



... a place to belong



CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Application Form and Information
for those interested in becoming
a part of our Church Family

HIGHWAY PENTECOSTAL CHURCH
800 Stewart Blvd. K6V 5T4
Office: 613.342.4075
www.highwaychurch.net

The subject of church membership and its importance has been the object of discussion by many across the years. There are some who contend that it is not important and who will contend that it is not even biblical. Some reason that since church membership is not essential to salvation and since one already is a member of the universal church and a part of the body of Christ through faith in Jesus Christ, then local church membership is simply a man-made idea and is not important or necessary.

1. Why then do we have a local church?

Perhaps it would do well to see what the Bible has to say about the church and the believer's relationship to a local body of believers.

There are many references in the New Testament to a church in a local place.

- Acts 8:1; Acts 11:22
 - o "the church that was in Jerusalem"
- I Cor. 1:2; I Cor 1:1
 - o "the church of God which is at Corinth"
- Romans 1:5
 - o "the church that is in their home"
- I Cor 4:17
 - o "every church"
- Matthew 18:17
 - o "tell it to the church"

New Testament references to the local church and groups of churches show how these congregations were able to make decisions, send out missionaries, raise funds, respond to the needs of fellow believers, exercise discipline and accept leadership.

The local church is a smaller fellowship of believers of "like precious faith" within a community who gather regularly for worship, teaching and fellowship.

2. What is the meaning of church membership?

Some professing Christians ask, "Why should I join a church? Does it matter? What is derived from it?" So important did the early Christians regard church membership that they were willing to suffer persecution to belong to the church.

Church membership should be thought of in terms of a commitment to a community of believers and its leadership "as under the Lord" and not as a legalistic bondage of some kind.

Church membership is not something to be feared. IT is simply a bond of Christian fellowship and love. IT is a means of wholesome unity among the brethren. It makes for a closer tie of fellowship.

3. What are the advantages and responsibilities?

The commitment of local church membership will actually help us grown and mature in Christ because it teaches us faithfulness, stewardship, dedication and discipline.

But with privileges come responsibilities, and church membership involves responsibilities. By joining a church we become party to a covenant in which we acknowledge our relationship to God and to one another. If the church is to prosper and have God's blessing upon it, then members must recognize their mutual responsibilities and be faithful in assuming them.

In joining a church, we are agreeing to the following statements:

1. We agree by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to join in mutual labours for the Kingdom of Christ; to strive loyally for the advancement of this church in holiness, knowledge and love; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, disciplines and doctrines.

This affirms a responsibility of each member to cooperate in the work of the church. With the aid of the Holy Spirit, each member is to walk with other members in Christian love and actively participate in the work entrusted to the church. Faithful attendance at services by the congregations is commanded in Hebrews 10:25. This is often overlooked, for it includes attendance and support of the Sunday worship services and the midweek services as well. IT includes the Sunday School, the business meetings, missionary conventions and special meetings of the church, too.

2. We agree to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God prospers us, to the support of this church and its worldwide ministries.

Every member affirms the responsibility of supporting the church and its worldwide missionary program. Stewardship involves not only our personal talents but our material possessions as well. The basic principle of Christian stewardship is that the earth is the Lord's and He has made man the steward of all His resources. Man is responsible to God for that which is entrusted to him. It should be realized that ten percent of the Christian's income is "holy unto the Lord," which is known as tithing. Leviticus 27:30 states that "the tithes is holy unto the Lord," that is, it is to be set aside exclusively for His use. In Malachi 3:8 we are told that it is robbing God to withhold the tithe from Him.

God not only has given a plan for our giving by stating that the tithe belongs to Him, but He has told us the place to which the tithe should be given. Malachi 3:10 states: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse...saith the Lord of Hosts...and I will pour you out a blessing..." The storehouse is the house of God. When God's work is carried on in a way that is honoring to Him, this principle of "storehouse giving" presents itself as the way God intends for His work to be supported. In this way, missionaries are sent out, believers are built up in the faith, and the lost are reached with the gospel of Christ.

In his letter to the church at Corinth, the Apostle gave some guidelines about giving: It should be regular and proportionate (1Cor. 16:2); it should be cheerful (II Cor. 9:7); it should be generous (II Cor. 9:6); and it should come from a consecrated heart and life (II Cor. 8:5).

