

# Our Philosophy of Ministry

## Our Ministry Options

1. NOT – Getting ministry done *for* people, "We must get those needs met!"
2. NOT – Getting ministry *done* through people, "We must get this work done!"
3. BUT RATHER – Growing people *through* ministry – "We must get the workers done!"

## Great Hope's Philosophy of Ministry:

**G**reat Hope Baptist Church, as operating under the Headship of Jesus Christ must limit its methods within the boundaries of or under the discipline of clear and specific Biblical convictions. God's work must be done God's way, with motives and manners that are pleasing to Him.

*And He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent – Colossians 1:18*

*And if a man strive also for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully – 2 Timothy 2:5*

*Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain – 1 Corinthians 9:24*

- 1. Doctrinal Purity** – The Bible is the sole authority for belief and practice. It and its teachings are the final voice concerning any doctrine, teaching, music, associations, or programs for Great Hope
  - a. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction of righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works – 2 Timothy 3:16*
  - b. *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine – 2 Timothy 4:2*
- 2. Church Centered** – The local New Testament Church is the body of Christ in this age. The means of fulfilling God's plan in this age is to be accomplished through the local, visible body of Christ, the local church. While the New Testament does speak of all believers of this age being members of Christ's body, the overwhelming concentration of the term in the New Testament is to local, physical, visible churches. The mission of discipling our world was committed to this visible body. The carrying out of this mission must be done within the ministry of churches and within the accountability to churches. Church mission must not be confused with church buildings, since much, if not most, of

our mission as a gathered church is actually accomplished as we are scattered within our communities.

a. *But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth – 1 Timothy 3:15*

**3. Family Emphasis** – As God is the Creator of the family (Genesis 2:23-25), the Church is to be an encourager to the family. As such, the ministries of the church must not supplant or suppress the importance of individual families. The church is not more important than the family; both are important and should complement one another.

a. *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord – Ephesians 6:1-4*

**4. Servant Leadership** – As the mission of the Great Hope is to equip saints for the ministry, each ministry must teach members their gifts and how to use those gifts. As such, each ministry of the Great Hope must point lay members towards their responsibility within the church, their spiritual gifts as given by God, and their place within God's plan to reach the world through the Great Commission. Therefore, each leader of a ministry must be developing other leaders through practical teaching and hands-on training in the ministry.

a. *And the things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also – 2 Timothy 2:2*

b. *For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ – Ephesians 4:12*

**5. Outreach Oriented** – While the church may be involved with building the lives of the saints (through Christian Day Schools, Bible Institute, etc.) the primary focus must be upon glorifying God by winning people to Jesus Christ and equipping them to be more faithful disciples. It is through reaching the lost and maturing saints that the church builds the lives of the members. Each member is to be involved in reaching the community, and each ministry is to remind them of that responsibility. No activity or program of the church must be allowed to become a wall to the lost and dark world around the church. No ministry is to become a refuge to keep the saved church members from the lost world (whether children or adults).

a. *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! – Romans 10:13-15*

**6. Biblical Separation** – While Christ is certainly the "friend of sinners" (Matthew 11:19),

He also was "separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26). The Bible clearly teaches separation from sin and error as an indispensable part of a holy life. Separation from error and those who promote it is also an essential demonstration of our love for the truth and for the holy God who has saved us. God warns that sinful or corrupt associations will in fact corrupt good behavior. As we plan, prepare, and practice ministry, we must pay careful attention to avoid associations with unbelieving ministers and ministries or the ministry of fellow believers who are making moral, doctrinal, or associational compromises. By conviction we are a church that is fundamental, separatist and Baptist, which in fact is to say that we are true Biblicists. While loving all humans, whether saved or lost, we will only participate in joint ministry with those in harmony with our moral and doctrinal convictions.

- a. *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them – Romans 16:17*
- b. *And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother – 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15*

**7. Indigenous Principle** – While we are spiritually, ethically, and doctrinally aliens and pilgrims in our society, we are physical citizens of that society. God commends and commands good citizenship. As in the case of foreign missionaries who rightly seek to be culturally sensitive while spiritually distinct, we too are missionaries in our communities and must seek to do the same. Our programs and facilities must reflect a sensitivity to the community in which we minister.

- a. *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. (20) And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; (21) To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. (22) To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some – 1 Corinthians 9:19-22*

**8. Financial Integrity** – As financial stewards of both finances and facilities, we will give an account to God for what we have done with what He has entrusted to us. The ministers and ministries of Great Hope must be supported by the tithes and offerings of Great Hope members. Care must be taken and accountability provided for the collection, accounting, and distribution of all church receipts. Our financial dealings must reflect honesty and openness, planning for the future, an emphasis on people over things, and the judicious use of debt as a tool, not a crutch.

- a. *Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: (21) Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men – 2 Corinthians 8:20-21*
- b. *Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful – 1 Corinthians 4:2*

- 9. Christlike Compassion** – As we use Christ as a model for life and ministry, we come to the conclusion that ministry must be marked by compassion. It is evident that He had an uncompromising passion for the truth, but also a true empathy and passion to redeem and reclaim those who did not. He saw sinners as needing a Savior and suffering saints needing a Comforter. We must never become tolerant of sin, but we must never become indifferent to the sinner. Great Hope's ministries must reflect that we care about what Christ cared about. Certainly that includes the lost, wayward Christians, and suffering and struggling brothers and sisters in Christ.
- a. *Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous – 1Peter 3:8*
  - b. *Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering – Colossians 3:12*

## **The Means**

### **Therefore, we are committed to . . .**

1. The practical preaching and teaching of the Word of God.
2. The promulgation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the presentation of the Gospel, both locally and worldwide.
3. The building of strong Christian families by developing godly men, women, and children.
4. The development of the spiritual gifts of each member, and guidance of applying those gifts.
5. The advancement of Christian fellowship as a unified church family.
6. The gentle and unfailing reminder of this mission: to glorify God by winning people to Jesus Christ and equipping them to be more faithful disciples of Him.