever possible; by the payment of past debts, refunding thefts, and asking pardon for slanders, etcetera.

SECTION 13 - THE BELIEVER'S CONFESSION OF SINS

- (a) We believe that where sin has been committed which is only known to God and the believer, this should be confessed to God only: Luke 15:21; 1 John 1:8,9.
- (b) Where offences have been committed and another individual is involved, this should be confessed to God and to such individual, if humanly possible. If several individuals are affected then the confession should be made to God and to them: James 5:16.
- (c) Where an offence has been committed, which has brought dishonour upon the Church, then the offence should be confessed to the Church : James 5:16; 11 Corinthians 2:5-8. **(THE PASTOR SHOULD BE CONSULTED IN ALL OF THESE MATTERS.)**

SECTION 14 - SANCTIFICATION AND HOLINESS

We believe that those who would live unto God and in fellowship with Him are enjoined to be holy in life. Since the Creator is holy in Himself, the obligation to be holy rests upon all of His creation: Psalm 22:3; 1 Peter 1:15,16; 11 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:7. Sanctification is represented in three aspects in the Scriptures, namely:

(A) POSITIONAL

Positional sanctification is that state of holiness or sainthood that is the initial imputation of Christ's righteousness to the regenerated or born-again believer. It is a result of the believer's union with Christ as a new creation: Hebrews 10:10; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11; Ephesians 4:24; 11 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2. Positional sanctification has to do with the standing of the regenerated before God, which standing is based upon the imputed holiness of Christ to all and upon all who believe: 11 Corinthians 5:21.

(B) EXPERIMENTAL

While all who believe are sanctified positionally, the positional sanctification does not have reference to practical or experimental sanctification, which has to do with the quality or condition of our daily lives. Experimental sanctification is subsequent to regeneration and may come as an instantaneous blessing in regard to specific problems in the Christian life, or as a progressive experience as the believer walks in the light, and in the Spirit: 1 John 1:7; Romans 12:1.

- (1) **Yieldedness to God** - Romans 6:17,22; 12:1.
- (2) **Freedom from the Power of Sin** - Romans 6:11-13; 8:2; 1 John 2:1,2.
- (3) **Spiritual Growth**

Christians are expected to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: 11 Peter 3:18. As the child of God abides in the Vine he is expected to bear much fruit: John 15:2,5,8; Philippians 3:12,15. This phase of experimental sanctification is the result of the constant growth of the individual in things spiritual, and the ever-increasing knowledge of the rights of his sonship through grace.

SECTION 14 (B) (4) – SECURITY IN SALVATION

(B)(4) Security in salvation

Security in salvation is based upon continued faith in Christ as evidenced by holiness. Further it is possible for a believer to repudiate his faith in Christ and be lost. Therefore the perseverance of the saints is conditional to eternal salvation and further - salvation is for the whosoever.

**** Doctrinal Matters**

In the explanation or application of doctrinal matters of the Church extreme forms of exposition or interpretation will not be recognised or accepted as representative of the Church.

(C) Ultimate

The ultimate aspect of sanctification is related to the Christian's final perfection in Glory. This will take place at the time when the Church is presented "faultless" before the presence of His glory, free from every spot and wrinkle: 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Ephesians 5:27; Colossians 1:22; Jude verse 24.

(D) Agents

The agents of sanctification as emphasised in the Scriptures are as follows:

- (1) The Holy Spirit - 1 Corinthians 6:11; 11 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2.
- (2) The Son of God - Hebrews 10:10.
- (3) The Word - THE TRUTH OF GOD: John 15:3; 17:17.
- (4) The Blood of Christ - Hebrews 13:12.

SECTION 15 - THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that every believer at the moment of regeneration or the new birth is indwelt by the Holy Spirit: John 14:16,17; 20:22; Romans 8:9-11; 8:14-16; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 11 Corinthians 1:22; Galatians 4:16; Ephesians 3:14-19.

This indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer at the time of the spiritual re-birth creates the new nature within and forms the basis for the development of spiritual fruit (Galatians 5:22,23) and makes it possible for the believer to walk in the Spirit and experience practical sanctification: Romans 8:1-6,13; Galatians 5:16.

