

The Tabernacle Exists to Promote the...

*T*eaching of Scripture,

*A*doration & Prayer,

*B*aptist Principles,

*E*vangelism & Missions,

*R*adical Generosity,

*N*urtured Relationships,

*A*ge Focused Ministries,

*C*ongregational Love & Encouragement,

*L*eadership Development and

*E*xcellence & Fun.

The Tabernacle Explained

The Tabernacle exists to glorify God by making an eternal impact through Teaching of Scripture, Adoration and Prayer, Baptist Principles, Evangelism and Missions, Radical Generosity, Nurtured Relationships, Age Focused Ministries, Congregational Love and Encouragement, Leadership Development, and Excellence and Fun.

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The T stands for the Teaching of Scripture.

But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His Kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. -2 Timothy 3:14—4:2

These 6 verses describe why we are so zealous to Teach Scripture at the Tabernacle! The Bible is God's perfect Word! It is inerrant and authoritative, and we have full confidence in it! The sharing of its Truth to all ages makes its hearers wise unto salvation when people place their faith in Christ.

The Bible is profitable for doctrine - that's what we should believe. It is profitable for reproof - that's what we should not believe. It is profitable for correction - that's how we should not behave. It is profitable for instruction in righteousness - that's how we should behave!

The Word of God heard and applied helps men and women of faith grow into mature disciples and helps them be ready for every good work God has called them to! The B-I-B-L-E, yes that's the Book for me! We stand alone on the Word of God, the B-I-B-L-E! Preach and teach it, brothers and sisters! Whether they come by the hundreds or the handfuls, faithfully and patiently use the Bible to convince, rebuke, and exhort all you influence!

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The first A stands for Adoration and Prayer.

Our response to what we learn in the Bible must be Adoration and Prayer. In 'Adoration' we worship God for who He is and what He has done, especially for creating and sustaining all things and redeeming those who turn to Christ in repentance and faith. In 'Prayer' we listen to and talk to God about all things going on in our lives and our world.

Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And

whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. -Col. 3:16-17

Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying for us, that God would open to us a door for the Word... -Col. 4:2-3a

Notice a couple of things here.

First, notice the connection between what we are learning from the Bible and turning that into adoration and prayer! If we truly are rooted in God's Word, clear fruit of that will be singing praises to God and prayer! God can do more in one millisecond than we can do through a lifetime of effort! Our church, city, county, state, country and world desperately need a Heaven-sent revival that only God can give!

Second, in the verses from Colossians above, only the first command is in the singular – to let the Bible dwell richly in you as individuals. All the other commands to praise and to pray are in the plural, calling us to go beyond individual responses to the Bible to a corporate commitment to praise and to prayer. As we sing and pray out loud with others it helps our faith grow as few other things do! There is a connection between our most fruitful ministries and the time spent in group prayer, bathing those ministries in prayer!

Tabernacle family, let's be known for individual and corporate adoration and prayer!

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The B is for Baptist Principles.

And with many other words he testified and exhorted them saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." Then those who gladly received his word were baptized, and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. -Acts 2:40-41

These verses have several of the components that make a Baptist church a Baptist church. First, true Baptists lead the way among true Christians in having full confidence in the Bible and boldly preaching its content. Secondly, Baptists have the utmost confidence in the gospel, and call all sinners to turn from their sins, believe in Jesus Christ, and be born again.

Thirdly, and this is key, we believe in regenerate church membership. That means that the only people who are members of a Baptist church are those who have received Christ as their Savior, testifying to their faith in Christ through believer's baptism. We speak against the non-biblical idea of having the church be supported by the state. A person is born a citizen of their country, but they are supposed to be born again to be a citizen member of a Baptist church.

That leads to the fourth key principle, the autonomy, or independence, of every local Baptist church. We cooperate with other churches for missions and other ministries, but each church is self-ruled under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

That leads to the fifth key Baptist principle, our advocacy for religious liberty for all. Baptists do not need nor want their country's government meddling in ours or anyone else's faith expressions. Early Baptists in Europe, America and even our beloved Virginia advocated loudly and proudly for themselves and others to be freed from the tyranny of state sponsored churches. We seek to win souls to Christ by preaching and reliance on the Holy Spirit, not through government advocacy. In these days when religious liberty is under threat for our fellow believers by tyrannical state government, we will continue to raise our voice for religious liberty for all!

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The first E is for Evangelism & Missions.

The first two passages that come to mind when we think of Evangelism & Missions are Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8.