3. We agree to maintain private devotions and family devotions where possible; to endeavor to bring early to a saving knowledge of Christ all over whom we have the care and influence; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings and faithful in our engagements.

It is the duty of every Christian to grow in grace (II Peter 3:18), to mature toward an ever increasing likeness of Christ (Eph. 4:7-16), and to help others grow in the Lord (Deut. 6:6-7; II Timothy 2:1,2). Such growth and development will come through daily reading of the Bible (I Peter 2:2), prayer (I Thess. 5:17), witnessing, and walking in the Spirit (John 14:21, 23; Eph. 5:18).

4. We agree further to watch over one another in brotherly love, to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offense and always ready for reconciliation.

This acknowledges our duty toward those who are fellow Christians, those of the “household of faith.” Here we have the opportunity to demonstrate most fully that love by which Christ said that men should recognize His disciples. Of the early church it was said, “Behold how they love one another.”

This love can be expressed in many ways as indicated: by praying for each other, by helping in times of sickness and trouble, by cultivating a sympathy that is shown in feelings and in speech, and by seeking to bring unity when any kind of division may arise.

There is always the possibility of misunderstanding tensions and conflicts when people associate closely within an organization, but there should always be every effort made to resolve these problems. The church, made up of men and women who have felt God’s touch upon their lives and His forgiveness, should be a place where forgiveness and sympathetic understanding are quickly found.

5. We agree to witness faithfully to the saving and keeping power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ so that in every way we may bring lost men and women to a saving knowledge of Him.

Members of the church also agree to bear witness for Jesus Christ fulfilling His Great Commission. This ministry of bringing people to Christ belongs to the entire church, and every member should realize his responsibility to share in it. Members should learn all they can of the various churches, the mission fields, and the opportunities to witness for Christ and see themselves as a part of the total program through the church.

4. What are the qualifications of a church member?

1. The candidate must be one who has been born of the Holy Spirit through personal repentance of sin and by faith received Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.
2. The candidate is expected to be in harmony with the doctrines and practices of the local church and its affiliation with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.
3. The candidate is expected to be baptized in water by immersion either before becoming a member or at the earliest opportunity after.
4. The candidate should sense the Holy Spirit leading them into the fellowship of this church.
5. The candidate must be 18 years old or over to qualify as a regular member with voting privileges.
6. Other qualifications are as outline in I Cor. 5:11 – “But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother or a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one not to eat.”
7. All potential candidates should be in agreement with the Statement of Faith of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada prior to applying for membership.

5. How do I become a member of Highway Pentecostal Church?

1. Fill out the application for membership that is provided and turn it in to the church office. Feel free to call the church office if you have any questions.
2. Your application must be approved by the Pastor and the church board.
3. You will be publicly received into the fellowship of Highway Pentecostal Church at the earliest opportunity.
4. If you have been a member in good standing at another local congregations of the Pentecostal Assemblies in another area, then all that is necessary is for a transfer of membership letter from that church to this church.

6. Can this membership be terminated?

Yes, there are certain standards whereby the church itself can terminate your membership. Or, you can request that it be terminated for a specific reason.

APPLICATION FOR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Please fill out the following information if you wish to become a member of this church, and hand it into the church office.

NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

NUMBER OF CHILDREN (living at home) _____

DATE OF SALVATION: _____ DATE WATER BAPTISM: _____

PREVIOUS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY): _____

NEW _____ TRANSFER _____ RE-INSTATE _____ REGULAR ATTENDANCE _____ BEGAN _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____ DATE APPROVED _____

PASTOR'S SIGNATURE: _____

Can be submitted online using this link

<https://highwaychurch.net/membership-application.php>



2450 Milltower Court, Mississauga, Ontario L5N 5Z6

***STATEMENT OF
FUNDAMENTAL AND ESSENTIAL TRUTHS***

2014

STATEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL AND ESSENTIAL TRUTHS

Article 5 of the *General Constitution and By-Laws* Amended by General Conference, 2014

ARTICLE 5 STATEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL AND ESSENTIAL TRUTHS

