

Three Levels of Conviction

Level 1 beliefs (primary beliefs) are the foundational convictions of the Cityview family. These beliefs align us with historic, confessional, evangelical, orthodox Christianity.

When it comes to our primary beliefs, the elders of Cityview Bible Church have strong **convictions** and seek **alignment** from our members. We describe our primary beliefs in eight succinct statements...

CORE DOCTRINE. We believe in these eight foundational truths:

1 - The Authority and Inerrancy of Scripture. We believe the Bible, as revealed to us in the Old and New Testaments, is our final authority and without error in its original manuscripts. *(Matthew 5:17-18, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:20-21, Hebrews 4:12-13, Psalm 119)*

2 - The Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe in One God who exists eternally as three co-equal, fully divine persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. *(Deuteronomy 6:4, Matthew 28:19, 2 Corinthians 13:13)*

3 - The Full Deity and Humanity of Jesus. We believe that Jesus Christ is God Incarnate, both fully God and fully human at the same time and forever. *(John 1:1-18, John 20:28, Titus 3:4-6)*

4 - The Dignity and Depravity of the Human Race. We believe that every person has inherent worth and value because they are created in the image of God, and yet that every person is a sinner by nature and by choice and unable to justify themselves before God based on their own good deeds. *(Genesis 1:27, Psalm 14:2-3, Romans 3:9-20)*

5 - The Substitutionary Atonement and Bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus died in our place for our sins, was buried, and then was physically resurrected to new life. *(1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 5:8, Romans 1:4)*

6 - Salvation by Grace Alone through Faith Alone in Christ Alone. We believe that people are reconciled to God and reborn to eternal life by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ and not as the result of any human efforts. *(Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 3:21-31)*

7- The Necessity of the Holy Spirit for the Christian Life. We believe that ongoing dependence on the indwelling Holy Spirit is necessary for the believer to walk in holiness and fruitful ministry. *(Galatians 5:24-25, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Romans 8:5-11)*

8 - The Future Physical Return of Christ. We believe that Jesus Christ will return to the earth in the future to finalize His work of redemption and restoration. *(Revelation 1:7, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 2 Peter 3:1-13)*

THE GOSPEL. We trust in Jesus:

The center of our faith and practice is the gospel of Jesus Christ. To be a member of Cityview, one must be born again through personal faith in Christ. You must have made a personal decision to repent of your sin and place your trust in Jesus Christ alone as your Savior. Why must you repent of sin and turn in faith to Jesus for salvation?

First, because God is holy and righteous.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Armies; his glory fills the whole earth. (Isaiah 6:3)

Second, because we are sinful and unrighteous.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

Third, because Jesus died in our place and rose from the dead to save us.

But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

Fourth, because our only hope for eternal life is to trust in Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

The gospel message teaches us that we are not made right with God through our obedience to His commands (our works), but we obey His commands because we have been made right with God through faith in Jesus Christ (the gift of grace). The order is essential to understand true Christianity.

If we cannot work our way into a right relationship with God, how then can we be saved?

By believing in Jesus and calling on His name.

⁹ If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation.

(Romans 10:9-10)

Level 2 (Secondary) Beliefs

As stated above, the elders of Cityview Bible Church have strong convictions about our primary beliefs and seek agreement from our members. When it comes to secondary issues, the elders have **clarity** and seek **unity** from our members. You don't have to agree with our positions on secondary issues to *be a Christian or even to be a member*. But we want you to have clarity on where we stand on these issues so that the church family *can be unified*. We expect those who serve on our staff and elder board to agree with our secondary beliefs.

1- Church Government

Cityview Bible Church is an elder-led church. We believe the local church is best served when led by a plurality of godly men who seek to follow Jesus together and provide spiritual care and guidance for the congregation. (see 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, Acts 14:23, 20:25-31, 1 Timothy 5:17-20, 1 Peter 5:1-4, James 5:14-15 for more information on the role of elder)

In our church, the lead pastor is a perpetual elder, and the other six elders serve rotating three-year terms. Each elder has an equal vote in decision-making. The elders are responsible for caring for the members of the church, protecting doctrine, guarding unity, managing the finances of the church, providing support and accountability to the lead pastor, seeking the Lord in prayer, and leading the congregation in making disciples. Our elders meet every week for 2+ hours.

Future Cityview elders are nominated by our current elder board and approved by a vote of the membership of the church at our January leadership gathering.

2- Gender Roles

Cityview Bible Church is complementarian in our view of gender roles. What does that mean? It means we affirm the equal value/worth/dignity of men and women as created in God's image AND hold to distinct roles for men and women in the home and the church. What does this look like in practice?

We affirm the equality of men and women before God (Genesis 1:27), believing that men and women have equal standing in the kingdom of God through faith in Christ, equal gifting by the Holy Spirit to serve and edify the congregation, equal access to God, and equal possibility for growth in knowledge of God and personal maturity.

Jesus' ministry was radically pro-women for the first century in the ways that He talked to women, healed women, honored women, had female followers, and revealed Himself to women after His resurrection. Women have always played a significant role in the Jesus movement and continue to do so today.

At the same time we affirm the equality of men and women, we also affirm the Bible's teaching that men and women are different by design. In this way, God designed men and women to

complement one another in the home and in the church (see Genesis 2). How are men and women different?

