



P. O. BOX 3704 MERCED, CA 95344



Statement Of Faith

Love Focus International Association operates as a non-profit tax-exempt Association of Churches. Approved by United States Internal Revenue Service under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

This **Statement of Faith** is what we believe, and it's who we are at the core as a ministry.

OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS

We believe in one God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (John 14:9-20; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 5:1-12).

We believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of all things visible and invisible. (Genesis 1:1; Matthew 5:16, 45; 6:1, 4, 8, 9; Acts 17:24-28; Hebrews 11:3; James 1:17).

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the eternal Word, the one and only Savior. (John 1:1, 14, 29; 3:16; Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 1:15-19; 1 John 4:9). Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, both fully human and fully divine; Who lived a sinless life; Who suffered and was crucified as an atonement for sin; Who rose again bodily from the dead on the third day; Who ascended into Heaven; and Who will return in victory to rule forever. (Luke 1:26-35; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 4:15; Romans 5:15-17; Luke 22:47-24:53; John 20:24-29; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8; Acts 1:1-9; Colossians 3:1; Revelation 1:7-8; 11:15).

We believe in the Holy Spirit. Who convicts of sin; Who indwells every true believer in Jesus Christ; Who helps them in their weakness and intercedes for them in prayer; and Who empowers them to a fruitful Christian life. (John 16:1-16; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19; 2 Timothy 1:14; Romans 8:26; Galatians 5:22- 23).

We believe in the Bible—God's Holy Word, Scripture. We believe God inspired the original writings of the Scripture and those original writings were consequently without error. (Mark 12:36; John 14:26; 16:12-15; Acts 1:16; 1 Corinthians 2:12-13; 2 Timothy 3:14-16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We believe that the Bible is the final authority for all matters of faith, truth, morality, and Christian living. (Isaiah 40:8; Psalm 119:11, 105; Matthew 5:18; 24:35; Romans 15:4).

We believe the Bible teaches that God is the Creator and Sustainer of human life; that God creates each person in His image; and that life is therefore sacred, from conception to natural death.

We believe that God creates each person as male or female; that these two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the "image of God" in humankind; and that each person's biological gender is an intrinsic, immutable aspect of his or her nature and identity. (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 2:7, 21-22; Psalm 139:13-18).

We believe the Bible teaches that God established marriage in the beginning as a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman; that He has reserved sexual intimacy as an expression of love and commitment between married couples; and that any intimate expression of sexuality outside of Biblical marriage is sin. (Genesis 2:23-25; Exodus 20:14, 17, 22:19; Leviticus 18:1-20, 22-23; 20:11-21; Matthew 19:4-6; 9; Romans 1:18-31; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 15-20; 1 Timothy 1:8-11; Jude 7).

We believe in the Gospel—the Good News of Salvation.

That man, created by God, willfully sinned against God and is consequently lost and without hope apart from Jesus Christ. (Isaiah 53:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:23).

That salvation—the forgiveness of sins—is only by grace through the blood of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 26:28; Romans 5:9; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 1:7).

That one receives salvation by putting faith in Christ, repenting of sin, and confessing Christ, and that the Bible commands every believer in Christ to be baptized by immersion. (Romans 5:1-2; 10:9; Ephesians 2:8-9; Acts 2:38; 3:19; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21).

That those who have received salvation through faith in Jesus Christ are sent into the world to proclaim the gospel and to love and serve mankind just as Jesus Himself did. (2 Corinthians 5:11-21; Ephesians 2:10; Matthew 28:18-20; John 20:21).

We believe in the Church of Jesus Christ, founded on the Day of Pentecost, consisting of all Christians everywhere, and organized into local assemblies, called church or fellowship. (Matthew 16:13-18; Acts 2:14-47).

We believe the Bible teaches that every Christian should be an active member of a local church or fellowship. (Hebrews 10:24-25). "For where two or three gathers in my name, there am I with them." Matthew 18:20.

We can see here according to Jesus that where two or three people come together in the name of Jesus Christ, he promised to be there with them. Therefore, the church of Jesus Christ is not a building but people who often come together in name of Jesus Christ to learn more about him through the Bible, pray, praise, worship God through him, fellowship with one another and love each other as he commanded is a local church.

These local churches are called upon to serve their communities by doing good work in name of Jesus Christ.

We believe that the Elders of the church are the overseers of its affairs and the shepherds of its members; that they are the final interpretive authority of the Bible's meaning and application for the ministry; and that they are responsible for the oversight, instruction, edification, discipline, and restoration of church members. (1 Peter 5:1-4; Titus 1:9; 2:1-15; Hebrews 13:17; Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 5:11-13).

We believe that the Bible instructs Christians to:

Meet together regularly for fellowship, worship, teaching, and the Lord's Supper. (Acts 2:42, Hebrews 10:25; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

Use our natural abilities and spiritual gifts to serve. (Romans 12; 1 Peter 4:10; Galatians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 12:7).

Love one another, bear with one another, accept one another, and forgive one another. (John 13:34-35; John 15:17; 1 John 4:7; Romans 13:8; Ephesians 4:2, 32; Colossians 3:14; Romans 15:7).

Seek unity, agreement, and peace with one another. (Romans 12:16,18; 1 Thessalonians 5:13; Philippians 2:2; 2 Corinthians 13:11).

Encourage and build up one another. (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

Bear one another's burdens and pray for one another. (Galatians 6:2; James 5:16)

Spur one another to love and good deeds. (Hebrews 10:24).

Submit to the authority of the elders. (Hebrews 13:17).

Support the ministry financially. (2 Corinthians 8:7; 2 Corinthians 9:7; 1 Timothy 5:17-18).

Pursue personal holiness and obedience to God's Word. (2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 1 Peter 1:15).

Strive together to fulfill the Great Commission. (Matthew 28:18-20).

FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY

The concept of the five-fold ministry comes from Ephesians 4:11, "It was he who gave some to be (1) apostles, some to be (2) prophets, some to be (3) evangelists, and some to be (4) pastors and (5) teachers." Primarily as a result of this verse, some believe God has restored, or is restoring, the offices of apostle and prophet in the church today. Ephesians 4:12-13 tells us that the purpose of the five-fold ministry is, "to prepare God's people for service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." So, since the body of Christ is not built up to unity in the faith and has not attained to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ, the thinking goes, the offices of apostle and prophet must still be in effect.

However, Ephesians 2:20 informs us that the church is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone." If the apostles and prophets were the foundation of the church, are we still building the foundation? Hebrews 6:1-3 encourages us to move on from the foundation. Although Jesus Christ is most definitely active in the church today, His role as the cornerstone of the church was completed with His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. If the work of the cornerstone is, in that sense, complete, so must the work of the apostles and prophets, who were the foundation, be complete.

What was the role of the apostles and prophets? It was to proclaim God's revelation, to teach the new truth the church would need to grow and thrive. The apostles and prophets completed this mission. How? By giving us the Word of God in written form (the Holy Bible).

The Word of God is the completed revelation of God. The Bible contains everything the church needs to know, grow, thrive, and fulfill God's mission (2 Timothy 3:15-16). The foundational work of the apostles and prophets is complete. The ongoing work of the apostles and prophets is manifested in the Holy Spirit speaking through and teaching us God's Word. In that sense, the five-fold ministry is still active.

In conclusion, the active manifestation of the fivefold ministry is carried out by the Holy Spirit as he wills and can be seen in operational service in one individual. Apostle Paul exhibited the gifts contained in the fivefold ministry.

Apostles are sent ones:

Called by Christ alone

Filled with the Holy Ghost

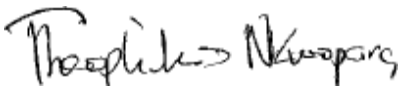
Loving spiritual fathers with spiritual sons and daughters

Builders

Suffers with the people

Rejoices with people

Do not quit or retire from the work until called home



Theo Nkwopara, Ph.D.

Presiding Spiritual Leader/ Office of the Council of Elders

Love Focus International Association

Gracious Father, we pray for the church. Fill it with all truth and peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in anything it is amiss, reform it; where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in need, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.



OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS

The Council of Elders of Love Focus International Association, in its October 2015 meeting, adopted "STATEMENT OF FAITH" as a statement of this body. Authorized its distribution to members and candidates for Credential.