We therefore believe that the repentant believer is born again by the Holy Spirit (John 3:5-8), bringing about regeneration. Simultaneously he is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9), bringing about sanctification. At the same time he is also baptised into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13), bringing about membership in the body of Christ and true spiritual sonship. In addition to these mighty acts of the Holy Spirit in and on behalf of the believer, he is also enjoined to receive by faith from God, the endowment of spiritual power to witness: Galatians 3:2,14; Acts 2:33. This endowment of power or baptism in the Holy Spirit is as needful in the church today as it was in the early church, and is still a divine provision to enable the church to fulfil the Great Commission: Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8.

SECTION 16 - THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, OR THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity coming upon the believer after regeneration. It is the endowment of power from on high, promised to all believers who obey Him: Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5-8; 2:38; 5:32. It is the privilege of every believer to receive this supernatural experience, as in the early church: Acts 2:1-4; 8:15-19; 10:44-47; 19:1-7. This wonderful experience is distinct from, in addition to, and subsequent to the experience of the new birth. At the time of the new birth the believer is baptised into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit, as referred to in 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Romans 6:3. This baptism into the body of Christ has to do with the placing of the believer into a new position as a child of God, whereas the baptism in the Holy Spirit referred to in Acts 2:1-4; 8:15-19; 10:44-47 and 19:1-7 has to do with the placing of the believer into the element or control of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of Divine direction and endowment of spiritual power for service.

SECTION 17 - THE INITIAL EVIDENCE OF THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

The initial Scriptural evidence of believers receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit is the physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Holy Spirit gives them utterance: Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6; in confirmation of the promise of Jesus in Mark 16:17. The speaking with tongues in these initial instances is the same in manifestation as the gift or “**spiritual**” (GR. pneumatikos), of tongues, 1 Corinthians 12:4-10,28.

SECTION 18 - THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The fruit of the Spirit is distinct from the gifts or spiritual manifestations of the Spirit, although both are nine-fold (compare Galatians 5:22,23; with 1 Corinthians 12:7-11). The fruit of the Spirit is the expression through the believer of the new nature, or the divine nature which is imparted at the time of the new birth, whereas the spiritual gifts or the manifestation of the Spirit is the revelation of the ministry purpose and power of the Holy Spirit through the believer in his worship and service: 1 Corinthians 12:7; Romans 8:26,27; 1 Corinthians 12:28.

SECTION 19 - SPIRITUAL GIFTS

We believe in the present day operation of the nine-fold manifestation of the Holy Spirit, the spiritual gifts (Gr. pneumatikos and charisma) as set forth by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; and we recommend to all to covet earnestly these spiritual gifts, so that the church may be edified and enlarged, and function effectively. The demonstration of these spiritual gifts should at all times conform to the Scriptural order as outlined in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthian church; whereas the bestowal of these spiritual manifestations is the sovereign right of the Spirit the Divine Giver : 1 Corinthians 12:11. Although distinct from each other, the fruit and the manifestations of the Spirit should operate in conjunction with each other: John 15:1-9; Romans 6:22; 1 Corinthians 13:1.

SECTION 20 - DIVINE HEALING

We believe that Divine provision has been made for the physical health and healing of the believer through the redemptive work of Christ upon the Cross and that by His stripes we are healed: Exodus 15:26; Numbers 21:8,9; John 3:14; Isaiah 53:4; Matthew 8:17; 1 Peter 2:24. Divine healing is to be ministered to the sick through prayer and the laying on of hands, in the ministry of the Gospel : Mark 16:18 : through anointing the believer with oil, and through the prayer of faith : James 5:14,15 and also through the ministry of the gifts of healing : Acts 28:8,9; 1 Corinthians 12:9.

SECTION 21 - THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that the Lord's Supper, consisting of the partaking of the elements, express our remembrance of the Lord's death and the initiation of the New Covenant through His shed blood. By the eating of the bread and the drinking of the cup, we also express by faith our participation of the body and the blood of Christ, and thereby express our spiritual communion with Him in the proclamation of His death until He comes: Matthew 26:26-28; Luke 22:6-20; 1 Corinthians 10:16,17; 11:23-29.

