

Living in Obedience to the Word of God
BYF Sunday, August 30th
Dr. Laurien Hook

From ECO Essential Tenents:

Progress in holiness is an expected response of gratitude to the grace of God, which is initiated, sustained, and fulfilled by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. The first response of gratitude is prayer, and the daily discipline of prayer – both individually and together – should mark the Christian life. The life of prayer includes praise to God for His nature and works, sincere confession of our sin, and intercession for the needs of those we know and for the needs of the world. As we practice the discipline of regular self-examination and confession, we are especially guided by the Ten Commandments. We therefore hold one another accountable to:

1. Worship God alone, living all of life to His glory, renouncing all idolatry and all inordinate loves that might lead us to trust in any other help;
2. Worship God in humility, being reticent in either describing or picturing God, recognizing that right worship is best supported not by our own innovative practices but through the living preaching of the Word and the faithful administration of the Sacraments;
3. Eliminate from both speech and thought any blasphemy, irreverence, or impurity;
4. Observe the Sabbath as a day of worship and rest, being faithful in gathering with the people of God;
5. Give honor toward those set in authority over us and practice mutual submission within the community of the church;
6. Eradicate a spirit of anger, resentment, callousness, violence, or bitterness, and instead cultivate a spirit of gentleness, kindness, peace, and love; recognize and honor the image of God in every human being from conception to natural death.
7. Maintain chastity in thought and deed, being faithful within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman as established by God at the creation or embracing a celibate life as established by Jesus in the new covenant;
8. Practice right stewardship of the goods we have been given, showing charity to those in need and offering generous support of the Church and its ministries;
9. Pursue truth, even when such pursuit is costly, and defend truth when it is challenged, recognizing that truth is in order to goodness and that its preservation matters;
10. Resist the pull of envy, greed, and acquisition, and instead cultivate a spirit of contentment with the gifts God has given us.

In Jesus Christ we see the perfect expression of God's holy will for human beings offered to God in our place. His holy life must now become our holy life. In Christ, God's will is now written on our hearts, and we look forward to the day when we will be so confirmed in holiness that we will no longer be able to sin. As the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, Jesus leads us along the path of life toward that goal, bringing us into ever deeper intimacy with the Triune God, in whose presence is fullness of joy.