



Circle of the Elders

This Grace Bible Churches

Code of Doctrine, Conduct and Ecclesiastical Discipline

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THIS GRACE BIBLE CHURCHES

PAULINE DISPENSATIONAL ASSEMBLY

CODE OF DOCTRINE, CONDUCT & ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE

King James Bible (KJB) - Final Written Authority

Founding Bishop Wesley Scott Ray

Tyler, Texas

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PREAMBLE

This Grace Bible Churches ("TGBC") establishes this Code of Doctrine, Conduct & Ecclesiastical Discipline to preserve sound doctrine, protect orderly ministry, establish fair ecclesiastical procedures, address serious misconduct or doctrinal departure, provide accountability for those entrusted with ministry responsibilities, and encourage correction and restoration wherever restoration is biblically appropriate.

This Code is an ecclesiastical governing instrument. It shall be administered according to the King James Bible, rightly divided, and consistently with the Constitution, Bylaws, Statement of Faith and Doctrine, Circle of the Elders Charter, Bishop and Deacon Qualifications and Ordination Manual, Local Assembly Charter, and other duly adopted superior governing documents of TGBC.

Discipline shall not be used as a weapon for personal retaliation, popularity contests, private grudges, financial advantage, suppression of legitimate questions, or the elevation of one man above the Word of God.

ARTICLE I

FINAL WRITTEN AUTHORITY

The King James Bible, Authorized Version of 1611 received in its standardized 1769 textual tradition and Pure Cambridge Edition text form, is the official Bible and final written authority of TGBC for doctrine, conduct, assembly order, correction, and ecclesiastical determinations.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 KJB

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

2 Timothy 2:15 KJB

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

ARTICLE II

PURPOSES OF ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE

TGBC discipline exists to:

1. preserve the Gospel of Christ and sound doctrine;
2. protect the doctrinal identity and orderly ministry of TGBC;
3. correct serious error and misconduct;
4. protect assemblies and individuals from abuse of ecclesiastical authority;
5. protect church property, funds, records, credentials, and the TGBC name;
6. determine continuing qualification for ecclesiastical responsibility where necessary;
7. provide an orderly process for addressing substantial disputes;
8. seek repentance, correction, reconciliation, and restoration where biblically appropriate; and
9. maintain truthful and permanent records of significant ecclesiastical determinations.

ARTICLE III

FOUNDATIONAL DOCTRINE TO BE PRESERVED

Matters of discipline involving doctrine shall be evaluated according to TGBC's adopted foundational doctrine. That doctrine includes the Gospel of Christ in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; salvation by grace through faith apart from human works as a means of obtaining salvation; right division; the distinctive apostleship of Paul; the revelation of the Mystery; the present Dispensation of the Grace of God; the distinction between Israel's prophetic program and the Body of Christ; and the Pauline identity of the one Body, one new man, and new creature.

TGBC does not recognize water baptism as a required ordinance for salvation, membership in the Body of Christ, or participation in TGBC fellowship, and does not recognize observance of the Lord's Supper as a required ordinance imposed upon the Body of Christ.

The recognized ecclesiastical offices of TGBC remain Bishop and Deacon. Participation in the Circle of the Elders does not create a third ordained office.

ARTICLE IV

GENERAL STANDARD OF CONDUCT

Those entrusted with ecclesiastical responsibility shall conduct themselves with honesty, faithfulness, sobriety, self-control, sound judgment, respect for others, proper stewardship, and conduct consistent with the responsibilities of their ministry.

No title within TGBC authorizes intimidation, coercion, dishonesty, exploitation, financial misuse, sexual misconduct, violence, retaliation, deliberate false accusation, manipulation of church records, or misuse of confidential information.

Ordinary disagreement, personality differences, correctable mistakes, temporary difficulty, or human imperfection shall not automatically be treated as disqualifying misconduct.

ARTICLE V

BISHOPS AND DEACONS

Bishops and Deacons remain subject to the Pauline qualifications applicable to their offices. Ordination does not permanently guarantee qualification regardless of later doctrine or conduct.

If a Bishop or Deacon materially ceases to satisfy the qualifications of his office through serious doctrinal departure, disqualifying conduct, abandonment of responsibility, misuse of authority, or other substantial cause, the matter shall be examined according to Scripture and TGBC governing documents.

Any determination shall distinguish between ordinary human imperfection, correctable error, temporary difficulty, and conduct that genuinely renders a man no longer blameless or qualified for ecclesiastical office.

ARTICLE VI

CIRCLE OF THE ELDERS

Members of the Circle of the Elders shall remain faithful to TGBC foundational doctrine, right division, the Gospel of Christ, the distinctive ministry of Paul, and the governing documents of TGBC.

A Circle member other than the Founding Bishop may be subject to correction, suspension from participation, or removal from the Circle for substantial cause, including abandonment of foundational doctrine, serious misconduct, abuse of ecclesiastical authority, persistent disruption, misuse of church property or funds, incapacity preventing fulfillment of responsibilities, resignation, or other substantial cause recognized under TGBC governing documents.

Removal from the Circle does not automatically determine a separate question concerning fellowship, ministry credentials, or another ecclesiastical position unless additional action is taken.

ARTICLE VII

FOUNDING BISHOP

Wesley Scott Ray is the one and only Founding Bishop of This Grace Bible Churches and serves in that historical office for the duration of his natural life according to the Constitution and governing documents of TGBC.

Nothing in this Code authorizes the Circle of the Elders, a local assembly, Bishop, Deacon, member, committee, policy, resolution, or disciplinary proceeding to remove, suspend, vote out, replace, appoint a co-Founding Bishop, transfer the title, or abolish the office of Founding Bishop during his natural life.

This protection of the historical office does not place any man above the Word of God. Questions concerning doctrine or conduct may be addressed truthfully and scripturally, but no disciplinary procedure may be used to accomplish an action against the Founding Bishop's office that the Constitution expressly prohibits.

ARTICLE VIII

GROUND FORS FOR ECCLESIASTICAL REVIEW

A formal ecclesiastical review may be initiated for substantial matters including:

1. abandonment or official contradiction of TGBC foundational doctrine;
2. teaching another saving message in place of the Gospel of Christ adopted by TGBC;
3. serious moral or ethical misconduct materially affecting ecclesiastical qualification or ministry;
4. abuse of ecclesiastical authority;
5. fraud, theft, embezzlement, intentional misuse of ministry funds, or deliberate falsification of financial records;

6. deliberate falsification, destruction, or concealment of material ecclesiastical records;
7. sexual misconduct or exploitation materially inconsistent with ecclesiastical responsibility;
8. violence, credible threats, or serious harassment;
9. persistent divisive conduct after reasonable attempts at correction;
10. deliberately false material accusations against another person;
11. unauthorized use of the TGBC name, credentials, property, or authority;
12. refusal to relinquish TGBC credentials or representations after lawful revocation or termination;
13. serious violation of a duly adopted TGBC governing requirement; or
14. other substantial cause materially affecting doctrine, qualification, safety, stewardship, or orderly ministry.

ARTICLE IX

RECEIVING A COMPLAINT OR ACCUSATION

Complaints concerning serious doctrine or conduct should identify, as reasonably possible, the person involved, the conduct or teaching at issue, relevant dates or circumstances, and available witnesses or documentary evidence.

Anonymous information may be considered as a lead when safety or serious wrongdoing is implicated, but an adverse ecclesiastical determination should not rest solely upon an untested anonymous allegation when meaningful corroboration can reasonably be sought.

Accusations against an Elder or other ecclesiastical leader shall not be received carelessly. TGBC shall seek reliable evidence and shall guard against rumor, retaliation, and reckless accusation.

1 Timothy 5:19 KJB

"Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses."

ARTICLE X

PRELIMINARY REVIEW

A preliminary review shall determine whether the matter is ecclesiastical in nature, whether the allegation would be substantial if true, whether immediate protective action is reasonably necessary, and what governing documents apply.

A matter may be closed at the preliminary stage when it is plainly unsupported, outside TGBC authority, immaterial to ecclesiastical responsibility, or adequately resolved without formal proceedings.

ARTICLE XI

NOTICE AND OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND

Except where immediate temporary protective action is reasonably necessary, a person subject to formal review should receive reasonable notice of the substantial issue and a meaningful opportunity to respond.

The person may provide explanation, Scripture, documents, witnesses, contextual information, or other relevant material. Refusal to participate does not prevent TGBC from reaching an ecclesiastical determination based upon the reliable information available.

ARTICLE XII

EVIDENCE AND FAIR CONSIDERATION

Ecclesiastical determinations should be based upon reasonably reliable information rather than rumor or popularity. Relevant evidence may include firsthand testimony, written communications, records, financial documents, photographs, recordings lawfully available to the decision-makers, admissions, and other credible information.

The decision-makers should consider both evidence supporting and evidence contradicting an allegation and should avoid predetermining a matter because of friendship, family relationship, financial status, title, or personal disagreement.

ARTICLE XIII

TEMPORARY PROTECTIVE ACTION

Where reasonably necessary to protect people, funds, property, records, or the integrity of an ongoing review, TGBC may temporarily restrict access to ministry functions, financial authority, records, property, credentials, or representation of TGBC while the matter is examined.

A temporary protective restriction is not itself a final finding of guilt or permanent disqualification.

Nothing in this Article authorizes suspension or removal of Wesley Scott Ray from the constitutional office of Founding Bishop.

ARTICLE XIV

ECCLESIASTICAL HEARING OR REVIEW MEETING

When a formal meeting is appropriate, the authorized ecclesiastical body may hear the matter in person, by telephone, video conference, or another reliable means. A written record or minutes of significant proceedings and determinations shall be maintained.

The purpose is to determine truth, doctrine, qualification, accountability, and appropriate ecclesiastical action rather than to imitate every procedure of a civil or criminal court.

ARTICLE XV

POSSIBLE ECCLESIASTICAL DETERMINATIONS

Depending upon the facts and governing documents, a determination may include:

1. no action or closure of the matter;
2. private counsel, admonition, or correction;
3. doctrinal clarification or required correction of an official teaching;
4. a written warning;
5. a plan of accountability or restoration;
6. temporary restriction from specified ministry responsibilities;
7. removal from a particular administrative responsibility;
8. removal from the Circle of the Elders where authorized;

9. determination that a Bishop or Deacon no longer satisfies the qualifications of his office;
10. suspension, withdrawal, or revocation of TGBC-issued credentials where authorized;
11. suspension or termination of a local assembly's affiliation;
12. termination of authorization to use the TGBC name or represent TGBC; or
13. another ecclesiastical action consistent with Scripture and TGBC governing documents.

ARTICLE XVI

RESTORATION

Where restoration is biblically appropriate, TGBC should seek correction in a spirit of meekness and should distinguish restoration to fellowship from restoration to an ecclesiastical office or position of trust.

A person may be restored to fellowship without automatically being restored to a former office, credential, financial authority, leadership responsibility, or Circle membership. Restoration to responsibility may require renewed examination, time, demonstrated faithfulness, and satisfaction of applicable qualifications.

Galatians 6:1 KJB

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

ARTICLE XVII

DOCTRINAL DISPUTES

Significant doctrinal disputes shall be examined according to the King James Bible, rightly divided; the Statement of Faith and Doctrine; the Constitution and Bylaws; adopted doctrinal position papers; and other applicable TGBC governing documents.

The objective shall be preservation of sound doctrine and orderly fellowship rather than personal preference or popularity.

A sincere question, request for scriptural explanation, or respectful doctrinal discussion shall not by itself constitute disciplinary misconduct.

ARTICLE XVIII

LOCAL ASSEMBLY MATTERS

Local assemblies should ordinarily address local matters at the appropriate local level when they can do so consistently with TGBC governing documents. Matters involving foundational doctrine, TGBC credentials, the TGBC name, inter-assembly disputes, serious abuse of authority, or issues assigned to the Circle may be reviewed through the broader TGBC structure.

Suspension or termination of a local assembly's recognition shall be handled consistently with the Local Assembly Charter and Affiliation Agreement.

ARTICLE XIX

CREDENTIALS AND OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION

TGBC-issued ordination records, credentials, certificates, identification, letters of recognition, and other official representations remain subject to the governing conditions under which they were issued.

When credentials are withdrawn or revoked, the individual shall cease representing himself as currently credentialed or authorized by TGBC. Historical facts concerning a prior ordination or credential shall not be falsified, but current status must be represented truthfully.

ARTICLE XX

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORDS

Ecclesiastical matters should be handled with appropriate discretion. Confidentiality, however, shall not be used to conceal serious wrongdoing, obstruct lawful reporting, falsify records, or prevent TGBC from taking reasonable protective action.

Permanent records should be maintained for significant disciplinary determinations, credential actions, Circle removals, doctrinal determinations, local-assembly affiliation actions, and restoration decisions.

Access to sensitive records may be limited to persons with legitimate ecclesiastical, administrative, legal, or safeguarding responsibilities.

ARTICLE XXI

SAFETY, ABUSE, AND CIVIL AUTHORITIES

TGBC ecclesiastical discipline does not replace lawful civil processes. Nothing in this Code requires any person to conceal suspected abuse, violence, theft, fraud, threats, or other conduct that applicable law requires or permits to be reported to civil authorities.

Where immediate danger exists, protection of persons and appropriate contact with emergency or civil authorities may take precedence over ordinary internal procedures.

An ecclesiastical determination and a civil or criminal proceeding serve different purposes and need not produce identical outcomes.

ARTICLE XXII

RETALIATION AND FALSE ACCUSATIONS

Retaliation against a person merely for making a good-faith report, participating truthfully in an ecclesiastical review, or raising a sincere doctrinal concern is contrary to orderly administration.

Likewise, knowingly making materially false accusations, fabricating evidence, or intentionally using disciplinary procedures to injure another person may itself constitute serious misconduct.

ARTICLE XXIII

RECONSIDERATION AND REVIEW

A person materially affected by a final ecclesiastical determination may submit a written request for reconsideration when new material evidence, a significant procedural error, or a substantial scriptural or governing-document issue is identified.

A request for reconsideration does not automatically suspend the original determination. The body authorized under TGBC governing documents shall determine whether further review is warranted.

ARTICLE XXIV

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IN DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

A person with a substantial personal, financial, or other conflict concerning a disciplinary matter should disclose that conflict and, where reasonably appropriate, refrain from controlling the determination.

This provision is intended to support fair consideration and does not alter constitutional authority or create power in a subordinate person or body that TGBC governing documents otherwise withhold.

ARTICLE XXV

RELATIONSHIP TO SUPERIOR GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

This Code is subordinate to the King James Bible and to the superior governing documents of This Grace Bible Churches. It shall not be interpreted to amend the Constitution, Bylaws, Statement of Faith, Founding Bishop provisions, or other superior instruments except through the amendment procedures governing those documents.

Where this Code and a superior governing document appear to conflict, the superior governing document shall control.

ARTICLE XXVI

AMENDMENT AND DOCUMENT CONTROL

This Code may be amended according to TGBC governing procedures. Each adopted edition should bear a version number and adoption or revision date. Superseded editions shall be retained in the permanent ecclesiastical records and clearly marked as superseded.

ADOPTION AND CERTIFICATION

The foregoing Code of Doctrine, Conduct & Ecclesiastical Discipline is hereby presented for adoption as an official ecclesiastical governing document of This Grace Bible Churches.

Adopted at: Tyler, Texas

Date: _____

FOUNDING BISHOP

Wesley Scott Ray

Founding Bishop of This Grace Bible Churches

Signature: _____

Date: _____

CIRCLE OF THE ELDERS / AUTHORIZED WITNESS

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

CERTIFICATION

We certify that the foregoing Code of Doctrine, Conduct & Ecclesiastical Discipline has been duly adopted according to the governing procedures of This Grace Bible Churches and shall be retained among the permanent ecclesiastical records of TGBC.