

CONSTITUTION FOR CHURCHES
OF
TENTMAKERS BIBLE MISSION, INC.

The primary purpose of Tentmakers Bible Mission, Inc. ("TBM") is "the establishment of new churches, and the assistance of existing churches so that these churches might become and remain independent, fundamental congregations."

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this church shall be to bring glory to God, to further the believer's growth in grace, to promote Christian fellowship, and to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ both at home and abroad for the salvation of lost men, women, and children, and for the establishment of new independent, fundamental churches to increase and mature the body of Christ.

II. AFFILIATION AND FELLOWSHIP:

This church shall remain a part of TBM until the conditions of Section VI.4 are met. At that time this church shall become, and forever remain, independent and autonomous, adhering to the fundamental and premillennial doctrines of the Christian faith as set forth in the Holy Bible and the Doctrinal Statement of this Constitution. This Church shall have fellowship with other Churches as long as such associations do not compromise the independent, fundamental, doctrinal position of this church.

III. CHARACTER:

This church shall be and remain independent; it shall not now nor at any time hereafter be under any denomination, federation of denominations, or federal council of denominations. It shall never change its name nor its policy so as to affect such identifications (I Cor. 1:11-13; 3:1-9).

IV. DOCTRINE

1. The Holy Scriptures.

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the verbally inspired Word of God, and final authority for faith and life, inerrant in the original writings, infallible and God-breathed (II Tim. 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:20, 21; Matt. 5:18; John 16:12, 13).

2. The Godhead.

We believe in the Triune God, eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfection (Deut. 6:4; II Cor. 13:14).

A. The Person and Work of God the Father

1) We believe that God the Father who is Holy, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent, so loved the world that He gave His son, Jesus Christ, to become our only means of salvation. 2) We believe that God the Father is sovereign and calls the sinner, and that He becomes the believer's Father at the new birth. 3) We believe that God the Father sends the Holy Spirit to abide in the believer forever in response to the Son's request, and that this takes place at conversion. 4) We believe that God the Father answers believing prayer when asked in accord with His will in Jesus name (Isa. 6:3; Ps. 139:1-4, 7:16; Jer. 32:17; John 3:16; 8:42; Acts 4:10-12; John 6:37, 44; Eph. 1:16-22; Gal. 4:4-7; John 14:16, 26; I Cor. 6:19, 20; Acts 10:44, 45; John 16:23, 24; Rom. 8:14, 17).

B. The Person and Work of Christ

1) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men (John 1:1, 2, 14; Luke 1:35). 2) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for all mankind as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice, and that the sufficiency of this atoning sacrifice to accomplish the redemption and justification of all who trust in Him is assured by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Rom. 3:24, 25; I Peter 1:3-5; 2:24; Eph. 1:7). 3) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate (Acts 1:9-11; Heb. 7:25; 9:24; Rom. 8:34; I John 2:1, 2).

C. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

1) We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and that He is the supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8-11; II Cor. 3:6; I Cor. 12:12-14; Rom. 8:9; Eph. 1:13, 14) 2) We believe that He is the Divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth; and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit (John 16:13; I John 2:20, 27; Eph. 5:18).

3. The Total Depravity of Man.

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God but that in Adam's sin, the race fell, inherited a sinful nature and became alienated from God; and that man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (Gen. 1:26, 27; Rom. 3:22, 23; 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3, 12).

4. Salvation.

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins (Eph. 1:7; 2:5-10; John 1:12; I Peter 1:18, 19).

5. The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers.

1) We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1, 38, 39; I Cor. 1:4-8; I Peter 1:5). 2) We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the Testimony of God's Word; which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh (Rom. 13:13, 14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).

6. The Two Natures of the Believer.

We believe that every saved person possesses two natures, with provision made for victory of the new nature over the old nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit; and that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural (Rom. 6:13; 8:12, 13; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:10; I Peter 1:14-16; I John 3:5-9).