PREAMBLE

The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada stands firmly in the mainstream of historical Christianity. It takes the Bible as its all-sufficient source of faith and practice, and subscribes to the historic creeds of the universal church. In common with historical, evangelical Christianity, it emphasizes Christ as Saviour and coming King. It also presents Christ as Healer, and it adopts the distinctive position that speaking in tongues is the initial evidence when Christ baptizes in the Holy Spirit. (See Article 5.6.3)

5.1 HOLY SCRIPTURES

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God ¹ by which we understand the whole Bible to be inspired in the sense that holy men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit to write the very words of Scripture.² Divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the original writings. The whole Bible in the original is, therefore, without error and, as such, is infallible, absolutely supreme and sufficient in authority in all matters of faith and practice.³

The Bible does not simply contain the Word of God, but is, in reality, the complete revelation and very Word of God inspired by the Holy Spirit. Christian believers today receive spiritual illumination to enable them to understand the Scriptures,⁴ but God does not grant new revelations that are contrary or additional to inspired biblical truth.⁵

5.2 THE GODHEAD

The Godhead exists eternally in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, having the same nature and attributes and are worthy of the same homage, confidence, and obedience.⁶

5.2.1 THE FATHER

The Father exists eternally as the Creator of heaven and earth, the Giver of the Law, to whom all things will be subjected, so that He may be all in all.⁷

5.2.2 THE SON

The Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal and only begotten Son of the Father, is true God and true man.⁸ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,⁹ and by His sinless life, miracles and teaching, gave full revelation of the Father.¹⁰

He died upon the cross, the Just for the unjust, as a substitution sacrifice.¹¹ He rose from the dead.¹² He is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high as our great High Priest.¹³ He will come again to establish His kingdom in righteousness and peace.¹⁴

¹ 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17

² 2 Pet. 1: 20,21

³ Psa. 119:160; Matt. 5:17,18

⁴ 1 Cor. 2:12-14

⁵ Prov. 30:5,6

⁶ Matt. 3:16,17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14

⁷ Gen. 1:1; 1 Cor. 15:28

⁸ John 1:1,14; 10:30,17; Phil. 2:6,7; Heb. 1:8

⁹ Luke 1:26-35

¹⁰ John 12:49; Acts 2:22; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26

¹¹ Rom. 5:6,8; 1 Cor. 15:3; 1Pet. 3:18

¹² Matt. 28:6; 1 Cor. 15:4,20

¹³ Acts 1:9-11; 2:33; Heb. 8:1

¹⁴ Matt. 25:31

5.2.3 THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is also God, performing actions and possessing the attributes of the Deity.¹⁵ His personality is shown by the fact that He has personal characteristics and that individuals may relate to Him as a person.¹⁶

5.3 ANGELS

5.3.1 CLASSIFICATION

Angels were created as intelligent and powerful beings to do the will of God and worship Him.¹⁷ However, Satan, the originator of sin, fell through pride and was followed by those angels who rebelled against God.

These fallen angels or demons are active in opposing the purposes of God.¹⁸

Those who remained faithful continue before the throne of God and serve as ministering spirits.¹⁹

5.3.2 THE BELIEVER AND DEMONS

Demons attempt to thwart God's purposes; however, in Christ, the believer may have complete liberty from the influence of demons.²⁰ The believer cannot be possessed by them because the believer's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit in which Christ dwells as Lord.²¹

5.4 HUMANITY

Humans were originally created in the image and likeness of God.²² They fell through sin and, as a consequence, incurred both spiritual and physical death.²³ Spiritual death and the depravity of human nature have been transmitted to the entire human race²⁴ with the exception of the Man Christ Jesus.²⁵ Humans can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ.²⁶

5.5 SALVATION

5.5.1 ATONEMENT OF CHRIST

Salvation has been provided for all people through the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross.²⁷ It is the only perfect redemption and substitution atonement for all the sins of the world, both original and actual. His atoning work has been proven by His resurrection from the dead.²⁸ Those who repent and believe in Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit and receive eternal life.²⁹ Furthermore, in the atonement, divine healing was provided for all believers.³⁰

5.5.2 REPENTANCE AND FAITH

A person can be born again only through faith in Christ. Repentance, a vital part of believing, is a complete change of mind wrought by the Holy Spirit,³¹ turning a person to God from sin.

