

since the Fall of Creation—God has been calling out to His Creation and bringing a people to Himself, from the first call of “Adam, where are you?” to periods of unbelievable wickedness as described in Genesis 6:5–7, Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. ⁷ The LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them.” Next verse you should memorize—But Noah found favor/grace in the eyes of the Lord, periods of darkness/silence, then to Abraham—Get up from your country and go to the land I will show you—I will make your name great, in you all the nations of the earth will be blessed; God has come near to His creation, cares, delivers, and calls a people to Himself; Pillars set up to remember (Jacob Bethel—house of God—stone, poured oil, vow--if God will protect me, bring me back--he did, with whole family) ends in Egypt, but when people leave – watch multitude cross Red Sea—then watch Joshua send 12 men back into the riverbed and take 12 stones (on shoulder) came out – Joshua 4:21-24 He said to the sons of Israel, “When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, ‘What are these stones?’ ²² then you shall inform your children, saying, ‘Israel crossed this Jordan on dry ground.’ ²³ “For the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed, just as the Lord your God had done to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed; ²⁴ that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty, so that you may fear the Lord your God forever.” NASB95 over & over, Israel told they chosen NOT for anything in themselves, but to show glory of Lord to the nations We are slow in the evangelical world to have rituals or ceremonies, but do this today tied to Lord’s Supper tonight where Jesus said, as often as you drink this, do this in remembrance of Me—Lord’s Table, reflect not only on the death of Christ, but on the reality of Jesus’ words found in Luke 22:20 . . . “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood. These words repeated and added to in 1 Corinthians 11:24-26 do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes. Now we are talking in terms of God calling out to His fallen creation and bringing them to Himself with both covenant privileges AND responsibilities 1. To aimless, b/c don’t know where fit, looking for best option, God gives in the Gospel the hope for new position; identity Ephesians 2:1-6 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ² in which you formerly walked . . . ³ Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, or 1 Pet. 1:21, 23-24 ²¹ who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. ²³ for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. ²⁴ For, “ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS, AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF, ²⁵ BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER.” And this is the word which was preached to you. what excitement—born again, not of perishable, but imperishable . . . whoopee, let’s go, but then see something else – skipped v. 22, 2:1-3 Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, ¹ Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, ² like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, ³ if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. how does that fit? Well look at vv. 4-5 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Here we have house, stones, no tabernacle—don’t come to see presence of God in building but spiritual—made alive by? The Spirit Jn. 3, Acts 2 stones are holy priesthood—not focus so much on task, but on set apart as people of God—all come to God through cross and resurrection of Jesus (Schreiner) living stones, interesting, verb—allow yourselves to be built up, or build yourselves up; can you imagine building where each living part willingly stays in place to let the purposes of building take place; spiritual sacrifices—not animal sacrifices, but something brought about by the Spirit—God doing a work in and through lives tied together to the Head to further God’s kingdom, v. 22, 2:1; find Christ didn’t merely make this living body, but Ephesians 1:22-23 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body . . . I Cor. 12:18-20 find that He placed each one in the body as He saw fit for the common good—in a day when people feel depressed b/c dreams are shot, people have taken from them, feel wandering restlessness, we remind you that, as a Christian, you have a place, purpose; serve God, by serving His body—owning them (attitudes of Col. 3, Rom. 12, Eph. 4 compassion, forgiveness, meeting physical needs as able, but THIS rooted in owning each other’s spiritual health Ephesians 4:15–16 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. When do this, bring praise to Christ as the Chief Cornerstone of the Church; We welcome you & remind the rest of us of this privileged identity 2. To the free/independent/slow to commit attitude in our society, I want you to hear the word submission—yes, wives to husbands, children to parents, us to bosses—but greater force driving then merely rules for mankind--against the grain of our independence, hear the words of Jesus, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, take up cross, follow Me —come to Me all who are weary, heavy-laden, I will give rest; Take my yoke upon you & learn of me submission scares, b/c it feels like we give up safety, security, even identity—to own self be true; if little trepidation about belonging to group, look to the God who called you—God the Son, in the incarnation was so submissive to the Father’s will that wouldn’t do anything apart from it—so

submissive that the Bible says He was obedient even to? the point of death on a cross; **why did He do this—for what great cause?** **Ephesians 5:25-27** Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, ²⁶ so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. --**love**, He died for the church (people of God—nothing unifying them except for grace by which each responds to call)—gave Himself for her, Father’s plan to offer grace in the face of rebellion, offer hope when none deserved--this love & obedience so great that it is the song of heaven now & on into eternity **Revelation 5:9-10** And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. ¹⁰ “You have made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.” --in a day when church membership means absolutely nothing & there are seemingly more perks to be gained superficially for taking what you need from here and then leaving rather than staying, **we welcome you** to the privileged position of being an essential part of something God thought worthy of sending His Son to die for—the church of Jesus Christ—each local body is to be a picture of what it looks like to submit to the Head & provides a place where each is needed to carry out the ministry God has for His bride; **It is a joy to welcome each of you to the **privilege and the responsibility** of submitting to Christ, your Head by seeking to identify with this local body of believers;** w this as background, I’d like members to stand and together read and reaffirm our church covenant

We, the members of Cornerstone Bible Church, having been redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, in order to carry out more efficiently the commission given by Jesus Christ to His Church, do ordain and establish the following Constitution and By-laws to which we voluntarily enter into covenant with one another. We acknowledge that this Constitution and By-laws is but a tool, and that apart from the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in our midst, it will prove ineffective in maintaining a vibrant and obedient local body of believers.

We engage, therefore, as the Holy Spirit shall enable us, to walk together in brotherly love; to exercise Christian care and watchfulness over one another; to participate in one another’s joys and sorrows; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation; to consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; and to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together.

We further engage to strive for the advancement of Cornerstone Bible Church in grace, knowledge, and holiness; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; to sustain its worship, ordinances, and doctrines; and to contribute cheerfully and liberally to the financial support of the ministries of the church.

We further engage to maintain family and private devotions; to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; and to avail ourselves of the great privilege of prayer for one another and all men.

We further engage to walk circumspectly and watchfully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to refrain from gossip, backbiting, and sinful anger; to avoid every appearance of evil; and ever remembering our relationship to Jesus Christ our Lord, to seek to live to His glory.

We further engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other Bible preaching church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God’s Word.