7. Separation.

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord, and that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associates is commanded of God (II Tim. 3:1-5; Rom. 12:1, 2; 14:13; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11; II Cor. 6:14-7:1).

8. Missions.

We believe that it is the obligation of the saved to witness by life and word of the truths of Holy Scripture and to seek to proclaim the Gospel to all mankind (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; II Cor. 5:19, 20).

9. The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts.

- We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts; that gifted men holding the office of evangelists, pastor-teachers, and other gifted believers, empowered by the Holy Spirit, are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today, and that speaking in tongues, and the working of sign miracles have ceased (Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:4-11, 13:8; II Cor. 12:12).
- We believe that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, in accord with His own will (John 15:7; I John 5:14,15).

10. The Church.

- We believe that Christ is the head over all things to the church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons of this present age (Eph. 1:22, 23; 5:25-27; I Cor. 12:12-14; II Cor. 11:2).
- We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament scriptures (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11).
- We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external human authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; I Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; I Peter 5:1-4).
- We believe in the ordinances of believers' water baptism and the Lord's supper as scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age (Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 2:41, 42; 18:8; I Cor. 11:23-26).

11. Dispensationalism.

We believe that the scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense, reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these: the age of law, the age of the church, and the age of the millennial kingdom, are the subjects of detailed revelation in scriptures (John 1:17; I Cor. 9:17; II Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24, 25; Heb. 7:19; Rev. 20:2-6).

12. The Personality of Satan.

We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the fall; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Job 1:6, 7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

13. The Second Advent of Christ.

We believe in that "blessed hope", the personal, imminent, pretribulational and premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for his redeemed ones; and in his subsequent return to earth with his saints to establish his millennial kingdom (I Thess. 1:10; 4:13-18; 5:9; Zech. 14:4-11; Rev. 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6).

14. The Eternal State.

A) We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28, 29; 11:25, 26; Rev. 20:5, 6, 12, 13). B) We believe that the souls of the redeemed at death are absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; Rev. 20:4-6; II Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; I Thess. 4:16, 17). C) We believe that the souls of unbelievers after death remain in conscious misery until the second resurrection when, with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne judgment and shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment (Luke 16:19-26; Matt. 25:26-41; II Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6, 7; Mark 9:43-48; Rev. 20:11-15).

V. ORDINANCES:

We recognize two ordinances of the church for this age – the Lord's supper and believers' water baptism. They are not to be regarded, however, as a means of salvation, nor as a means of grace by which special merit is obtained. 1) The Lord's Supper. This ordinance shall be observed at least once each quarter. All who have accepted Jesus Christ as personal savior and are walking in fellowship with the Lord shall be welcome to join in this service unless they are under the discipline of the church as defined in VIII, section E. (I Cor. 11:17-34). 2) Believers' Water Baptism. When administered by this church, baptism shall be by immersion at the request of those who have personally acknowledged Christ as savior (Acts 8:36-39; 10:47, 48; I Cor. 1:14-17).

VI. GOVERNMENT:

1. Authority.

While the church is functioning under this Constitution and the signed Mission-Missionary Pastor Agreement, the ultimate authority will rest within the Board of TBM, who will act as Trustees for the purpose of handling all legal matters.

2. Steering Committee.

A) When a church is started by TBM, or an existing church is accepted as a TBM church, TBM will appoint a Steering Committee consisting of at least three men who meet the scriptural qualifications of elder. These men to be chosen from the church congregation, the TBM Missionary-Pastor, the TBM staff, other TBM missionaries, or neighboring independent fundamental churches. B) Every member of the Steering Committee shall annually sign a statement indicating unreserved agreement with this Constitution and doctrinal statement. C) Steering Committee members shall have the full authority of elder status and shall be responsible for guiding the church to such a spiritual state of health that scripturally qualified candidates for office are present within the church. D) The Steering Committee shall appoint from its members a Chairman, who will chair all Steering

Committee meetings and meetings with the congregation, a Treasurer who will send TBM a monthly Financial Statement, and a Clerk who will keep Minutes of all Committee Meetings and send a copy of those Minutes to TBM. E) Because such Steering Committee members may be largely unfamiliar with the church, they may conduct as many meetings as deemed necessary with the congregation invited to be present for discussion. Decisions shall be made by the Committee using information gained through these discussions. F) At what time the Steering Committee deems the church ready to form an official membership, they will examine and approve those applicants meeting the qualifications under VII.1. (I Tim. 3:1-13). G) The Steering Committee shall function until it is agreed by its members and the church membership that qualified candidates for office are present within the membership. Members of the Steering Committee from outside the regular church membership shall be replaced by qualified member as they become available.

3. Practicing Self-Government.

The church may begin practicing self-government as a Constitutionally organized structure when the Steering Committee and TBM agree to the following conditions:

- The ultimate authority will remain with TBM until the church is graduated.
- There is an established membership.
- There are enough qualified men to fill the positions of elders and deacons.
- That the church adopt the TBM recommended church Constitution, or write their own Constitution providing it is approved by the TBM Board.

4. Self-governing, Autonomous Church.

The church will become a self-governing, Constitutionally organized structure, when they meet the following GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Incorporated with the State.
- Become self-governing and self-supporting.
- Establish church membership.
- Adopt a Constitution and doctrinal statement approved by TBM, including a dissolution clause.
- Payment in full of any loans of financial help from TBM. (See IX.5.)
- The church will have their own employee identification number from the IRS (or similar requirement of the country in which the church resides).
- A debriefing session between the church board and/or congregation, and a Director of TBM.

VII. MEMBERSHIP:

1. Qualifications of Members.

Persons who give testimony to their faith in Christ as Savior, who give assurance of their willingness to follow and submit themselves to the word of God as the only rule of faith, doctrine and practice, and who sign their agreement with the Constitution of this church, shall be eligible for membership.

2. Reception of Members.

Christians who desire to associate themselves with the church, and who fulfill the qualifications for membership, shall make application to the Pastor or Steering Committee. They shall then meet with the Pastor and Steering Committee for examination and approval. Upon approval, the right hand of fellowship shall be extended to them at a Sunday Service.

3. Responsibility of Members.

A. Members involvement.

All members of this church shall be expected to participate in its ministry in such measure as talents and circumstances enable. Such service shall be voluntary and subject to the supervision of the Pastor and Steering Committee.

B. Members godliness.

The members of this church are urged to cultivate all those graces in their Christian lives that will glorify the Lord, promote spiritual growth, and further the ministry of the church. And they are further entreated to:

- Engage in private and family Bible reading, prayer, and the regular attendance at the services of the church (Deut. 6:6,7; Heb. 10:25; I Tim. 4:12-16; II Tim. 2:15).
- Practice daily living that is consistent with the scriptural principles of the Christian life; to abstain from worldliness in all its forms, avoiding such alliances which would constitute an unequal yoke with unbelievers; to guard against religious apostasy and false teaching (Rom. 12:1, 2; Titus 2:11-15; II Cor. 6:14-7:1; I John 2:15-17).
- Support the financial program of the church with systematic, proportional giving (I Cor. 16:2).
- Fellowship in Christian love and unity with the entire congregation so as to avoid the development of factions (I Cor. 1:10; James 2:1-5).

4. Status of Membership.

The membership of this church shall consist of three groups, namely active membership, associate membership, and inactive membership.

A. Active membership.

Active membership shall consist of such Christians as have been received in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and who are not members of any other church.

- No minimum age shall be set for membership.
- Active members who have reached the age of 18 years shall be entitled to vote.

B. Associate membership.

Associate membership shall be extended to those who meet the qualifications of active membership, but who are not permanent residents of this area, such as students and missionaries, who may hold regular membership elsewhere. Associate members shall be permitted to teach a Sunday school class or participate in a similar ministry. They shall have the right to attend the business meetings of the church, but shall not have the right to vote.

