

Freedom Church

...believes everything starts with life's most important question: "Who is Jesus?" (Matthew 16:13-18). Every person is required to and must give an answer to this question.

We believe the church is His project. He owns it, He builds it, and it is to be growing. We are at war in this world, and wherever the church is being built, the battle rages the fiercest. We are never to be on the defense but on offense! We should never be threatened, we should however be threatening! We believe every church like every person is created with its own unique and individual DNA and God has His own unique and individual plan for every person and for Freedom Church.

Understanding DNA:

- All living things have a specific and unique DNA. DNA is the internal code that maintains the integrity of each multiplied cell. In every organism, DNA is what encodes each cell with its proper process and place in the body. Without DNA there is no life.
- Like the physical body the church is an organism (not an organization or building) Let's be clear, Freedom Church is a people not a place. Freedom Church is a local expression of the global church. Freedom Church gathers at the SHOP in Osage Beach MO.
- Just as God breathed life into all living creatures (Genesis 2:7) He also breathed life into His church (John 21:21-23; Acts 2)
- We are called living stones who make up the temple of God (1 Peter 2:5)
- All living things are to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth (Genesis 1:28) so is the church (Acts 1:8)
- The church is a holy people who bring a holy presence. It is not a holy place.
- The Church is a living entity and therefore it has the unique fingerprint of God.
- So how do we define church? Our definition of church is " (D) The presence of Jesus among His people called out as a (N) spiritual family to (A) fulfill His mission on earth."

This is how we understand and explain DNA in Freedom Church:

(D) **Divine Truth:** truth is the foundation for everything. By Divine Truth we mean the dynamic and living presence of Christ. Jesus said, "I am the ...truth" (John 14:6) Jesus is the Divine Truth.

(N) **Nurturing Relationships:** Healthy relationships are what make up a family. Love for one another is to be a constant pursuit of the family of God. Humans were not created to be alone, we need each other. We are social creatures and have a built in need for each other. God himself is relational and exists in community ... Father, Son And Spirit. God is love because He is relational.

(A) **Apostolic Mission:** Apostolic means - sent as a representative with a message (Ambassador) We are here with one mission... To make disciples of all nations. Just as Jesus was sent by God, so we are sent on a mission by Him and for Him. Our mission is to go and reach people with the good news (gospel) out of obedience, for their good and God's glory.

So here is how it works:

A life changed or born again (John 3:1-15) by the power of the Divine Truth (Jesus) lays aside the old corrupt things of the flesh and puts on the new ways of Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). This change begins to produce Nurturing relationships for the new Christian and as they mature, Love begins to flow through and out of the newly changed heart (John 13:35). Empowered by Truth and Love, the new Christian is unable to contain this energy and is compelled to follow the Lord's command to reproduce by taking this good news (gospel) to the world on Apostolic Mission, with hope others will believe in the Divine Truth (Jesus) and be born again!

Did you see it? - birth, maturity and reproduction.... LIFE! (DNA)

Mission Statement (what we do) (D) Love God (N) Meet Needs (A) Share Jesus

Mark 12: 29-31

29 Jesus replied, "The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. (D) 30 And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' 31 The second is equally important: (N) 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" No other commandment is greater than these."

Matthew 28:18-20

18 Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 19 (A) Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Purpose Statement (why we do it)

To Know (D) Jesus and (N) (A) Make Him Known!

Galatians 2:20 20 So I am not the one living now—it is (D) Christ living in me. I still live in my body, but I live by faith in the Son of God. He is the one (N) who loved me and (A) gave himself to save me. The church should not be losing ground.... but gaining ground (Matthew 16:13-18)

What we - Freedom Church - are committed to...

(D) Loving God, (N) Meeting Needs, (A) Sharing Jesus

Freedom Church is about helping the lost and hurting people in the lake area become a unified community of growing, multiplying Christ followers, by (D) Loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and (N) meeting the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of all we encounter. (A) We believe the resources are in the harvest... (Matthew 28:18-20, Ephesians 4:12-13)

Jesus never saw church as a building or a place to go, but as a people who love Him and who are learning to love others. Freedom Church believes no matter what your spiritual background or past or where you are now, we want you to come as you are – questions, doubts, skepticism, whatever – bring it! Connect into community here and take the next steps toward becoming who you were intended to be.

How we're committed to doing it...

(D) **Loving God:** Jesus made it clear that the first and greatest commandment in scripture is to love God with all your heart. (Deuteronomy 6:5, Matthew 22:37) We want to inspire and move people toward life lived in a very real, loving relationship with a very real God. Loving God is at the center of everything we do.

(N) **Staying Connected:** The amazing thing about being in a relationship with God is that He's with you all the time. We can do life with Him moment by moment through His Spirit that actually lives within those who have a relationship with Him. When we choose to follow Him we get to be a part of something so much bigger than ourselves and have an eternal impact. (John 15:5-16, I Thessalonians 5:17, Matthew 18:19).

(D) **Following God's Word:** We believe that the Bible is the main way that God communicates with us. It's a vital part of how we grow in our relationship with Him. Because the Bible is more than just a book, it's a living, active word of God – we're transformed when His Spirit helps us understand and apply Biblical truths to our everyday life. (II Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12, Romans 10:17, Psalm 1:1-3)

(N) **Engaging in Worship:** Everybody worships something. That is to say we all give our attention, devotion and loyalty to someone or something we love, value and respect. God created us with that nature and desire because He longs for us to spend time with Him, to see Him for who He is, to worship Him. We believe that coming together as a church to celebrate and worship God is part of our purpose and role as a church. (Acts 2:46-47, John 4:19-24, Colossians 3:16). Worship can take many forms and expressions. It's primarily an attitude of reverence and love resulting in acts of service. As we regularly come together, we experience God's presence and are reminded of who He is.