Jesus' words in Matthew remind us that our task is to make disciples of all the peoples of the earth. We baptize new converts when they come to Christ and continue to teach them all that the Bible does.

Jesus' words in Acts 1:8 let us know we are to do this first where we are, our "Jerusalem;" then in our state and country, our "Judea;" then with people near us who are culturally different than we are, our "Samaria;" and to the ends of the earth.

Each of us should be praying and working as individuals and together to win people to Jesus Christ here and around the world. This is our all-consuming passion! We pray for people who need Jesus! We get involved in their life and then invite them to church. We go where they are and minister to them! We give to help those reaching them!

As a church we want to reach everyone, but we also want to ask questions of ourselves. The world has a billion lost Muslims, so what are we doing to reach some? The world has a billion lost Chinese people, so what are we doing to reach some? The world has a billion lost Indian people, so what are we doing to reach some? The world has a billion largely lost Roman Catholics, so what are we doing to reach some? And then there is our special heart for Israel!

Thankfully the answer is that we are doing much, although we need to continue to be involved as personally as possible! Around 25% percent of our giving goes to missions every year, with around 5 percent going to Southern Baptist causes and the other 20 percent going through other initiatives. But it all starts with each member making it personal, from their lost friends and family members to areas of missions that particularly touch their hearts.

By the way, don't ever believe the lie that evangelism and missions should be left to full-time pastors and missionaries. Who started the best missionary church in the book of Acts, the church at Antioch? We don't know, for it was people like you who got it done without any help from the apostles.

Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen travelled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. -Acts 11:19-21

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The R is for Radical Generosity.

The Tabernacle has been marked over the years by radical generosity in it's overall giving, and specifically its missions giving. It is the norm that 25% of our overall giving goes to missions expenditures. This has included not only missionary work around the world, but also support for Jewish help ministries, pro-life initiatives, and excellent community organizations.

Check out these verses where Paul brags on the churches of Macedonia:

For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God. -2 Corinthians 8:3-5

I can testify the same about our Tabernacle folk! Though the church faces all the things other established churches face in these days of America desperately needing a revival, we have remained committed to our high standard of giving.

One of the main reasons I believe God has many great days in the present and future for the Tabernacle is that many other churches won't give in 20 years to missions what the Tabernacle gives EVERY year.

That's worth preserving! And so we will continue to give proportionately through tithing. We will continue to give generously, because our God has been so generous to us. And we will continue to give sacrificially, as Jesus so wonderfully sacrificed for us!

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The N is for Nurtured Relationships.

Here we have primarily in mind our relationships with our like-minded ministry partners both within and outside the church as we together glorify God by partnering in things the Bible calls for. The apostle Paul wrote...

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship (partnership) in the gospel from the first day until now." -Philippians 1:3-4

We love praying and giving to the organizations we support, but Nurtured Relationships also calls for personal involvement with our ministry partners. Your pastor and staff model this in many ways, and increasingly our members do.

Whether it's our church ministries, the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia, or the missionaries and ministries we support locally, nationally, and internationally, we are part of something bigger than ourselves and our local church. We are PARTNERS in the gospel! As we do our part and work together with others doing their part, we are advancing Christ's work.

Nurtured Relationships help keep us and our partners focused and encouraged both when ministry is fun and when it gets tough. Nurtured Relationships help us all as believers to know that "YOU ARE NOT ALONE" as you know, love, and serve Jesus Christ!

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The second A is for Age Focused Ministries.

We value bringing the entire church together inter-generationally on Sunday mornings and for special events.

But we also appreciate the value of Age-Focused Ministries that help reach and disciple people. This acknowledges that at different ages people learn and process information differently, and that they face similar life challenges and opportunities.

"I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write to you, fathers, because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one." -I John 2:12-13

These wonderful verses guide our thoughts to believe that the basics should be poured into little children, young men and women should be supported in the intense spiritual warfare associated with getting established, and older men and women should be mature in their experiential knowledge of the Lord!

With this in mind we feature Sunday School classes for every age, and devote major resources to specialized ministries for children and youth ministries, men's and women's ministries, and senior adults.

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Here is an interesting graph to show the variation in the ages in the Tabernacle and the challenge before us as we minister to the different generations:

Age Range:	USA	Va	Pitts. Co.	Danville	Tabernacle
Under 18	24%	24%	23%	23%	21%
19 to 64	60%	61%	60%	59%	47%
Over 65	16%	15%	17%	18%	32%

You probably notice that the Tabernacle has a much higher number of people over 65 than under 18. One researcher says the entire country will look like that by the year 2030, with more over 65 than under 18.