C. Inactive membership.

- Inactive membership shall consist of the following:
- Those who have been absent from the services of the church for a period of six months or more without giving a satisfactory reason for such absence.
- Those who are under disciplinary action of the church.

Inactive members shall not have the right to vote or hold any office or position of service in the church. The Pastor and the Steering Committee shall seek to restore the inactive membership to active membership. If this has not been accomplished after twelve months, they may be dropped from the membership roll.

5. Discipline of Members.

A. The reasons for discipline:

- Non-attendance, as described in VII.4.C. A regular review of the active membership shall be conducted by the Pastor and Steering Committee, after which those who have been absent for a period of six months may be placed on the inactive roll, provided that a contact has first been made in the interest of restoring them to regular attendance.
- Doctrinal deviation or heresy (I Tim. 6:3-5; Titus 3:10, 11; Rom. 16:17, 18).
- Immoral conduct (I Cor. 5:8-13; II Cor. 6:14-17; II Thess. 3:6).
- Sowing discord, causing division, or walking disorderly (Prov. 6:19; Rom. 16:17; II Thess. 3:6, 7, 11).

B. The rules for discipline.

The discipline of this church for the above shall be entrusted to the Pastor and Steering Committee. Any disciplinary action that is deemed necessary shall be in the spirit of love and meekness (II Thess. 3:14, 15; Gal. 6:1).

- No accusation shall be brought against any member except upon the testimony of two or three witnesses (Matt. 18:16; II Cor. 13:1; I Tim. 5:19).
- The suspected person shall be confronted with the charges with the desire and effort to correct the difficulty and restore proper fellowship (Gal. 6:1). If this does not lead to restoration of fellowship, charges shall be stated clearly in the presence of two or more witnesses to the suspected person, and he or she summoned to meet with the Steering Committee not more than two and not less than one week subsequent unless providentially hindered. Failure on the part of the accused to appear before the Steering Committee will not prevent the Steering Committee from examining the case and rendering a verdict in accord with the testimony received. In the event the individual being disciplined is not satisfied with the decision of the Steering Committee, he or she may appeal to the Board of TBM unless he or she has deliberately refused to meet with the Steering Committee (Matt. 18:17).
- The names of persons who leave the church to regularly attend another church without a letter from this church may be erased from the roll by vote of the Steering Committee. Those disciplined because of doctrinal deviation shall be placed on the inactive roll. Those who are guilty of heresy and who refuse to repent of their error shall be excommunicated from the church. Those who are guilty of immoral conduct who refuse to repent shall be placed on the inactive roll. Persistent immorality shall result in

excommunication from the church by action of the Steering Committee. The names of any whose status of membership has changed shall be reported to the congregation.

C. The purpose for discipline.

The purpose of all discipline shall be to restore the individual to fellowship and active membership in the church. Such efforts shall be made in light of the following scriptures: Gal. 6:1, 2; II Thess. 3:14, 15; Heb. 10:24, 25; James 5:19, 20. Restoration to fellowship shall be granted upon due repentance and by action of the Pastor and Steering Committee.

VIII. MINISTRY:

1. The Pastor.

A. Placement.

The conditions for a man to become the Pastor of a TBM church are as follows:

- Make application to TBM by completing the Pastor Application Form.
- Be examined and approved by a committee appointed by TBM for recommendation to the TBM Board.
- Be approved by the TBM Board.
- Sign the "Agreement between TBM and the Missionary Pastor".
- Attend candidate school unless excused by the Mission.
- Display a burden for the church or area to which he will minister.
- In the case of an existing church, the church must show interest in having the candidate as their Pastor.

B. Duties.

The Pastor, by virtue of his office as spiritual leader and shepherd of the flock, becomes a member of this church, and his duties shall be those generally associated with his office, including the ministry of the word, administration of the ordinances, and the care of the spiritual welfare of the members. He shall be an ex-officio voting member of all committees and organizations of the church.