5.5.3 REGENERATION

Regeneration is a creative work of the Holy Spirit by which a person is born again and receives spiritual life.³²

5.5.4 JUSTIFICATION

Justification is a judicial act of God by which the sinner is declared righteous solely on the basis of their acceptance of Christ as Saviour.³³

¹⁵Acts 5:3,4

¹⁶John 16:13-14

¹⁷Psa. 103:20; Rev. 5:11,12

¹⁸Isa. 14:12-17, Eze. 28:11-19; Eph. 6:11-12; 1Tim. 4:1; Jude 6

¹⁹Heb. 1:14

²⁰Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8; 4:1-4

²¹Matt. 6:24; 1 Cor. 6:19,20

²²Gen. 1:26,27; 2:7

²³Rom. 5:12; James 1:14,15

²⁴Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:10-19, 23

²⁵Heb. 7:26

²⁶John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5,6

²⁷Isa. 53:3-6; John 12:32,33; 1 Pet. 2:24

²⁸Acts 2:36; Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:14,17,20; Heb. 10:12; 1 John 2:2

²⁹Acts 20:21; 1 Pet. 1:23,25

³⁰Isa. 53:4,5; Matt. 8:16b,17

³¹Isa. 55:7; Acts 17:30; Gal. 3:22,26; Eph. 2:8; 1 John 5:10-13

³²John 3:3b,5b,7; 2 Cor. 5:17,18a; 1 Pet. 1:23

5.6 THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

5.6.1 ASSURANCE

Assurance of salvation is the privilege of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ,³⁴ resulting in love, gratitude and obedience toward God.

5.6.2 SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification is dedication to God and separation from evil.³⁵ In experience it is both instantaneous³⁶ and progressive.³⁷ It is produced in the life of the believer by the appropriation of the power of Christ's blood and risen life through the person of the Holy Spirit;³⁸ He draws the believer's attention to Christ, teaches them through the Word and produces the character of Christ within them.³⁹ Believers who sin must repent and seek forgiveness through faith in the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ.⁴⁰

5.6.3 BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is an experience in which believers yield control of themselves to the Holy Spirit.⁴¹ Through this the believer comes to know Christ in a more intimate way⁴² and receives power to witness and grow spiritually.⁴³ Believers should earnestly seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁴⁴ The initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.⁴⁵ This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth.⁴⁶

5.6.4 THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

The gifts of the Spirit are supernatural abilities given by God through the exercising of which believers are enabled to minister effectively and directly in particular situations.⁴⁷ They serve the dual function of building up the church and of demonstrating the presence of God within His church.⁴⁸

5.6.5 DIVINE HEALING

Divine healing provided in the atonement of Christ⁴⁹ is the privilege of all believers. Prayer for the sick and gifts of healing are encouraged and practised.⁵⁰

5.7 THE CHURCH

5.7.1 THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

All who are born again are members of the universal church, which is the Body and Bride of Christ.⁵¹

5.7.2 THE LOCAL CHURCH

5.7.2.1 PURPOSE

The local church is a body of believers in Christ who have joined together to function as a part of the universal church.⁵² The local church is ordained by God and provides a context in which

³³ Rom. 3:24; 4:3-5; 5:1-2

³⁴ John 10:27-29; Rom. 8:35-39

³⁵ 2 Cor. 6:14; 7:1

³⁶ John 17:17,19; Heb. 10:10,14

³⁷ 1 Thes. 5:23; 2 Tim. 2:19-22; 1 Pet. 1:14-16

³⁸ Rom. 6:11,13,14,18

³⁹ 1 Cor. 13; Gal. 5:22, 23; 2 Pet. 1:3-4

⁴⁰ 1 John 1:9; 2:1-2

⁴¹ Matt. 3:11; Acts 1:5; Eph. 5:18

⁴² John 16:13-15

⁴³ Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 3:18

⁴⁴ Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8

⁴⁵ Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6

⁴⁶ Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46

⁴⁷ 1 Cor. 12:4-11

⁴⁸ 1 Cor. 12:7; 14:12, 24-25

⁴⁹ Matt. 8:16,17

⁵⁰ 1 Cor. 12:28-30; James 5:14

⁵¹ 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 5:25b; Col. 1:18; 1 Tim. 3:15

believers corporately worship God⁵³, observe the ordinances of the church, are instructed in the faith and are equipped for the evangelization of the world.⁵⁴

