

APPROVED UNTO GOD

DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

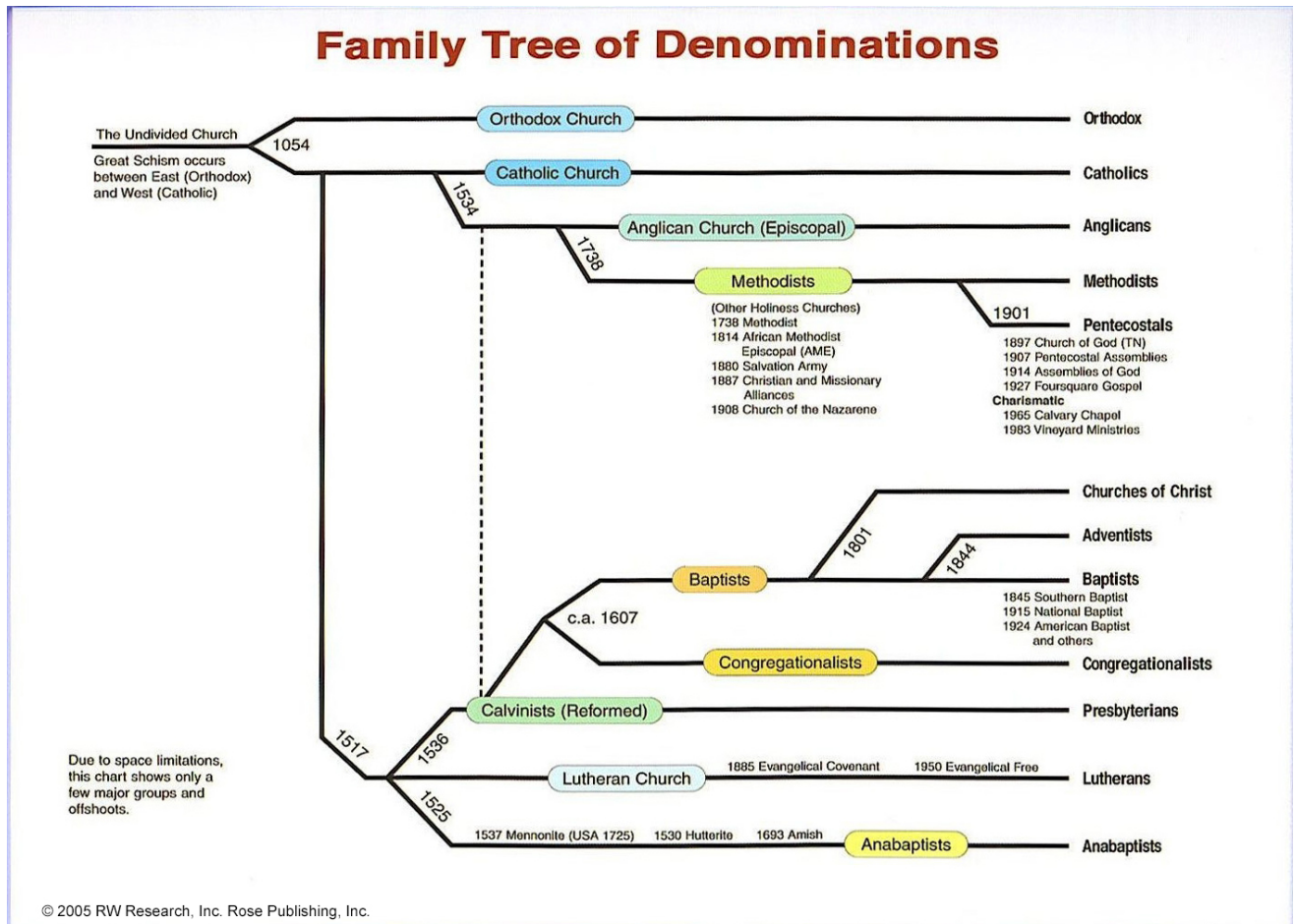
Wooddale Church is a multi-denominational, bible-teaching church affiliated with both Converge Worldwide and the 4Cs (*Conservative Congregational Christian Conference*). *We are Baptist in our theology.*

What is a denomination? branches of the Christian Church

Why do denominations exist? Differences in doctrine, authority, practice, race and/or nationality

Brief History of the church

- A. After Jesus died, Simon Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, became a strong leader in the early church. Later, James took over leadership.
- B. At this time Saul, originally one of the strongest persecutors of the early Jewish Christians, had a blinding vision of Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus and became a Christian. Adopting the name Paul, he became the greatest evangelist of the early Christian church. Paul's ministry was directed to the Gentiles as well as the Jews. (Acts 9)
- C. The Roman Empire recognized Christianity as a legal religion in 313 AD.
- D. In 1054 AD a formal split occurred between the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches.
- E. The Protestant Reformation began in 1517 by Martin Luther. His message was a bold one of salvation in Jesus by faith alone.
- F. Protestants insisted that believers be allowed to read the Word of God for themselves and to have services in their own language.
- G. Protestants believe that through Christ they have been given direct access to God, just like a priest; a doctrine known as the priesthood of all believers. God is equally accessible to all the faithful, and every Christian has equal potential to minister for God.
- H. There are many denominations, but one body of Christ. (I Corinthians 12:12-14)
- I. If you are wondering if a certain organization is a Christian organization ask this question. What is their belief in Jesus?
 1. Jesus is the Son of God
 2. Jesus is a member of the Trinity
 3. Virgin Birth
 4. Died and rose again to save us
 5. Fully man & fully God