C. Termination.

- The Pastor's term of office shall be indefinite.
- If at any time TBM feels that the Pastor is not satisfactorily fulfilling the functions of a Pastor, it may, after due consultation with the Pastor and congregation, terminate his services at this church.
- If at any time the Steering Committee determines that a majority of the congregation does not support the Pastor, it shall report such findings to the Board of TBM for its determination of the Pastor's services.
- In the event of doctrinal or moral defection, the Pastor's services may be terminated immediately by the Board of TBM.

2. Pastoral Staff.

All additional pastoral staff will be subject to the conditions of VIII.1.

3. Sunday School, Bible Studies, Children's Ministries.

At what time the Steering Committee deems these types of ministries appropriate for the church, they shall appoint and supervise personnel to administer such ministries.

4. Missions.

To insure the regular activity of the church in the cause of missions, these guidelines are to be followed:

- The church shall be strongly encouraged to fully support their Pastor before assuming support of other missionaries.
- Missionaries from independent, fundamental, and reputable mission boards shall be invited to present their work to the church. An honorarium may be given to those missionaries when they come.
- When the church provides the full support for their pastor, a missions program supporting missionaries of independent, fundamental, and reputable mission boards on a regular basis shall begin (See IX.6).

IX. FINANCES:

1. Support.

The financial program of this church and its sub-organizations shall be supported only through the free-will offerings of members and gifts of those interested in its ministry.

2. Pastor's Salary.

All of the Pastor's support money, whether from the Church itself, outside contributors, or honorariums from speaking engagements, is to be channeled through TBM for proper accounting purposes. TBM in turn will channel all support to the Pastor.

3. Loans, Credit, and Expenditures.

Loans, credit, or purchases in excess of \$2,000 shall have the approval of the Steering Committee and the TBM Board.

4. Designated Funds.

- Any temporary use of funds for purposes other than designated must have the approval of the Steering Committee.
- If the purpose for which funds have previously been designated is to be changed, it must be done with the approval of the congregation.
- Gifts designated through the church for an approved specific purpose or person shall be so used, unless the donor approves a change.

5. TBM Church Builders Fund Loans.

- Loans to the church from the TBM Church Builders Fund are subject to the following conditions:

- It shall be interest-free.
- The church shall strive to pay back the loan as quickly as is practical.
- If the church is not making payments on a mortgage or other loans, regular monthly payments shall be made to TBM.
- Loan shall be paid in full at the time of graduation, unless special arrangements have been made with TBM.
- If TBM and the TBM church mutually agree that the church will no longer be a TBM mission church, loans shall be paid in full at the time the church leaves TBM.

6. Missionary Support.

Missionary support may be channeled through the church's general fund, or an account to be established for that purpose. (See VIII.4)

X. PROPERTIES:

1. Title

A. Churches started by TBM.

- Title to all property of the church, both real and personal, shall be and remain in the name of Tentmakers Bible Mission, Inc., until such a time as the church graduates from TBM.
- At the time the church graduates from TBM, the title shall be transferred to the church with no remuneration paid to TBM.
- If the church ceases to be a church, or chooses to no longer be a TBM mission church before it graduates, title to all properties shall remain with TBM.

B. Existing churches who become TBM churches.

- Title to all property of the church, both real and personal, may remain in the name of the church, or if the church so chooses, it may transfer such title to TBM.
- At the time the church graduates from TBM, the title shall be transferred to the church with no remuneration paid to TBM.
- If the church ceases to be a church, titles to all properties shall be in the name of TBM.
- If the church chooses to no longer be a TBM mission church, title to all properties shall be in the name of the church.

B. Acquisition and Sale of Property.

- When the church acquires property, both real and personal, in excess of \$2,000, it shall first obtain approval of TBM. All properties acquired shall be titled in the name of TBM.
- Any sale, mortgage, or transfer of real or personal property, by the church, must have prior approval of TBM.

C. Use of Property.

All properties belonging to the church shall be used for purposes consistent with the ministry of the church, subject to regulation by the Steering Committee.