We are different biologically (God made the physical design of men and women distinct). We are called to different roles in the home (see Ephesians 5:21-32 and Colossians 3:18-19) and different roles in the church (see 1 Timothy 3:1-7). God designed men to be servant leaders in their homes and assigned the role of elder to men in the leadership of the local church. These distinct roles explain the responsibility that men have before God for the condition of their homes and the church (see Genesis 3:9). At the same time, women at Cityview provide unique perspectives and insights that are essential to the health and life of the church. We honor and affirm the leadership of women across the ministries of our church.

Ultimately, men are to use their God-given roles for the benefit of women, not themselves. As followers of Jesus, we believe that the leader role is not an opportunity to use and abuse those under our care, but to serve and give our lives away for the good of others.

3 – Spiritual Gifts

Cityview Bible Church is a continuationist church under the sufficiency of Scripture. What does that mean? It means that we believe that all the spiritual gifts listed in the New Testament exist today (none have ceased), but that we are not receiving new revelation today that is on the same level as Scripture. God warns us in multiple places in the Bible not to add or take away from the Scriptures. God has given us everything we need to know in the Bible, and the Spirit leads and guides His people primarily *from the Scriptures, not through internal emotions or urges*.

We glorify and worship the Holy Spirit as God, and we believe that every believer must learn to submit to the Spirit in order to walk in godliness. At the same time, we do not believe the Bible teaches a secondary baptism in the Spirit that is evidenced by speaking in tongues. The Scriptures are clear that we receive the indwelling Spirit when we believe in Jesus as Savior, and that we must learn to *daily walk in the fullness of the Spirit*. We believe that the Spirit spreads the spiritual gifts throughout the body of Christ and does not give any one gift to every believer.

4 – Baptism

Cityview Bible Church baptizes people by immersion after they believe in Christ. We believe that baptism is the outward sign of an inward reality, and that the practice of the New Testament is “believer’s baptism.” Because of that, we don’t baptize infants at Cityview. Instead, we dedicate parents and young children to the Lord, and we baptize children whenever they are able to articulate a personal faith in Jesus Christ.

We don’t require baptism by immersion to join Cityview as a member, but we do encourage every member to take the step of baptism if they have not been baptized after their conversion. The method of baptism is less important to us than the order of baptism. We

believe that baptism should occur after conversion as a testimony to faith in Christ. Those interested in being baptized can sign up at www.cityviewbible.org/baptism

5 – Marriage and Divorce

Cityview Bible Church defines Christian marriage as a life-long covenant between one man and one woman to be faithful to one another and follow God's design for the marriage roles. (see Genesis 2:18-25, Matthew 19:1-12, and Ephesians 5:22-33). We believe that divorce is not God's desire for any marriage (*what God has put together, let no man separate*), but that God allows divorce in some extreme situations (unrepentant adultery, abandonment, or ongoing abuse).

As stated above, based on Genesis 2:18-25, marriage (as God originally designed it) is a complementary relationship between a man and a woman. We believe two men or two women married to one another is in conflict with the biblical vision of marriage. When the Bible does speak on the topic of same-sex sexual activity, it is always prohibited (Leviticus 18:22, Romans 1:26-28, 1 Corinthians 6:9). In addition, we believe that two men or two women pursuing a marriage relationship together is in contradiction to the natural order of creation and doesn't invite the full life of faith Christ has to offer.

Because of this conviction, the pastors of Cityview will not perform the marriage of two men or two women. However, we invite gay men or women to attend worship and pursue the Lord Jesus Christ with us at Cityview. We recognize this is an important and often sensitive subject, and hope that those who believe differently will respect our theological and biblical position. As with any subject, we invite respectful dialogue with those who desire to engage in discussion.

Level 3 (Tertiary) Issues

When it comes to third-level issues, we are very open-handed as a congregation. We may have personal positions and opinions, but we do not expect all our members to align behind one position or conviction. Instead, we ask our members to have **compassion** and **understanding** toward other people's personal views. What kind of issues fall into the level 3 category for us?

1- End Times

Cityview Bible Church is officially premillennial and dispensational in our eschatology, but we don't have unanimous agreement even among our pastors and elders on the finer points of end-times theology. Because of the difficulty of the Biblical passages that speak to the return of Christ and the diversity of historical positions present in the church, we give our members freedom to hold differing convictions in this area as long as they are not divisive within the congregation.

2- Worship Style

Cityview Bible Church is contemporary and convergent in our worship style and open to using modern technology to enhance our experience of God's truth in worship. The form of our worship (style) will continue to change as we adapt to new tools and means for encountering God. While the forms will change, the functions will remain the same in obedience to Scripture (the public reading and preaching of God's Word, singing, sacraments, confession, etc.).

3- Philosophy of Education

The families of Cityview Bible Church use all kinds of strategies to educate their children. Some homeschool, others use private schools, and others use public schools. As church members, we have agreed to support each other in our schooling decisions. At the end of the day, whatever schooling method parents use, they are still called by God to be the primary disciplers of their children.

4- Politics

Cityview Bible Church doesn't take official positions on political candidates because we have such a wide variety of political opinions within our church. While political issues will be addressed as needed from Scripture, the pulpit of Cityview will not be used for political purposes. The members of Cityview are asked to represent Christ well in their public tone and debate of political issues and to be careful to not alienate people who are investigating the gospel.