SECTION 22 - THE CHURCH

(A) The etymology of the word

The word "Church" comes from the Greek word "ekklesia" which means "a called out company". The deeper spiritual use of the word, translated "Church" in the New Testament, refers to a company of saved people, who by their salvation are called out from the world into organic union with Christ to form His mystical body, over which He is the head: Romans 8:30; Acts 15:14. It does not refer merely to a visible assembly of people, which may include some unsaved as well as saved people, nor is it restricted to any one generation, race, or locality. It includes all those truly saved of all generations since the church began; and is through the inner ministry of the Holy Spirit, a self-perpetuating spiritual organism: Ephesians 4:16; 1 Peter 2:9.

(B) The Origin of the Church

The Church is a separate and distinct company from Old Testament Israel. This is clear from the following: Christ during His ministry declared it to be yet future (Matthew 16:18). Saving faith in a crucified and risen Saviour is the requirement which brings about regeneration and membership in the Church; so the Church could not have existed until after Calvary: Galatians 3:23-25. There could be no Church until it was purchased with His shed blood: Ephesians 5:25-27. The Church could not live until Christ arose to give it resurrection life: Romans 6:5; Colossians 3:1-3. The Church could not exist as His body until He had ascended to be the head over all things to it: Ephesians 1:20-23. It would have been impossible for the Church to exist and perpetuate itself through its various ministries until the resurrection of Christ had brought the ministry gifts into existence: Ephesians 4:7-12. These various ministries could not have carried out their functions until they were endued with power for the task: Acts 1:8; 2:4. The Church therefore came into existence through the crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection of Christ. It received the Holy Spirit, and was given the great commission, John 20:22, Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15 and at Pentecost had the ministry gifts bestowed upon it and was endued with power for service and ministry. Ephesians 4:7-12; Acts 1:8; 2:4.

(C) The Doctrine of the Church

The doctrine of the Church was an unrevealed mystery to the Old Testament saints, but it was revealed later to the New Testament apostles and prophets. Therefore the doctrine of the Church relates to this present age only. Also the doctrine, discipline and order of the Church are given in the New Testament only: Ephesians 3:1-10.

*** The Universal Church of Christ

The church is constituted in a universal sense by all those who are born again through the Holy Spirit in this dispensation (John 3:5; 1:12 and 13), and are baptised by Him into one body (1 Corinthians 12:13), with Christ as the Head of the body (Colossians 1:18). The church is then such a spiritual and living organic unity that expresses itself as the body of Christ in action, in the organisational church (1 Corinthians 12:20). Thus the local assemblies are equally organic.

SECTION 23 - THE BLESSED HOPE

We believe that the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ to resurrect those who have died in Him, their rising to be caught up together with those believers who are alive when He returns, and their joint meeting with the Lord in the air, is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church. This event is to take place prior to the great tribulation: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51-55.

SECTION 24 - THE GREAT TRIBULATION

We believe that the closing days of this age will witness a period of unprecedented and great tribulation on the earth (Matthew 24:21-31), and that Christ, together with His saints, will return immediately after the tribulation of those days: Matthew 24:29,30.

SECTION 25 - THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

We believe in the coming of the Lord with His saints to judge the nations and reign in righteousness upon the earth for a thousand years. This is the expectation of the true Church: Psalm 72:8,11; 96:10-13; Isaiah 11; Daniel 7:22; Micah 4:1-7; Zechariah 14:1-9; Revelation 19:11; 20:6; Jude verse 14,15; Isaiah 24:23.

SECTION 26 - THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH

We believe in and look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, and over which God shall reign with his people forever: 11 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1; 22:5.

SECTION 27 - PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED

We believe in the everlasting punishment of the wicked in the sense of eternal torment: Matthew 25:46; 13:49,50; Luke 16:23,24; Romans 6:23; 11 Thessalonians 1:8,9; Revelation 20:6-15; 14:11; 21:8.

