

NCFIC Confession (National Conference for Uniting Church & Family)

Taken from the [National Center for Family-Integrated Churches](http://www.ncfic.org) website

Introduction

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we believe that the family is a holy institution, ordained and established by the Sovereign Triune God Who created the heavens and the earth. God's infallible revelation, the Bible, reveals that the family is an integral part of the unfolding of His eternal purpose for the redemption of sinners. This great and gracious salvation—purposed by the Father, accomplished by the Son, and applied by the Holy Spirit—is in great measure passed on to succeeding generations as parents faithfully disciple the children God gives them. Therefore, the biblical order and unity of the family are crucial to the stability and health of the Church of Jesus Christ. In light of this, we recognize that the family—and especially fathers—are the focus of a fierce and unrelenting attack by the world, the flesh, and the Devil. This has escalated to the point that Christians must rise up in defense of the family in uncompromising biblical warfare. Rather than helping in this battle, church leadership has often unwittingly contributed to the problem and, though well intentioned, bears responsibility for the vulnerability of the family in the face of its enemies. Unfaithfulness to God's Word in our pulpits has produced the decline of biblical Christianity and the dissolution of the family in our pews. The abdication of God's authority leads to unbiblical practices in the churches and to the erosion of biblical manhood and leadership. This in turn leads to the perversion of the role of women, the destruction of our children, and the collapse of our society. Traditions, which have originated in the minds of devils and fallen men, counterfeit God's authority. False doctrines derived from Darwinism, Marxism, Feminism, Secular Humanism, Psychology, and countless other unbiblical sources, have emerged from a society that has discarded Divine Revelation and have contaminated or replaced God's standards in many professing churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. The bitter fruit of this is the fragmentation, not the unity of the family. We believe that the only resolution to this problem is repentance. We must confess our failures, reject the traditions of men, and wholeheartedly return to God's revelation for the establishment and nurture of the family in loving obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. Our fervent prayer is that our God will raise up Spirit-filled and healthy family-integrated assemblies from the ashes of our man-centered, fragmented, and individualistic churches.

ARTICLE I — Scripture is Sufficient

We affirm that our all-wise God has revealed Himself and His will in a completed revelation—the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments—which is fully adequate in both content and clarity for “everything pertaining to life (salvation) and godliness (sanctification)” including the ordering of the church and the family (2 Pet. 1:3-4; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

We deny that God's people should treat His Word as inadequate for church and family life by supplementing His completed revelation with humanistic psychology, corporate business models, and modern marketing techniques.

ARTICLE II — God Created Church and Family

We affirm that Almighty God is the sovereign Creator and Preserver of His people and all the institutions that bring blessing to mankind—including the church and the family—and is thus deserving of our highest honor and humble obedience (Col. 1:16-17).

We deny that we, being mere creatures, have a right to refashion the church and family according to our vain imaginations by altering God's prescribed government, worship, gender-based roles, or any other normative patterns revealed in Scripture.

ARTICLE III — Satan is a Deceiver

We affirm the warning of Holy Scripture that Satan, the father of lies and deceiver of the brethren, has used his subtle trickery from the beginning to question God's Word: “Yea, Hath God said...?” (Gen. 3:1).

We deny that the children of God should embrace and employ the philosophies, goals, and methods of this fallen world in our churches and families, and thus succumb to the Adversary's deception.

ARTICLE IV — Church's Head is Christ

We affirm our Lord Jesus Christ as the Head of His church, having purchased it with His own blood and having instructed it through His Word in order to make known the manifold wisdom of God and bring glory to Himself (Col. 1:18). We deny/reject the self-importance and pride of man to usurp Christ's headship of His church by creating personal kingdoms through churches with man-made rules that disregard the Law of Christ.

ARTICLE V — Church's Leadership and Ministry

We affirm God's revealed pattern in Scripture that the church be led and fed by a plurality of biblically qualified elders whom the Holy Spirit raises up from within the local church, who equip all the saints to do the work of ministry, and who may or may not be remunerated (Acts 14:23; 20:28; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Tim. 5:17-18). We deny/reject the two unbiblical extremes of our day: authoritarian, one-man leadership/one-man ministry that impedes the biblical functioning of the body, and leaderless house churches that disregard the biblical necessity of elders.

ARTICLE VI — Church is a Family of Families

We affirm that our Heavenly Father designed His church to be a spiritual household — a “family of families and singles” where members know one another intimately, the shepherds understand the sheep effectively, and the various body parts function interactively (1 Tim. 3:15). We deny/reject the current trend to value numbers and size more than intimacy and vitality by building impersonal mega-churches rather than the multiplication of family-like congregations.

ARTICLE VII — Family is a Building Block

We affirm that the biblical family is a scripturally ordered household of parents, children, and sometimes others (such as singles, widows, divorcees, or grandparents), forming the God-ordained building blocks of the church (2 Tim. 4:19). We deny/reject the church's implementation of modern individualism by fragmenting the family through age-graded, peer-oriented, and special-interest classes, thus preventing rather than promoting family unity and inter-generational relationships.

ARTICLE VIII — Church and Family Mission is Generational

We affirm that God intends both church and family to carry out evangelism and discipleship through multiple generations, “so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the Lord your God to keep all His statutes and His commandments” (Deut. 6:2; Lk. 1:50). We deny/reject the contemporary seeker-sensitive and youth group philosophies which fail to “equip the saints” for spiritual ministry and maturity, resulting in adults and youth who become lukewarm and spiritually wayward.

ARTICLE IX — Church and Family Method is Relationships

We affirm that the saints of God are to be equipped for spiritual ministry and maturity primarily through the preaching of the Word of God by qualified shepherds and that children are also equipped primarily through family-based, one-on-one, father directed, heart-level discipleship relationships (1 Tim. 3:4-5). We deny/reject the popular church system that has replaced heart-level relationships with activity-based programs which often have supplanted father involvement with clergy usurpation.

ARTICLE X — Church and Family Milieu is Everyday Life

We affirm that the church's relationships are nurtured primarily through daily discipleship in everyday life, especially fathers and mothers training their families and living out the gospel in ministry to the saints and witness to the lost (Eph. 5:21-6:4). We deny/reject family-fragmenting, facility-based programs which disregard the Church as a people in community and which displace family-integrated outreach through “loving our neighbor as our self.”

ARTICLE XI — God Requires Examination

We affirm that God enjoins us to “examine everything carefully, and hold fast to that which is good”—moreover, to “let each one examine his own work”—particularly when the people of God are not thriving according to the New Testament pattern (1 Thes. 5:21; Gal. 6:4).

We deny that we who shepherd the flock of Christ—whether as fathers or as pastors—have adequately and vigilantly scrutinized the beliefs and practices of the modern church as well as our own role in it.

ARTICLE XII — Judgment Begins With the Church

We affirm that God has declared “judgment begins with the household of God” and thus, we Christians are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, looking to judge ourselves lest we be chastened all the more (1 Pet. 4:17; 5:6). We deny that the church should continue as she has and delay dramatic reformations, or that she will escape the wrath of God for the disintegration and destruction of the family by ignoring or taking lightly biblical roles and responsibilities.

WHEREFORE, in light of this our faith, we do hereby resolve to...

- 1) Rely upon the Scriptures alone for “everything pertaining to life and godliness,” treating the Bible as fully sufficient for the ordering of the church and the family;
- 2) Restore the practice of teaching “the whole counsel of God” through exegetical preaching of Scripture in the church and daily instruction in homes by fathers and mothers;
- 3) Honor Almighty God as Creator and Preserver of the church and the family, and humbly submit to His prescribed order for each of these fundamental institutions;
- 4) Resist Satan’s deception designed to supplant God’s goals and methods with the world’s felt needs and opinion polls, but instead depend on God’s Word, just as our Lord did in the wilderness;
- 5) Submit to the Headship of Christ over His church, embracing His manifold wisdom, not our own, for its structure and operation;
- 6) Reject the errors of both authoritarian one-man ministry and leaderless house churches, and return to plural leadership by godly elders who equip the saints for ministry;
- 7) Recognize the church to be a spiritual “family of families” who value intimacy and interaction and grow by the multiplication of family-like congregations;
- 8) Acknowledge families (which include singles, widows, divorcees, grandparents, etc.) as God’s building blocks for the church, and maintain family-integrated rather than family-segregated meetings;
- 9) Develop a multi-generational vision for both the church and the family which stimulates personal sacrifice and maturity and preserves our spiritual posterity;
- 10) Equip whole households for ministry through heart-level relationships rather than activity-based programs, preparing and utilizing fathers as servant-leaders in family and church;
- 11) Pursue outreach through whole families “living out the gospel” in ministry to the saints and witness to the lost, rather than age-segregated programs;
- 12) Scrutinize the beliefs and practices of modern families and churches as well as our own role in both—whether as fathers or as church leaders—and make whatever changes are necessary to conform to God’s revealed patterns for family and church;
- 13) Seek God while there is yet time so that, seeing our true repentance, He will withhold His hand of judgment upon our worldly families and churches.