

# I LOVE CFBC

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I love my local church. God has graciously called me to serve the family of believers as a shepherd. I'm called to feed them truth, point them to Christ, lead them in prayer, and serve through selflessness. Christ has instilled in me a deep affection for this local assembly. Though I could write out many (many!) reasons why I love my local church, I'll condense them to a few. Here are 5 reasons why I love CFBC.

## **Hunger For Truth**

The body of Christ hungers for truth. Like newborn babies who long for milk so God's people long for the pure milk of the Word. The flock of CFBC wants divine Truth to be taught faithfully, biblically, expositively, and powerfully. I appreciate and love this expectation at CFBC. I praise the Lord that His people who gather for worship thirst for the pure Word to be delivered to satisfy their souls as they hear of Christ and remember the gospel. I cherish the weekly responsibility that God has given me to satisfy their hungry souls with the meat of the Word & the Bread of Life! Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel. My commitment is to preach the Word -- faithfully -- in season and out of season. Christ sent me ... to preach the gospel. I'm determined to know Christ and Him crucified. By God's grace, I'll faithfully preach His Word.

## **Zeal For Holiness**

Christ calls His people whom He has saved to live out who they positionally are in Christ. The Word calls saints to be holy for God is holy. Believers are to pursue Christ, to grow in the knowledge of Him, to be distinct from the world, to set their eyes on things above. The call of Christ is to follow Him, to put off sin, and to live in such a way as to be distinct from nonbelievers who do not trust Christ, live for Him, nor bow to His Lordship. I love my church family because a great zeal for Christ permeates the church family. A love for what Christ loves saturates the church family. A mark of progressive growth in holiness is the desire to put off sin, emulate Christ, and fight for truth. As I look at the steady barometer of CFBC, I see a great zeal for holiness, a fight for purity, and a yearning for Christlikeness. May God accelerate that more!

## **Pursuit of Christ**

The gathering of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ of CFBC longs to grow in "being imitators of God as beloved children" (Eph 5:1-2). Like Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus, so the pursuit of Christ by sitting at His feet, hearing His Word, and growing in conformity to Christ seems to permeate the fellowship of believers. Recognizing that there is much growth still needed, a longing for Jesus Christ and the worship of Christ exudes from the redeemed at CFBC. Of course hardships exist and unforeseen trials invade, but the church family remains steadfast in its commitment to pursue Christ in Scriptural knowledge, in Christ-centered worship, in Christ-exalting conduct, in Christ-saturated joy, and in Spirit-enflamed affections & in biblically-based discipleship-relationships. We gather to exalt Christ. We exist to magnify Him! Soon, we'll behold Him face to face!

## **Commitment to Prayer**

A highlight of my week as a shepherd is gathering with the church family for corporate prayer on Wednesday nights. We study the Word for a brief time and then gather to corporately call upon God responding to what we've learned from Scripture. We believe that the prayer meeting is the engine of the church; that is, it's the powerhouse of the assembly. What makes CFBC thrive and remain healthy is the steadfast, weekly, passionate, and corporate commitment to prayer. Without prayer and dependence upon God, our ministry lacks Spirit-given power. Without corporate prayer, it would seem that we endeavor to do ministry in our own strength, by our own ingenuities, and with our own cleverness, but prayer drives us to corporate desperation for Christ, for His power, and for God's blessing upon all that is done — from preaching, to evangelism, to discipleship, to purity, to doctrinal fidelity, to healthy families, and humble hearts. We depend upon prayer and so we are relentlessly committed to prayer as a local church.

## **Love for Saints**

Jesus said that all men will know that His people are disciples by their love for one another. One vital element that the Spirit of God produces in His people is sacrificial love for one another which demonstrates itself in brotherly love, affectionate care, proactive pursuit of one another, bearing each other's burdens, and seeking to serve one another in any way possible. I believe that the Lord continues to grow this church family in Christlike love and brotherly affection. Different cultures, backgrounds, races, and ages come together with great love for Christ and for each other that manifests itself in a myriad of Spirit-created ways. To love one another requires that the people of God remember that we are members one of another and that we need each other and that the body needs each member to function well, actively, and selflessly to thrive in a healthy way. Let us excel still more in brotherly affection and in active, intentional ways to build up one another as we journey together to the heavenly city.

I love CFBC. Yes my church family is a wonderful gathering of saints where I am encouraged, refreshed, stimulated, convicted, and blessed. At the same time, of course, this local church family is far from perfect. We have many blemishes and many areas where we still must grow. But we are a work in progress and I am grateful to the Spirit for bringing us together and growing us in Christlikeness. As I reflect on my church family, I'm reminded to pray for humility, to pray for unity, to pray for purity, to pray for doctrinal fidelity, and to pray for a doxological spirit to exude through each and every member of the church family. May the Lord continue to work His will in us for His glory and for the exaltation of and our enjoyment of the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ.