

## LESSON 3 – WHAT IS OAKLAND INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP (OIF)?

### THE PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON

There are many good churches in the area. Why should someone become a member of OIF? In this lesson we will learn about the uniqueness of OIF and how you can become an active participant in our church family.

### OUR HISTORY

OIF was founded in 2004 by the leaders of Pittsburgh Chinese Church Oakland (PCCO) with the vision of forming a church community that is made up of people from all nations in the university areas. OIF is the international/English-based congregation of the PCCO Chinese congregation. In addition to the church facility and finances, we share various ministries and programs together (Children and youth ministries, Missions, combined worship service 4x/year, baptisms, etc.)

### OUR MISSION

(PURPOSE STATEMENT: WHY WE EXIST? WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO HERE?)

Oakland International Fellowship exists to gather, nurture, and inspire **people from all nations** in the university areas of Pittsburgh to **love God<sup>1</sup>, love one another<sup>2</sup>, and love all peoples<sup>3</sup>.**

#### <sup>1</sup>MATTHEW 22:37-39 (LOVING GOD)

And He said to him, "**YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.** This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, **YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.**"

#### <sup>2</sup>JOHN 13:34-35 (LOVING ONE ANOTHER)

A new commandment I give to you, that **you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.** By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

#### <sup>3</sup>MATTHEW 28:18-20 (LOVING ALL PEOPLES)

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,** baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

### OUR VISION

(DIRECTIONAL STATEMENT: WHERE ARE WE GOING? WHAT DO WE WANT TO LOOK LIKE?)

We want to see OIF become a place where **people from all nations** come together to grow **deeper in our faith, stronger as a community,** and make a **greater impact for Christ** from the university areas of Pittsburgh to the nations.

**All Nations:** We want to see OIF's membership and leadership reflect God's desire for people from every tongue, tribe and nation to worship Him together.

**Deeper Faith (from Loving God):** We want to see OIF members seek God with a passion in our lives- enjoy the loving kindness of our God; worshipping His majesty and holiness; learning, trusting and obeying His Word, and crying out to Him for our needs and for our broken world.

**Stronger Community (from Loving One Another):** We want to see OIF members gather in small groups, seeking direction from the Bible together, supporting one another in their struggles and burdens, and sharing with each other about the Holy Spirit's conviction and comfort.

**Greater Impact (From Loving All Peoples):** We want to see OIF members join God in bringing freedom to

the oppressed, mercy to those in need, and light to those in darkness. We want to see us going out locally and globally together to make new friends from all nations, showing them how the gospel of Jesus is transforming our lives, and helping them to experience the same.

*Which part of the mission and vision statements interests you the most? Why?*

## OUR CORE VALUES

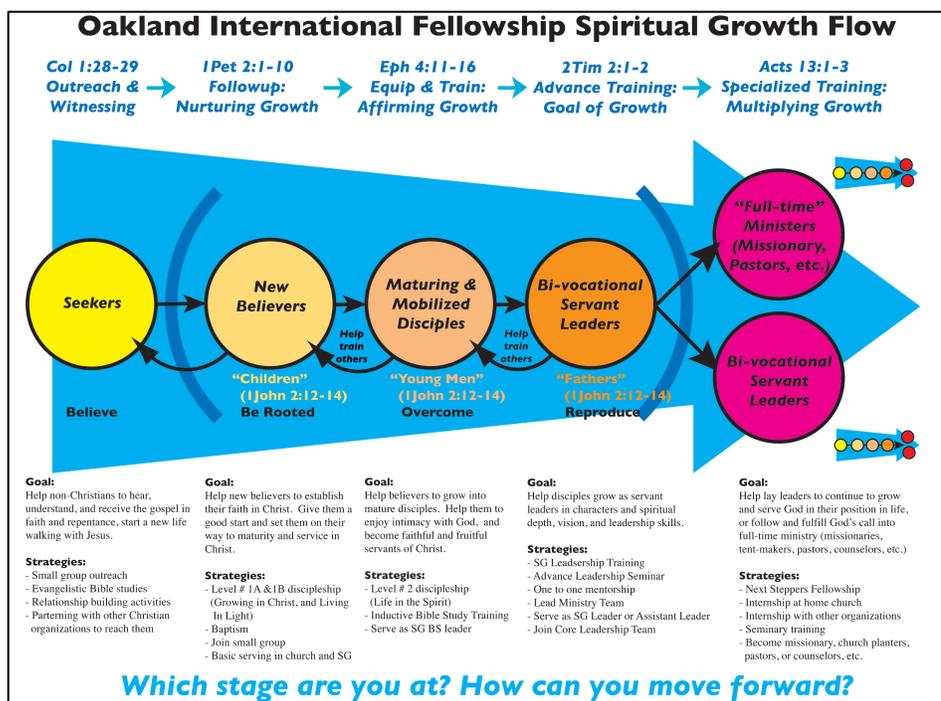
(VALUE STATEMENT: WHAT WE CARE ABOUT THE MOST AS WE LIVE OUT OUR MISSION AND FULFILL OUR VISION?)