What those numbers tell me is that we need to continue focused efforts to reach, disciple, and equip the young along with their parents and also provide relevant senior adult ministries.

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The C is for Congregational Love and Encouragement.

One of the beautiful phrases that occurs over and over again in the New Testament is “One Another,” building on Jesus’ command to “Love One Another” as He has loved us –

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”
-John 13:34-35

One of my favorite “One another” commands related to the church when we gather together is found in the book of Hebrews –

“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”
-Hebrews 10:24-25

Do people know you are Christ’s disciple because of the love you have for your brothers and sisters in Christ?

The church is a family with a perfect Heavenly Father! Born-again believers are brothers and sisters in Christ. Note that Hebrews challenges us to come to church looking to stir up love and good works among our brothers and sisters. What a great challenge!

But Congregational love and encouragement is for a lot more than our Sunday and Wednesday gatherings. During the week we should have many contacts with each other as we live out our faith in the world. Particular care should be given to reach out to those who are shut-in or facing an illness or who have become discouraged in the Christian walk.

To get Congregational love and encouragement right, it takes 100% of the church body committed to loving one another, with the Pastor and church staff leading the way. The Tabernacle also has a Deacon family ministry plan, where every member of the church is assigned to a deacon for spiritual watch-care. Additionally we have GROW teams that go out during the week to love and encourage our members and others.

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The L is for Leadership Development

I have always loved these words from the Apostle Paul to Timothy –

“You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” -2 Timothy 2:1-2

Jesus promised in Matthew 16:18 that He would build His church and the gates of Hell would not be able to overcome it. We don't need to worry about the future of the church – Jesus began it, He promised to build it, and one day He will rapture it to Heaven.

But even though we are not to worry about the future of the church, we should work for the future of the church. And the building blocks of both the current and future of the church are people (Ephesians 4:11-16). In 2 Timothy, Paul speaks of how what he had poured into Timothy was to be poured into faithful men who would pour into others still.

That is how leadership development works. As Paul lived and taught, Timothy stood out among his peers as exceptionally interested. Timothy's interest in spiritual things led to him being involved in ministry opportunities in the church and community, standing out to church leaders (Acts 16:2). Because he had been a faithful volunteer, Paul and Silas invited him to full time ministry.

In 2 Timothy 2, Paul reminds Timothy how the baton of church leadership had passed from Paul to Timothy and was to go on to faithful others who would share with others as well. 2,000 years later that baton came to us, and it is a great joy as older church members to pass it on to others.

At the Tabernacle, we have had thousands of faithful volunteers over the years and have seen well over a hundred people go into full time ministry. The key in our day is the same as past days – teach and pour ourselves into others, and as they show faithfulness in little ways ask them to take on more ministry ownership and responsibility while we encourage them and give them feedback.

Using visitation as an example, we follow the same pattern as the New Testament. First, we do the sharing while our Timothy is with us. Afterward we answer Tim's questions. Second, we do most of the sharing while our Timothy shares a testimony or prays. Afterwards, we give feedback. Third, our Timothy does almost all the sharing while we are along grinning! Afterwards, we encourage and give feedback. Fourth, our Timothy does a visit with another Timothy along, without us there, but we debrief soon afterwards. Finally, both we and our Timothy's become peers leading other Timothy's. And so it has been for 2,000 years!

Tabernacle family, let's give the church's children opportunities to grow and serve from their earliest days in every appropriate way!

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The second E is for Excellence and Fun.

Colossians 3:23-24 says, “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.”

When I think of the word ‘heartily,’ I think of doing our best for the Lord, and enjoying ourselves as we do it!

The Tabernacle has a long history of members doing ministry with excellence, because it is FOR the Lord. Our members have put in long hours behind the scenes studying to teach, constructing scenery for Vacation Bible School, learning music for services and special events, taking care of the building and grounds, and praying diligently.

The Tabernacle also has a long history of members enjoying God’s presence and having fun fellowship with each other! Perhaps it is the overflow of how invested our members are in the ministry, that when something like Vacation Bible School or the Homecoming Meal or the Fall Festival rolls around, invested members are seen with joy on their faces, enjoying both a job well done for the Lord, and enjoying spending time with each other!

The word “heartily” says it all!

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If you are a member reading this, consider how you can advance each of these objectives as you love God and people.

If you are not a member and reading this, we invite you to come and join us as we grow together in Christ!

Dr. Danny Campbell, Senior Pastor, The Tabernacle of Danville, Virginia

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