

Fundamentalists stood to defend the Bible. They were Bible believers who were willing to do battle for the Bible and for Christianity.

The 5 fundamentals in the battle against liberalism in early 1900s.

- **The inerrancy of the Bible**
- **The literal nature of the Biblical accounts**, especially regarding Christ's miracles, and the Creation account in Genesis.
- The Virgin Birth of Christ
- The bodily resurrection of Christ
- The substitutionary atonement of Christ on the cross.

The Free Presbyterian Church gladly takes up the battle to defend the gospel. We are fundamentalists in the sense that we are set for the defence of the gospel against unbelief and apostate teaching to maintain the essential doctrines of the gospel.

3. EVANGELICAL

[1] Proclaiming the good news of the gospel - Christ centred

It ought to be the church's passion to have the fulness of Christ and His gospel proclaimed. This must be the bulls-eye target of the church. Everything in the church must be focused toward the message of redemption.

As redemption is the red rope running through the Bible, it must be the great hope of the church.

[2] Declaring Justification by faith alone

“Justification is the standing or falling of the true church.” _ Martin Luther

[3] Holding to a born again membership. To have unregenerate members, is to soon have unregenerate deacons, elders and ministers. The church is for the sheep not the goats. It doesn't matter that young people can recite all 107 questions and answers of the Shorter Catechism - if they have not been born from above they are only religious sinners.

The preacher must always reserve the right to preach to adults, youth and children as sinners in the sight of God.

Subject: Are Free Presbyterians Members of the True Church?

Text: Matt 16.16

Date: Sept 05 2010 6p.m.

1. The Lord has a church on earth.

He promises that nothing shall wipe out that witness until the Lord returns. “The gates of hell shall not prevail it.” Shall the Lord find faith in the earth? -Ans. Yes.

2. The Lord's Church is a Christ Confessing Church

Matt. 16:16 The person and work of Christ will be their theme in song, ministry and for which they will love not their lives unto death.

3. Every Christian is to confess Christ by joining themselves to the Lord's visible church.

That is the will of God. **Eph. 4 Rom. 10:9 -11**

Comment by A.A. Hodge on the WCF:

“That every man who hears the gospel is commanded to confess Christ before men—that is, to become a public, visible professor of the true religion (Matt. 10:32). The conditions of salvation laid down in Rom. 10:9-10.

In some way every person having the love of Christ in his heart will confess him. But our Confession intends in these sections to teach further that ordinarily, where there is the knowledge and opportunity, God requires every one who loves Christ to confess Him in the regular way of joining the community of his people and of taking the sacramental badges of his discipleship. (See. WFC Chs. 26—29 - Communion of Saints, Baptism and Lord's Supper). And that when providentially possible every Christian heart will be prompted to obey this matter, is self evident. When shame or fear or persecution is the preventing consideration, then the failure to obey is equivalent to the positive rejection of Christ, since the rejection of Him will have to be publicly pretended in such case in order to avoid the consequences attending upon the public acknowledgement of Him.”

My homiletics teacher used to call Christians without a church ‘spiritual gypsies, whose religion was in their feet.’

But for many the question is how to find a true church? That is becoming a difficult thing for many people even in Canada. I find it one of the hardest questions that is put to me.

The Marks of Christ's Church (Check our S.S. Notes May 2010)

A. The true preaching of the Word. This is the most important mark of the Church. While it is independent of the sacraments, these are not independent of it. The true preaching of the Word is the great means for maintaining the Church and for enabling her to be the mother of the faithful. That this is one of the characteristics of the true Church, is evident from such passages as **John 8:31,32,47; 14:23; I John 4:1.3; II John 9.**

b. The right administration of the sacraments. The sacraments should never be divorced from the Word, for they have no content of their own, but derive their content from the Word of God; they are in fact a visible preaching of the Word. As such they must also be administered by lawful ministers of the Word, in accordance with the divine institution, and only to properly qualified subjects, the believers and their seed.

That the right administration of the sacraments is a characteristic of the true Church, follows from its inseparable connection with the preaching of the Word and from such passages as **Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:42; I Cor. 11:23-30.**

{We should add to this that there are two and only two visible sacraments or ordinances in the church. The church of Rome claims there are seven sacraments and throughout church history groups of sects or para-church organizations have arisen to claim the role of the church even while they fail to administer one or both of the sacraments. This is all important to the believer in seeking a church fellowship as baptism and communion are a command from the Lord. They are not optional.

c. The faithful exercise of discipline. This is quite essential for maintaining the purity of doctrine and for guarding the holiness of the sacraments. Churches that are lax in discipline are bound to discover sooner or later within their circle an eclipse of the light of the truth and an abuse of that which is holy. Hence a Church that would remain true to her ideal in the measure in which this is possible on earth, must be diligent and conscientious in the exercise of Christian discipline. The Word of God insists on proper discipline in the Church of Christ,

Matt. 18:18; I Cor. 5:1-5,13, 1Cor. 14:33,40; Rev. 2:14,15,20.