### 1. GOSPEL TRANSFORMATION (2COR 5:14-17, 21; 2COR 3:17-18)

Everything OIF does must be driven by the Gospel of Jesus. And therefore this is the core value of all core values. The Apostle Paul says to the Corinthians that he has “decided to know nothing... except Jesus Christ and him crucified.” That is the gospel in a nutshell. God became a man to die for all men, because we are more sinful and broken than we are willing to ever admit, yet at the same time we are more loved by God than we dare to ever believe. Jesus did it all so that he could take on all our sins and we could take credit for all his righteousness before God’s judgment throne. This gospel makes life truly meaningful, worthwhile, and under God’s grace.

Only this gospel can transform us, nothing else! Our character transformation is driven and empowered by the gospel. Our interactions with others are driven by the gospel as well. Salvation through Jesus does not instantly turn us into perfect human beings. Our justification before God is instant. But our sanctification is progressive. Yet, progressive does not mean no change! The Spirit of God does renew our nature day by day as we respond to Him with in grateful faith (trust, depend, and obey). And that gradual renewal produces outward visible fruits.

As an expression of this core value, OIF aims to help every member to grow in the gospel transformation process in an **intentional pathway** (see chart). We hope that through participation in **personal discipleship relationships\*** and other programs, every member will continue to mature in Christ.



**\*Personal discipleship relationships** at OIF are intentional relationships that pairs believers (or groups of 3) together for the purpose of spiritual growth. It typically is a pairing of a more mature believer with another younger believer; but at times it can be peer to peer as well. The pair will spend time (usually once a week) to study God’s Word and usually a workbook (At OIF we have 3 levels of workbooks), share life, pray for each other, and encourage each other to grow as followers of Jesus in the power of His gospel.

### 2. BIBLICAL FOUNDATION (2TIM 3:15-17; 2:15)

The Bible is the Word of God- the unique, inerrant, authoritative guide for life. It must be the ultimate foundation to guide us in the decisions and directions of our lives. The Bible is also the primary “spiritual

food” that the Holy Spirit uses to grow us towards maturity. We at OIF strive to preach, teach, study, and apply God’s Word with passion and integrity.

### **3. COMMITTED RELATIONSHIPS (GAL. 6:2)**

The most obvious fruits of our spiritual growth appear in our relationships. We ought to be committed to each other because we are brothers and sisters in Christ. We are fellow sinners redeemed by the same Redeemer. Because of this identity, we are called to bear each other’s burdens. In a broader sense, this means that we rejoice with each other, and we mourn with each other. We should bear each other’s burdens to the point that we actually feel some of the weight of the burden – emotional, physical, or financial – that our brothers or sisters are carrying. If we can’t feel it, then we are not really sharing their burdens at all!

