

# What We Value at Vineyard Church Glendora

## **The Bible**

All our values, all our beliefs, all that we are and all that we do is based on the Bible. The Bible is God's written Word and the standard for all that we do at the Vineyard. The Bible reveals who God is, what He has done, and what He will do. It reveals who we are, and how we are to live. We study the Bible and meditate on its words to experience God, and to see how to apply the Bible to our lives in practical and relevant ways.

As part of the Association of Vineyard Churches, U.S. A, we share certain common views regarding ministry and the church.

We believe that the kingdom of God (God's rule and reign) was inaugurated by Jesus at his first coming, and is active and growing in the world today. The kingdom will not be complete until Jesus returns again, but until He does, the power of the future and coming kingdom has broken into this present age. We have both the authority and the responsibility to minister in the power and authority of God's kingdom in this fallen world.

Thus the primary mission and issue of church life must be to help build and extend the kingdom of God (God's rule), not self-preservation or the perpetuation of church structures or programs. Church life should equip people to live in and help build the Kingdom as Jesus described it.

We believe that an indescribably loving God poured out His grace upon us, and set us free to pour out that same grace which we have received on the lost, hurting, and broken people around us. Mercy triumphs over judgment. (James 2:13). Therefore we believe that we must minister from a view of a God who is FOR us, not mad at us (reconciliation); who has forgiven us (justification); who has received us (redemption); and who has changed us and is now helping us to realize it (sanctification). Holiness and righteousness come out of knowing and living out of our identity in Christ, rather than outward adherence to laws and regulations.

In light of the above truth, we hold the following to be our highest values.

## **We Value:**

**Worship** - As Christians, our highest priority is to worship God. Worship is expressing our love for who He is, what He has said, and what He has done. God desires that we worship Him with every aspect of our lives. How we spend our time, money, and use our spiritual gifts and talents are reflections of our worship. In our gatherings we take time to worship God through music. We thank Him for who He is, and praise Him for what He has done. We give ourselves to Him, surrendering everything to Him. At the Vineyard, this becomes a time where we seek to draw near to God in an intimate and personal way, and invite His spirit to draw near to us, touching our pain, healing our wounds, and making us whole.

We worship God because He is worthy to be praised, but we have also seen worship accomplish something no other feature of human experience can. It renews us, orients us to God, increases our receptivity to His work in us, strengthens us, unites us, and helps us forget about ourselves and focus totally on God as the essential reality in the universe. Our worship should never end when the singing is done. Having given Him our praise and adoration, we freely give back to Him a portion of the resource He has provided for us, and continue to worship Him as we study His Word, and seek to hear His voice. As we minister to one another, we continue to express our worship by seeking to follow His command to "Love one another".

**Compassion** - God poured out His compassion upon us by sending His Son, and His son poured out His compassion on those He encountered, healed, and taught. God's heart is for the poor, the broken, the hurting, and He invites us to share in His heart of compassion by freely giving all that we have freely received from Him. We believe that having a heart of compassion for the poor, orphans, and widows is normal for Christians.

**Community** - We believe that relationships are basic to what it means to be a Christian. As believers, we are not only reconciled to God but we are also relationally united with other believers in what's called the body of Christ. The most frequently used words to describe believers in the New Testament are "brother and sister," illustrating that we are to be like family to each other. It seems obvious from the numerous exhortations to "love one another," "forgive one another," that the Christian life is to be lived in the context of community. While relationships can and should begin at our Sunday gatherings, it is in our small group meetings during the week that we grow deeper in community.

Each person in the fellowship is ultimately responsible for his or her own fellowship needs and follow-up. The church provides certain settings where this can happen.

**Being Spirit Led** - Jesus said: "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." (John 14:26). We believe that the Holy Spirit is willing and available to give us God's direction for each and every situation we find ourselves in, and that we are to continually "ask, seek, and knock" for His will to be revealed to us, in us, and through us. Jesus also told us that apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5), so we seek to walk in close contact with the Spirit of God. This requires us to surrender our own agenda and be willing to wait on his leading and empowerment. We desire to get out of the way and let the Holy Spirit operate in us and through us as He sees fit.

The Holy Spirit, with the church, is able, willing and free to break in and carry on His work in non-spectacular, non-manipulative and surprising ways. You cannot manufacture the Holy Spirit's genuine working.

**Prayer** - Christ Jesus is at the right hand of the Father, interceding for us (Romans 8:34), and we are to be constantly bringing our petitions before the Father in faith that He will act on our behalf. We are to intercede on behalf of ourselves, our church, our nation, and our world, asking for God's mercy and justice to be poured out.

**Body Ministry** - John Wimber, the founding leader of the Vineyard movement, had a saying. "Everybody gets to play!" God wants to use men, women, young people, and old people to accomplish His work in this world. God wants us to discover and use the gifts He has given us to serve Him. We believe that each of us is called and equipped by the Holy Spirit to minister His mercy, healing, and love to those in need.

**Discipleship** - Because we are commanded to make disciples, we seek to teach, train and equip others to live in God's love, and minister His grace to others. Discipleship is the process of following Jesus--we are disciples of Jesus rather than of men. Discipleship happens through relationship with Jesus, obedience to Him, and modeling our life after his. As believers gather together for teaching, training and encouragement in either small or large groups this discipleship can be enhanced.

**Evangelism, Missions, And Church Planting** - Jesus commanded us to go into all the world, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and making disciples among all the nations. Evangelism is primarily a function of sharing about Jesus in the course of everyday life. The prime locations for evangelism are our homes, businesses, schools and neighborhoods rather than the church celebrations on Sundays. We, who have received God's truly amazing grace cannot help but share the good news

with others. Because God desires to raise up worshipers among every tribe and tongue, we are committed to His global cause. We seek to encourage believers to reach out to the world through participation in mission trips, support of missionaries, and encouraging believer's to consider a life of service to God.

We recognize that church planting is the most effective means to spread the Gospel, and so we support and encourage church planting efforts all over the world.

**Servant Leadership** - We take Jesus' words regarding leadership seriously, and so we do not view leadership as a position of rule and authority, but rather we seek to lead through example, and by encouragement and exhortation. Leadership is a functional reality, not an appointment, democratic decision or reward. Recognizing that Jesus alone is head of the church, we seek to operate under a team leadership model. We see the primary task and responsibility of leadership to be equipping, training and encouraging the people in ministry.

**Integrity** - We are people who value integrity and choose a naturally supernatural lifestyle to present the love of Christ in the most culturally current light. It is important to us to speak the truth, deal honestly, and live uprightly. We value being real, even if it means showing our own weakness.

**Simplicity** - We will not use manipulation, deception, or coercion to motivate people to function and participate in church life. We try to speak in the language of our culture without Christian clichés and dress. We desire to act in ways in which our culture will respond positively to the Kingdom of God without compromising the Gospel of Jesus Christ.