Two thousand years after the days of Christ and His apostles each Christian is to seek out that visible body of Christians (The Church) which best represents the true Church of Jesus Christ on earth.

You must weed out the false prophets and the spurious ministries. You are to discern between truth and error. **1John 4:1** That is your God given responsibility.

It is the responsibility of the church to honestly, clearly and carefully set out its doctrine and practice to establish its orthodoxy - the true nature as the true church of Jesus Christ.

The FPC has done this using a number of terms: Let me speak to 5 of them.

1. **BIBLICAL**

Holding to one source of authority - Sola Scriptura - That was one of the five solas of the Protestant Reformation. The Scriptures alone are our sole authority. See **Is. 8:20 Rev. 22:18,19.**

[1] a Church's Confession is its substandard, not equal with the Bible. What about the WCF? Yes this is the Confession of our church. It is our doctrinal textbook.

It is a subordinate standard. Note the Scripture proofs under each section. ****

It is a help to interpret the Scriptures. It is a basis of agreement in our worship and ministry. It is a voluntary subscription of those who minister and govern the church - ministers and elders

[2] Verbal Inspiration is applied to the Scriptures alone.

The Scriptures are our only source of authority and are binding on the conscience of the believer.

2. **FUNDAMENTAL**

Why would we use this term fundamental? It seems to be abused and even applied to radical Islam, or conservative Islam.

There is a history to this term in Modern day Christianity. In the early 1900s there arose many Protestant theologians who opposed the Bible and everything supernatural in Christianity. These Higher Critics attacked the Trinity, the deity of Christ, His virgin birth, His atoning death and literal resurrection.

4. **PRESBYTERIAN & REFORMED**

[1] Presbyterian - Method of church government. Representative government. Elders in every church. No minister, elder or deacon placed without the wishes of the local membership of the church.

[2] Reformed is a Method of Bible Interpretation It is called the covenant of grace.

God had one eternal plan to save his people by the covenant made with His Son.

- **It is a Trinitarian gospel** where all three Persons plan man's salvation **1Peter 1:2; Eph. 1:3 - 5 & 13**
- **It is a single gospel**- There is but one gospel , one church, one faith, one baptism offering one hope for all believers of the O.T. and N.T. Abraham was saved by the same gospel. **Gal. 3:8**
It sets out the unity of O.T. and N.T. The church did not start at Pentecost. It started in the Garden of Eden.
- **It is a sure gospel** - Whom God predestinated, He calls and He justifies and He glorifies (**Rom 8:29,30**).
God doesn't change his mind. God doesn't save men by part way salvation - He gives eternal life. God doesn't say, "I'll do so much, now you do the rest." He saves from alpha to Omega. He is the author and finisher of our faith.

5. **SEPARATIST**

[1] Separate from false religions - we don't partake in the sins of modernists or apostates who sell out the Bible. Not a penny donated to this church or denomination goes to ministry in any part of the world to support a false gospel.

[2] Separate from the world unto holy living

We have standards for personal godliness. What the Bible calls sin we expect every member in the church to call sin and flee from it.

The gospel is a spirit of repentance from the world. We call every member to live a holy life seeking to further purify the church by personal godliness.

This is not a kill joy religion. In Bible Christianity holiness is happiness and for the born again believer there can be no happiness without holiness. It is the command of God. **"Be ye holy for I am Holy." 1Peter 1:16**

It is a great tragedy when people want to call themselves Christians and want to join the church, but they don't want to give up the world, or be a witness against the world.

[3] Separate from false worship

Today the church is under attack in subtle ways – by changing worship styles. Such adverse changes will destroy the values and principles of worship. It is worship without reference to the holiness of God. It fails to produce reverence and brings the methods of carnal men - even Hollywood stars and rock stars into worship. Being carnal people fall into the habits of their manner of dress and behaviour which rob them of the knowledge of God.

In our denomination we strive for holy standards in each of our member congregations. So that if you were to attend any one of our churches in Canada, U.S, or in other parts of the world you would find that the same stand is taken against:

- a. False religion
- b. Unholy living
- c. False worship

This is only achievable by remaining separatists. This is not done to be negative. It is done to maintain the purity and power of the gospel. Romans 1:1

In the FPC we are convinced that we are building on a sure foundation – the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We make every effort to maintain purity of doctrine and practice in the worship of our Lord and the ministry of the gospel.