Because of this core value at OIF, participation in the **small group** and **personal discipleship relationship** are essential to being a healthy member of OIF. Small Groups are communities where we study and apply biblical truths together; where we care, support, and encourage each other and share our lives with each other. **Most SGs meets @ church on Fridays 7:30pm.**

### **4. EVERY MEMBER PARTICIPATION (EPH. 4:11-16, 1COR. 12:1-7)**

God has designed the church like a body where **every member** plays a vital role in service to God. To each grace has been apportioned by Christ. We must therefore use these gifts for the glory of God’s kingdom. The gifts are given to us so that we can serve one another and encourage each other’s faith, thus building up God’s church. Using our God-given gifts to serve is also a crucial element for us to mature in Christ. (Also see membership covenant)

### **5. THE GREAT COMMISSION (MATT. 5:13-16; 28:18-20)**

We have been commanded by God to share the gospel with others. Proclaiming the gospel to those who don’t know the gospel is the natural result of us truly understanding and experiencing the gospel. Besides sharing the gospel with our mouths, we are called to share and demonstrate the gospel with our lives. We are called to serve and help those in need and display the grace of God in our attitudes and actions. We are also called to participate in God’s gospel work around the world by praying, giving, and going.

### **6. DIVERSITY (GEN. 12:1-3; MATT. 28:19; REV. 5:9-10)**

Related to the core value above, the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant fulfilled in the Gospel, the Great Commission, and the multi-ethnic vision in the book of Revelation make clear that the good news of salvation and transformation is to be brought to peoples of every culture and nationality. OIF wants to intentionally reflect God’s heart for the nations to come together to worship Him and love one another. We are located in the university area where people from the nations have come here to study. Being in the university area, we are in a mission field very much in need for the gospel. This is especially true for the international students who come here to study. An education in the US holds many promises. But none of them can compare to the gospel of God’s amazing grace. We are here to actively introduce the people from all nations to the matchless grace of Jesus Christ. As the name of our congregation suggests, our desire is to make this church a place for international students and professionals to come both to worship and grow together (if they are already Christians) and to receive the gospel salvation of God’s amazing grace (if they are not Christians) and become a vital part of a multi-ethnic, multi-national family of God.

Because we and the Chinese congregation are one church, we support one another while having our different focus. The Chinese-speaking congregation focuses on reaching out to the Mandarin-speaking internationals. OIF focuses on other less reached internationals such as the Indian internationals, as well as leveraging our majority of Asian Americans, while welcoming all other ethnicities with the Gospel. We expect all members to embrace and be involved in this vision.

*Which one(s) of our core values excites you the most? Why?*

## OUR DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

1. We believe that the **BIBLE** is the inspired Word of God, the revelation of His will for the salvation of men, and the Divine and Final Authority for all Christian faith and life.
2. We believe in one **GOD** who is the Creator and Supreme Ruler of the Universe, the heavens, the earth, and all the things therein; and who eternally exists in three persons: **Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit**.
3. We believe that **MALE** and **FEMALE** were created in the image and likeness of God, but in Adam all have fallen into sin, and as sinners are in need of God's salvation.
4. We believe in Salvation and Justification is by grace through faith in **JESUS CHRIST** alone. All who turn from their sins and receive Him by faith as Lord and Savior are justified wholly on the ground of His shed blood and are born anew of the **HOLY SPIRIT** into the family of God, brought into the Kingdom of His Son, and are being transformed into the image of Jesus Christ.
5. We believe that the **CHURCH** is one body, of which Jesus Christ is the Head, and is composed of all who are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. The duty of the Church is to proclaim through word and deeds, the Gospel of Salvation to the World, and to nurture the spiritual growth of members through prayer, teaching, fellowship, and worship.
6. We believe that **Jesus will return, bodily and visibly**, to judge all mankind and to receive His people to Himself.

## OUR LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

# OIF LEADERSHIP