ARTICLE 3

M E M B E R S H I P

SECTION 1 – CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

The following persons may be accepted into membership and the fellowship of the Full Gospel Church of God in a particular local church, i.e. those who:-

- (A)** Have truly repented of their sins (**Acts 2:38; 1 Corinthians 6:10,11**), and
 - (B)** Have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and in consequence have had a real experience of regeneration: 11 Corinthians 5:17, and
 - (C)** Have taken all reasonable steps to make restitution where possible (**Matthew 5:23,24; Colossians 3:13**), and
 - (D)** Have been baptised in water by immersion: Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47-48, and
 - (E)** **Who** believe in and are willing to subscribe to the objectives, doctrines and regulations set forth in the Constitution (**Romans 13:1; Titus 3:1; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 2:13**), and
 - (F)** Do not belong to any other Christian organisation that could adversely affect their church membership, and
- * Do not belong to any other denomination, and
- ** **Have been accepted into membership by the local church council.**

SECTION 2 - ADMISSION INTO MEMBERSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP

(A) RECEIVING CONVERTS INTO MEMBERSHIP

Persons who have repented of their sins and have exercised a saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21; Galatians 3:26; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 8:9,16) and in consequence have given clear testimony of being born-again of the Spirit, and have followed the Lord through the waters of baptism (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; 22:16), shall be encouraged by the pastor and members of the local church to come into the fellowship of that local church (Acts 2:47; 1 Corinthians 12:13,20; Hebrews 10:25). Upon the expression of their willingness thereto, they shall be received into membership at a suitable public service and be given publicly the right hand of fellowship. Such persons shall then be encouraged to continue steadfastly in the doctrines and discipline of the Church (2 Timothy 2:2; 3:10, 14; 1 Peter 1:5 - 10; Acts 2:46).

(B) THE APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Application for admission to membership of the local church shall be made on the prescribed form and be submitted to the local church council for approval thereof.

(C) MEMBERSHIP CARDS

A prescribed membership card shall be issued to every person accepted into membership. This is to be done by the secretary of the local church council.

SECTION 3 - DUTIES OF CHURCH MEMBERS

Members of the Full Gospel Church of God must consider it their sacred duty to adorn the Gospel of the Lord in all things, and so to act that the Name of the Lord shall be held in honour and esteem among all men. The essential duties of members are set forth hereunder:

(A) Fellowship, Lord's Supper, Prayer, Worship and Witnessing

In addition to the importance of private fellowship with God, members should attend public services specially set aside for fellowship, Lord's Supper, prayer, worship and witnessing. Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Corinthians 11:23,24; Romans 12:11; Acts 1:8.

(B) Spiritual Growth

All members should grow spiritually by setting aside each day some convenient time for Bible reading, meditation and private prayer: Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2; Matthew 6:6; 1 Peter 2:2.

(C) Separation from the World

Members must clearly realise the necessity of maintaining a conscience void of offence toward God and men (Acts 24:16) and of showing to the world that they have been made new creatures in Christ Jesus (11 Corinthians 5:17) and by the purity of their lives demonstrate that they have put off the old nature with its evil deeds and have put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness: Ephesians 4:22-24. This will clearly involve a separation from sin and from the world: 11 Corinthians 6:17. Abstaining from tobacco, narcotics, alcohol, active membership in secret societies, unchristian entertainment, wearing of immodest or costly apparel and unnecessary jewellery, and everything else that is not becoming to a true disciple of Christ: Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 2:9; 1 Peter 3:3,4; 1 John 2:15,16; 11 Timothy 3:1-5; Galatians 5:19-21; Romans 1:29-32.

(D) Family Prayer

Members who are heads of households and families are urged to give conscientious attention to the importance of daily family worship and prayer, and by the regular maintenance of daily Bible reading and prayer not only to combat juvenile delinquency but to bring up their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord: Ephesians 6:4.