J. Denominations may have been God's way of preserving revival and missionary fervor. The members of denominational churches, however, must keep in mind that the Church which is the Body of Christ is composed of all true believers, and that true believers must be united in spirit to carry forward the Gospel of Christ in the world, for all will be caught up together at the Coming of the Lord. That local churches should band together for fellowship and missions is certainly a biblical truth.

I. Introduction

There is much confusion today concerning the definition, purpose, effectiveness, and the role of the church. Through lack of understanding, many have rejected the true church and her Savior, Jesus Christ. The true church is the greatest force for healing, hope, and good in the world today. But the church has no meaning, purpose, or identity apart from God, who created her. To understand the church and specifically, Wooddale Church, one must seek answers to the most basic questions.

II. What is the church?

A. The church is God's people. (Matthew 16:13-18).

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Doctrine of the Church

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Matthew 16:13-18; When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon Son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."

Matthew 16:19; "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Kingdom is the reign of God in the hearts of people and it is this which produces an identifiable group which is the "church".

- B. Definition of "church" (Ecclesia – pronounced (eck-la-see-ah)): to be called out
- C. Acts 2:42: Four activities the early church devoted themselves to: apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, & prayer.

III. Why does the church exist?

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

C.S. Lewis, one of the greatest theologians of recent times, took a crack at answering that question. He said, "*The Church exists for nothing else but to draw people into Christ. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became human for no other purpose.*"

- A. The Wooddale Church Purpose Statement: "The purpose of Wooddale Church is to honor God by making more disciples for Jesus Christ.
- B. Wooddale Church's Vision is to impart the hope of the Gospel to 700,000 people here, near and far over 7 years, and to provide a clear pathway toward spiritual maturity.
- C. Definitions

1. Fellowship (Koinonia): oneness

Synonyms: Association, communion, sharing, participation. (All of these are active words, not passive.)

2. Discipleship (Mathetes): teaching people; to be taught by God

Synonyms: Learner, pupil, follower, imitator of a teacher. Jesus' disciples were known by their love for one another (John 13:35).

A disciple commits to obey Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord - growing knowledge of God, Service for God and Sharing of God.

3. Evangelism (Evangelion): outreach telling others about Jesus and the Word of God (see Matthew 28:19-20).

D. Jesus, the Son of God, came to glorify the Father (John 17:1-4).

John 17:3-4; "Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do."

E. Jesus' followers are to glorify the Son (John 17:9-10).

"I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them (his followers)."

IV. The Practices of the Local Church

The Scriptures teach that there are two ordinances the local church should practice: Baptism and the Lord's Supper (communion). We believe that one should be baptized after accepting Jesus as Savior. However, though we observe the Lord's Supper only after we accept Christ, we observe it many times. Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." When we love Jesus Christ we want to do what He says.

What's the difference between a practice and a sacrament of the local church?
A practice is to remember, a sacrament is an active step to salvation.

A. Baptism

1. Definition: to dip, to immerse, to place into

2. Baptism is a picture...

a) of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 15:1-5).

Romans 6:3-4; "...don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his."

b) of a believer's death with Christ (Romans 6:3), our burial with Christ (Romans 6:4a), and our resurrection with Christ (Romans 6:4b).

Rom. 6:3-4 "Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

c) of our spiritual baptism into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13).

1 Corinthians 12:13; For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body - whether Jews or Gentiles, slaves or free - and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

d) a public testimony of our faith in Jesus Christ, and our commitment to follow Him (Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:31-32).

Romans 10:9-10; If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

Matthew 10:31-32; "So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven."

3. An act of obedience.

a) Christ was baptized, therefore, we follow His example (Matthew 3:13-17).

Matthew 3:13-17; Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

b) His disciples were baptized (John 3:26; 4:1-2).

John 4:1-2 Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John--although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples.

c) The early church was baptized (Acts 2:38,41; 8:12).

Acts 2:38, 41; Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"... Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

d) It is part of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

Matt. 28:19-20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end

of the age."

4. Procedure for baptism

- a) Let a JH Staff member know you are interested in baptism
- b) Share your testimony of your faith in Jesus Christ with a pastor.
- c) Choose a baptism time on the Baptism Celebration Weekend.

B. The Lord's Supper

1. It is an opportunity to remember Jesus' death on the cross for our sins (1 Corinthians 11:24).

1 Corinthians 11:24; "...do this in remembrance of me."

This is a re-presentation of the Lord providing an opportunity for fellowship with Jesus. The Lord's Supper draws the participant into a "communion" (a dynamic relationship) with Christ.