(A) **Loving People:** Loving people whether they ever love our God or not: Jesus went to the cross for everyone (John 3:16), knowing that most would reject him. That however did not change His love for them. Jesus knew the majority of people He spent time with everyday would turn their backs on Him, but scripture tells us "while they were still sinners Christ died for them" - and US! Jesus's favorite term of endearment was "friend of sinners" He loved them regardless of their love for Him! Freedom Church LOVES PEOPLE, right where they are and without condition.

(A) **Come As You Are:** Everybody is welcome. We want to provide a safe environment for people to experience grace and truth, without feeling judged or looked down upon. No matter where you have been, no matter what you have done, God's grace is sufficient and His forgiveness is complete.

(N) **Nobody Stands Alone:** We're convinced that real life-change happens best in the context of a small group of people doing life together (Hebrews 10:24-25, Luke 6:12-13, Acts 2:44-46). In these communities we are to be the church to one another and demonstrate God's heart to a watching world as we live out the "one another" of scripture. We're a church of small groups

committed to the value of everyone being cared for in a community that will love and prompt us to grow.

(N) **No Perfect People Allowed:** We believe authenticity, acceptance and truth-telling create an atmosphere where people can become whole (Romans 12:3, Ephesians 4:11-16, 25-26). There is no need to pretend we are better or worse than we really are, but as we accept each other and speak the truth in love to one another, we can help each other grow into whole people.

(A) **Culturally Relevant Communication:** We believe it's important to speak the language of our culture while not compromising biblical truth. (II Corinthians 5:14-21, I Corinthians 9:19-23). We use the arts, music, video, multimedia, drama, poetry, dance and any other medium to represent who God is and His love for people.

(D) **Building Character:** Come as You are... But Don't Stay that Way: We believe that the more we choose to do life with God everyday, the more we're transformed. We become more loving people, displaying the fruits of the Spirit of God (Matthew 22:37-40, Galatians 5:22-23). Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control are the indicators of spiritual growth. We're all "in process" and like any relationship it takes intentionality. It's not about us trying so hard to become or be perfect. It's about trusting and asking Him to change us step by step.

Be the Body

(N) **To one another:** We believe that everyone has unique spiritual gifts that God gave us to serve one another and build His Church. A significant part of growth and becoming who He made us to be happens when we choose to serve the Body using those gifts. The Church is only able to do what we're supposed to do when everyone does what they were created to do. (I Corinthians 12, Romans 12:3-8, Ephesians 4:11-12)

(A) **As You Go:** People in need cross our path everyday. We believe one of the main roles of the Church is to serve and care for the poor, oppressed and marginalized in our community and beyond. They have Physical needs (food, clothing, healing, shelter...) Emotional needs (someone to cry with, someone to counsel them and give wisdom, someone to simply say "it's going to be okay") Spiritual needs (someone to tell them the good news of Jesus, someone to pray with them, someone to disciple them...) We should always be on the lookout for ways to serve the lost and hurting. (Deut. 10:17-19, Deut. 15:7-11, Prov. 19:17, Micah 6:8, I John 3:17, Matthew 25).!

What Freedom Church Believes and Knows to Be True...

The Bible

We believe the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, are given by God's inspiration, and in the original writings they are without error. We believe the Scriptures were written by God through people and therefore speak with the authority of God while reflecting the backgrounds, styles, and vocabulary of the human authors. They are the unique and final authority on all matters of Christian faith and practice.

God

We believe in one God, creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is true God and true man, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. We believe he was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven, and now acts as the only mediator between God and people.

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit, as the third person of the Trinity, is to apply the saving work of Christ. He does this by bringing conviction of a person's need for the forgiveness of Christ. He regenerates their heart and then permanently indwells them when they believe. His ongoing work is to guide, instruct, and empower the believer for godly living and service.

Humanity

We believe that people were created in the image of God for a loving relationship with God. However, people have rebelled against God, actively or passively choosing to go their own independent way. As a result, we're separated from God and suffer the corruption of our nature because of our sin. The effects of this fall from our intended relationship with God can be reversed through faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins.

Salvation

We believe that Jesus Christ died as the substitution for the death penalty we owed. No amount of good works or human effort can restore us from our state of eternal alienation from God. It is only by God's free grace that we are saved from this state of alienation, and this grace is appropriated by a change of heart toward God's leadership in our lives and by faith in Jesus to forgive our sins.

The Church

We believe that there is only one true Church universal composed of all people who have asked Jesus Christ for forgiveness and made Him leader of their lives. The diversity of all believers working together, using their gifts to build up one another, form the parts of the body of Christ, the Church. The scripture commands believers to gather together to devote themselves to worship, prayer, the teaching of God's Word, using our gifts to build up one another, outreach, communion, and baptism. Wherever God's people meet in obedience to this command, there is the local expression of the church. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Head of the Church, and that every local church has the right under Christ to decide and govern its own affairs.

Spiritual Growth

We believe that transformation, growth and life change are evidence of a person's connection to God. As we continue to pursue a real relationship with God He will continue to change us to become more like Christ. But it requires our willingness and intentionality.

"Knowing God and Making Him Known"

is Freedom Church's way of being willing and intentional about our spiritual growth in relationship with God and others. It includes (D) Loving God, (N) Loving each other and (A) Loving people in the lake area.