(E) Dedication of Children

We find no proof of sprinkling or of water baptism of infants in the Holy Scriptures, therefore the Full Gospel Church of God practises dedication of children to the Lord (Luke 2:22; Mark 10:12-16). Members entrusted by the Lord with children are encouraged to bring them for public dedication to God.

(F) Public Service

Members, especially young converts, shall be encouraged to confess Christ before men: Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:9; to testify publicly in services, and witness for Christ in open air meetings, being saved to serve and become soul winners and to spread the message of the Full Gospel of Christ to others. They should at an early age dedicate their lives to God (Romans 13:1,2), and seek earnestly the baptism in the Holy Spirit as an endowment of power from on high: Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; 24:49; John 1:33; Acts 1:5-8, and be very zealous of spiritual gifts for the edification of the church: 1 Corinthians 12:7-11,31.

(G) Support of the Ministry and the Work of God

Members must respond to their privileges and sacred duty to bring their tithes and offerings regularly into the treasury of the local church where they are in fellowship. Members who are not tithing render themselves ineligible to hold office in the local church. Tithes and offerings are for the support of the full-time ministry, and the spreading of the Gospel of Christ in all its fullness to every creature in obedience to the command of Christ and in terms of the financial programme endorsed by the General Conference of the Church: 1 Corinthians 9:7-14; 16:1; Galatians 6:6; 1 Timothy 6:17; Malachi 3:10.

(H) Marriage and divorce

The Word of God makes it clear that marriage is an honourable estate, instituted by God in the time of man's innocence and thereby signifies unto us the mystical union that exists between Christ and His Church. The Divine ideal is that Christian marriage which is viewed as a monogamous relationship between one man and one woman, shall be indissoluble, for what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder (Matthew 19:6). However, it may be dissolved because of sexual infidelity. In the event of believers becoming estranged through sexual infidelity, every effort should be made to bring about reconciliation.

Believers whose marriage has been dissolved on the acceptable grounds of sexual infidelity, being the innocent parties, are permitted to re-marry in the Lord: 1 Corinthians 6:15-17. Believers who because of their Christian faith have been divorced by their unbelieving companions are allowed to re-marry in the Lord: 1 Corinthians 7:15, 26-28; 7:39.

In view of the sacredness of marriage, unmarried members of the Church are instructed to approach this honourable estate with Godly fear and earnest prayer for Divine guidance. Believers should not enter into any engagement or betrothal with an unbeliever (11 Corinthians 6:16) and marriage with such should not be contemplated. Marriage of members should be only "in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 7:39) and preferably "of the Lord", that is in the will of God. Members who feel inwardly moved upon by the Holy Spirit to offer themselves for the Christian ministry, are particularly advised to be very careful, discreet and wise in the choice of a life partner. An unwise choice may grievously mar their future usefulness.

New converts who have been received into the fellowship and membership of the Church and who have, previously to their conversion been divorced and remarried, must realise that now they have become new creatures in Christ and that whilst their sinful past has been completely covered by the redeeming blood of Christ it is incumbent on them to base their domestic relationship on the teachings of Christ and to love one another fervently.

Married members who allow their domestic relationship to deteriorate and/or end in divorce, render themselves liable to discipline by the local church council as set forth in these By-Laws. Unmarried members who contemplate entering the ministry of the Full Gospel Church of God, or who have already been accepted therein but have had marital problems prior to their conversion should consult the Ministerial Examining Board before contemplating marriage.

(I) Financial Transactions

Members are solemnly reminded of the Scriptural injunction "owe no man anything" Romans 13:8, and thus to order their financial arrangements with care and discretion so that they do not run into financial difficulties and embarrassment.

(J) Abstinance from Offences

Members must on all occasions refrain from all disloyalties, insubordination, whispering, adverse criticism, backbiting or slandering other members or ministers in the Church; thereby removing great hindrances to the progress of the work of God in the Local Church: Numbers 12:1; Ephesians 4:29-32; Colossians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13.