5.7.2.2 ORDINANCES

5.7.2.2.1 THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper is a symbol, memorial and proclamation of the suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. This ordinance of communion is to be participated in by believers until Christ's return.⁵⁵

5.7.2.2.2 WATER BAPTISM

Water baptism signifies the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection and is practised by immersion.⁵⁶

5.7.2.3 MINISTRY

A divinely called and ordained ministry is the provision of the Lord to give leadership to the church as it fulfils its purposes.⁵⁷

5.8 THE END OF TIME

5.8.1 THE PRESENT STATE OF THE DEAD

At death the souls of believers pass immediately into the presence of Christ,⁵⁸ and these remain in constant bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body.⁵⁹ The souls of unbelievers remain after death conscious of condemnation⁶⁰ until the final bodily resurrection and judgment of the unjust.⁶¹

5.8.2 THE RAPTURE

The rapture, the blessed hope of the church, is the imminent coming of the Lord in the air to receive to Himself His own, both the living who shall be transformed, and the dead in Christ who shall be resurrected.⁶² This event takes place before the wrath of God is poured out during the tribulation. Believers then will appear before the judgment seat of Christ to be judged according to faithfulness in Christian service.⁶³

5.8.3 THE TRIBULATION

The tribulation will be a time of judgment on the whole earth.⁶⁴ During this period the Antichrist will emerge to offer false hope to the nations.⁶⁵

5.8.4 THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

The return of Christ to earth in power and great glory will conclude the great tribulation with the victory at Armageddon,⁶⁶ the defeat of Antichrist and the binding of Satan.⁶⁷ Christ will introduce the millennial age,⁶⁸ restore Israel to her own land, lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, and bring the whole world to the knowledge of God.⁶⁹

⁵² Acts 14:23; 1 Cor. 16:19

⁵³ John 4:23; Acts 20:7

⁵⁴ Acts 1:8; 11:19-24; 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Pet. 5:2

⁵⁵ Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:23-26

⁵⁶ Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38, 41; 8:36-39; Rom. 6:3-5

⁵⁷ Acts 6:2b-4c; 13:2-4a; 14:23; Eph. 4:8, 11-13

⁵⁸ 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:21, 23-24

⁵⁹ Rom 8:22-23; 1 Cor. 15:42-44; 2 Cor. 5:1,4b

⁶⁰ Luke 16:22-31; John 3:36

⁶¹ Dan.12:2; John 5:28-29; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Rev 20:11-15

⁶² 1 Cor. 15:51-57; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Titus 2:13

⁶³ Rom. 14:10-12; 1 Cor 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:9-10

⁶⁴ Matt. 24:15, 21-22; 1 Thess. 5:1-3

⁶⁵ 2 Thess. 2:3-12; Rev. 13:11-18

⁶⁶ Matt. 24:27, 30; Luke 17:24, 26-30

⁶⁷ Rev. 16:12-16; 17:8, 12-14; 19:11-20

⁶⁸ Psa. 2:6-12; Dan. 2:44-45; Luke 22:29-30; Rev. 3:21; 20:6

⁶⁹ Isa. 1:24-27; 2:1-4; Zech. 14:3,4,9; Rom. 8:19-23; Rev. 22:3

5.8.5 THE FINAL JUDGMENT

There will be a final judgment in which the unbelieving dead will be raised and judged at the great white throne, according to their works.⁷⁰

The beast and false prophet, the devil and his angels, and whoever is not found in the Book of Life, shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to annihilation but to everlasting punishment, which is the second death.⁷¹

5.8.6 THE ETERNAL STATE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

The righteous will share the glory of God in the new heaven and the new earth for eternity.⁷²

5.9 POSITIONS AND PRACTICES

5.9.1 MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

Marriage is a provision of God wherein one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others enter into a lifelong relationship⁷³ through a marriage ceremony that is recognized by the church and legally sanctioned by the state.

Marriage establishes a "one-flesh" relationship⁷⁴ that goes beyond a physical union and is more than either a temporary relationship of convenience intended to provide personal pleasure or a contract that binds two people together in a legal partnership. Marriage establishes an emotional and spiritual oneness that enables both partners to respond to the spiritual, physical and social needs of the other.⁷⁵ It provides the biblical context for the procreation of children.