2. It is to be observed repeatedly so we do not forget what Jesus' did for us (1 Corinthians 11:26).

1 Corinthians 11:26; "...do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

3. We are to examine our hearts and ask forgiveness for sins (1 Corinthians 11:28).

1 Corinthians 11:28-29; "Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of the Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves."

4. Wooddale observes communion in two ways family style and intinction.

Wooddale Church Doctrinal Statement

WE BELIEVE that the Bible is the verbally and plerarily inspired Word of God, inerrant in its original manuscripts. The Bible is our supreme and final authority in faith and life. (II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20, 21)

WE BELIEVE in one God, eternally existing in three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1, 26; Matthew 28:19; John 1:1, 3; 4:24; Acts 5:3, 4; Romans 1:20; Ephesians 4:5, 6; II Corinthians 13:14)

WE BELIEVE that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary, and is true God and true man. (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13)

WE BELIEVE that man was created in the image of God, that he sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death but also that spiritual death which is separation from God, and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and become guilty sinners in thought, word, and deed. (Genesis 1:26,27; 3:1-24; Romans 3:25; 5:12-18; 1 John 1:8)

WE BELIEVE that the Lord Jesus died for our sins according to the scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice; that He rose victorious from the grave on the third day; and that all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. (Isaiah 53; Matthew 20:28; John 3:16; Romans 3:24-26; 5:1; I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 2:2; Matthew 28:6; Romans 10:9; and I Corinthians 15:14)

WE BELIEVE in the personal and imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 4:16, 17)

WE BELIEVE that all who come by grace through faith to accept the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God. (John 3:3, 5; 1:12, 13; James 1:18; I Peter 1:23; Ephesians 2:8, 9)

WE BELIEVE in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting joy of the saved and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost. (John 5:28-29; I Corinthians 15; II Corinthians 5:10; Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 20:4-6; 11-15)

WE BELIEVE that all Christians are baptized by the Holy Spirit when they are born again. We believe that water baptism by immersion is the biblical testimony of the professed believer in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:28-41,47; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 8:36-40; 10:47; 18:8; Romans 6:3,4; I Corinthians 12:13)

WE BELIEVE that those who partake of the Lord's Supper should be born-again believers, walking in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:42-46; I Corinthians 11:23-29)

WE BELIEVE that as Christians we are to meet together regularly for worship, ordinances, and the encouragement of each other. (Hebrews 10:24, 25; Acts 2:42,46, 47a.)

Wooddale Church Values

The purpose of Wooddale Church is to honor God by making more disciples for Jesus Christ. Our values are what Wooddale Church lives by to fulfill our purpose.

God-Centered

As a church, we exist for God. Individually and corporately, personally and programmatically, God is the object of our attention, affection and worship, and the One we seek to honor in all that we do.

God-Commissioned

We actively seek and obediently follow God's direction and will for our church.

Bible-Based

As a community of faith, we live by the Bible, seeking to be informed by and conformed to the inerrant Word of God.

Prayer-Reliant

We humbly, thankfully and expectantly bring all things to God in prayer to seek his blessing, guidance and wisdom.

Outward-Reaching

We are passionate about introducing people to Jesus. Resisting the natural tendency to focus on ourselves, we intentionally choose to make loving and serving others a priority.

Irresistibly Joyful

As Christians, we find transformational joy in our relationship with Jesus Christ, and that joy is evident and irresistible to those who do not yet know him.

Profoundly Generous

We recognize that all our resources come from God and we generously give our talent, time and treasure to build his church.

Disciple-Making

We are committed to following Jesus. Acknowledging Jesus as Savior and Lord, we immerse ourselves in his life and teaching in order to become like him in thought, attitude and action.

Kingdom-Building

We are serious about the expansion of Christ's Kingdom. Motivated by gratitude to God for his goodness, we invest generously in ministries here, near and far.

Future-Looking

As followers of Jesus Christ, we ask, "Where is God leading us next?" God's past faithfulness and present blessing instills a future hope that energizes us as we pursue his preferred future.

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MEMORY VERSE #8

*Then Jesus came to them and said,
"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.
And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
Matthew 28:18-20*

Commentary

You can tell a lot by what a person says. You can even tell more by what a person's last words are. Before Jesus left the earth He gave this verse as a command to all Christians. Some interesting things to note about this verse. Jesus comes with the authority of the Father over all of creation. Because of this power, He is able to give the command to all Christians to make disciples. The idea of baptizing is a public symbol of identification with Christ, the order to baptize is a mandate to all Christians to get other people to be identified with Christ. The verse goes on to involve the all important concept of obedience to what Jesus has commanded and finishes with a powerful conclusion. Jesus concludes by adding that He will be with all Christians to the end of time. Clearly, a strong show of support for the disciples as well as for each of us who reads this today.

Easy memorization breakdown

- ⇒ Matthew 28:18-20
- ⇒ Then Jesus came to them and said,
- ⇒ "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
- ⇒ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,
- ⇒ baptizing them in the name of the Father
- ⇒ and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
- ⇒ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.
- ⇒ And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
- ⇒ Matthew 28:18-20

Practice writing the verse

(Remember to write the reference, too!)