SECTION 4 - TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

(A) Official Certificate of Transfer

The transfer of a member from one local church to another may only be effected by means of an official certificate of transfer duly signed by the responsible pastor and/or officers, issued after the member was accepted in terms of this Constitution as a member by the receiving local church council. The transfer of members must, upon acceptance by the local church council, be acknowledged by the provision of the certificate of acceptance of the transferred member being sent to his/her previous pastor or church council.

(B) Pastoral Responsibility

Pastors must take every responsible step to prevent the loss of members from the Church as a whole in taking care of the issuing of the official certificate of transfer.

(C) Registering Transferred Members

Upon the receipt of an official certificate of acceptance of membership, such person's name shall be struck off the register of the local church from which he was transferred.

(D) Membership in one Congregation Only

All members should be registered at some or other local church, but no member should have his/her name entered on more than one register of church members of the Full Gospel Church of God at one time.

(E) Interim Record of Membership

The register of all certificated workers in goodstanding which is kept at Head Quarters, shall be recognised as a record of membership of such persons who for a limited temporary period are for any reason whatsoever not members of a Local Church.

(F) Jurisdiction

The persons as above, shall remain within the jurisdiction of the local church and region of which he/she is a member, until such time as his/her transfer is effected.

SECTION 5 - CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP

(A) BASIS OF CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- (1)** Resignation from the Fellowship of a Local Church.
- (2)** Wilful absence from regular meetings of the local church for six months, after due warning and decision by the local church council.
- (3)** Acquisition of membership of another denomination.
- (4)** Persons whose membership has been otherwise terminated.

(B) REMOVAL OF NAMES OF SECEDING MEMBERS FROM REGISTER

The Council of such Local Church concerned shall remove the name of the seceding person from the register of that Local Church in compliance with the exercise of the disciplinary powers of Local Church Councils as set forth in these By-Laws.

(C) REGISTRATION ESSENTIAL FOR MEMBERSHIP

No person shall be recognised as a member of the Full Gospel Church of God unless his or her name appears on the membership register of a local church of this denomination.

SECTION 6 - ELIGIBILITY OF MEMBERS FOR VOTING

(A) AGE LIMIT

Whilst no restriction is placed on persons who desire to become members of any Local Church, subject to the conditions laid down in Article 4, Section 1 of the By-Laws, no member of any Local Church under the age of fifteen years shall be allowed to exercise a vote in the business affairs of the Church, or in the election of the diaconate or the calling of a pastor.

(B) VOTING RIGHTS LOST THROUGH NON-ATTENDANCE

No member who neglects to attend the public services for more than three consecutive months in the Local Church where he holds membership, shall be empowered to vote in any matter to be decided by that Local Church until he repents of his neglect and resumes fellowship.

**** NOTIFICATION OF FORFEITURE OF VOTING RIGHTS**

The secretary of the local church council shall notify in writing a member of the forfeiture of his voting rights after a decision to that effect was taken by the local church council with an ordinary majority.

SECTION 7 - SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

(A) PRIVATE SETTLEMENT BETWEEN PERSONS INVOLVED

In the case of a member having transgressed against another, or a member against several others in a Local Church; or even if a member has a grievance against or a dispute with the Local Church Council Members of such Local Church, thereby involving a breach of spiritual fellowship, then such grievances, disputes, or transgressions shall not be initially discussed in the Local Church Council or in case of a Local Church Council Member (inclusive of elders), but shall be dealt with as set out hereafter (see Discipline of Local Church Council Members, Article 11.2.4.1-4).

(B) SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES

In all cases as referred to above, the principles of the maintenance of fellowship and settlement of transgressions laid down by the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 18:15-17 shall be complied with in their Scriptural order.

(C) PROCEDURE FOR FINAL REFERENCE TO LOCAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Failing settlement by individual action on the part of the one transgressed against, others shall be called in to assist in the elimination of transgression from the Local Church and the spiritual restoration of the transgressor. If further action proves unavailing, then and then only shall the matter be handled by the Pastor and the Local Church Council or presbytery in a spirit of complete impartiality and the administration of justice to all concerned.

(D) RIGHT OF APPEAL

For the right of appeal by members against the decision of a Local Church Council or presbytery, see Article 11, Section 2.3 of these By-Laws.