Marriage is to be an exclusive relationship that is maintained in purity.⁷⁶ It is intended by God to be a permanent relationship. It is a witness to the world of the relationship between Christ and His church.⁷⁷

Marriage requires a commitment of love, perseverance and faith. Because of its sanctity and permanence, marriage should be treated with seriousness and entered into only after counsel and prayer for God's guidance. Christians should marry only those who are believers.⁷⁸ An individual who becomes a believer after marriage should remain with his/her partner in peace, and should give witness to the Gospel in the home.⁷⁹

The Bible holds family life as a position of trust and responsibility. The home is a stabilizing force in society, a place of nurture, counsel, and safety for children.⁸⁰

Marriage can only be broken by *porneia*, which is understood as marital unfaithfulness⁸¹ involving adultery, homosexuality, or incest. While the Scriptures give evidence that the marriage vow and "one-flesh" union are broken by such acts and therefore recognize the breaking of the marriage relationship, the Scriptures do recommend that the most desirable option would be reconciliation.⁸²

5.9.2 DIVORCE

We believe that divorce is not God's intention. It is God's concession to the "hardness of men's hearts."⁸³

We, therefore, discourage divorce by all lawful means and teaching. Our objective is reconciliation and the healing of the marital union wherever possible. Marital unfaithfulness should not be

⁷⁰ Dan. 7:9-10; John 12:48; Rom. 2:2,6,11,16; Rev. 14:9-11; 20:11-15

⁷¹ Matt. 25:41b; Jude 6; Rev. 20:10,15; 21:8

⁷² Matt. 13:43; John 17:24; 2 Pet. 3:13; Heb. 11:10; Rev. 21:1-2, 10, 22-23

⁷³ Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:6

⁷⁴ Matt. 19:5; Mal. 2:15

⁷⁵ Gen. 2:18; 1 Cor. 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4

⁷⁶ Eph. 5:3, 26, 27

⁷⁷ Eph. 5:25, 31, 32

⁷⁸ 2 Cor. 6:1, 14, 15

⁷⁹ 1 Cor. 7:12-14, 16

⁸⁰ Eph. 6:4

⁸¹ Matt. 5:32; 19:9

⁸² Eph. 4:32

⁸³ Matt. 19:8

considered so much an occasion or opportunity for divorce but rather an opportunity for Christian grace, forgiveness, and restoration. Divorce in our society is a termination of a marriage through a legal process authorized by the State. While the Church recognizes this legal process as an appropriate means to facilitate the permanent separation of spouses, the Church restricts the idea of divorce, in the sense of dissolution of marriage, to reasons specified in Scripture.

The weight of the biblical record is negative and the explicit statement is made, "God hates divorce."⁸⁴ Divorce is more than an action of the courts which breaks the legal contract between partners in a marriage. It is also the fracture of a unique human relationship between a male and a female. Divorce has profound consequences for the children. Divorce is evidence of the sinful nature expressed in human failure. Jesus gives one explicit cause for the dissolution of marriage: *porneia* or marital unfaithfulness.

Where all attempts at reconciliation have failed and a divorce has been finalized, we extend Christ's love and compassion.

5.9.3 REMARRIAGE

Remarriage is the union, legally sanctioned by the State, of one man and one woman, one or both of whom have been previously married. It is regarded as acceptable in Scripture in the event of the death of a former spouse. It is also regarded as acceptable if there has been sexual immorality on the part of the former partner or if the former partner has remarried.

5.9.4 TITHING

Tithing was divinely instituted by God under the old covenant and was compulsory upon the people who worshiped God.⁸⁵ Under the new covenant we are not bound by arbitrary laws; but the principles of right and wrong, as expressed by the law, are fulfilled in the believer's life through grace. Grace should produce as much as or more than law demanded. Regular systematic giving is clearly taught in the New Testament. It is known as the grace of giving.⁸⁶ The gauge or rule of this systematic giving is defined in the Old Testament, known as the law of tithing. All Christians should conscientiously and systematically tithe their income to God.

⁸⁴Mal. 2:16

⁸⁵Lev. 27:30-32; Mal. 3:10

⁸⁶2 Cor. 9:6-15



