

# THE 30 CORE COMPETENCIES OF A FOLLOWER OF CHRIST

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians: “My little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!” (Gal. 4:19). Paul’s words describe the primary mission of the church - to see people establish a personal relationship with Jesus Christ that grows and develops to where Christ is seen in them. The **30 Core Competencies** proposes a three-fold responsibility in the task of pursuing spiritual growth in Christ-likeness:

- **ABIDE**
- **BELIEVE**
- **CONFORM**

What does a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ look like? The Core Competencies are a growth profile built upon Jesus’ commandments to love God as our first priority and love our neighbors as ourselves (Matt. 22:37-40). What are the core characteristics and traits of someone who is increasingly growing in his or her love for God and others? These thirty are not exhaustive but are core characteristics we see over and over again in the Bible. Of the thirty, six (6) make up the first set of competencies called abiding **habits** (practices that help us stay connected to Jesus and the church). The second set of competencies is comprised of twelve (12) foundational **beliefs** (key biblical beliefs or doctrines that help us think and act like Jesus). The final set of competencies consists of twelve (12) Christ-like **virtues** to which we seek to conform (so we can be like Jesus).

Finally, this profile seeks to help you compare yourself to the model Christ set forth while He lived on the earth based on His Word. It will help you discover the areas where you are strongest, as well as the areas where you need to grow in your life. Our goal as Christians is to identify and target specific areas we need to develop in our spiritual journey. The primary goal, however, is not to measure your spiritual maturity, as much as it is to move you toward spiritual maturity. May God richly bless you as you seek to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

*“And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek him, he will be found by you.  
(1 Chron. 28:9)*

## ABIDE: 6 ABIDING HABITS

Jesus said, “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). To abide simply means to stay connected. It is through our personal connection to Jesus that Christians receive every benefit of their salvation. Because we are easily tempted and distracted, we quickly learn that staying connected to other Christians can greatly aid us in staying connected to Jesus. Below are six (6) abiding habits for fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

### 1. Surrender to God and Obedience to His Word (John 8:31-32; cf. John 14:15)

I surrender to God and respond to His Word with faith, obedience, and personal worship.

*So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”*

### 2. Christ-Centered Reliance on the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16)

I rely on the work of the Holy Spirit each day in guiding me in what to do and empowering me to do it so that I may fix my eyes on Jesus in all things.

*But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.*

### 3. Practice the Spiritual Disciplines (Ephesians 6:18)

I focus on knowing, loving, and serving God through the disciplines of Bible study, prayer, Scripture memorization and meditation, confession of sin, fellowship, witnessing, and giving so that I may become more like Christ.

*With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.*

### 4. Engage in God-Exalting Worship (John 4:23-24; cf. Ps. 96, Rom. 12:1-2)

I engage in God-focused worship on a daily basis by celebrating and honoring who God is, what He has done, and promises to do through Jesus Christ. I live a daily lifestyle of worship that includes service, submission, sacrifice, and song.

*“But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”*

### 5. Grow and Serve in Community (Romans 12:3-8; cf. 1 Cor. 12-14; Eph. 4)

I pursue spiritual and relational growth in the context of a loving and encouraging small group of like-minded believers gathered to serve and build up one another according to their God-given spiritual gifts and to reproduce disciples.

*For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. (vv. 4-5)*

### 6. Manage Life Wisely and Accountably (Matthew 6:33; Luke 16:10-12)

I have developed personal life management skills and God-centered priorities knowing that I will stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

*“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”*

*He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you? And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?”*

## **BELIEVE: 12 FOUNDATIONAL BELIEFS**

Paul commanded Timothy to study the Word: Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15). This brings us to the virtue of faith: believing the Word of God, knowing the truth, and living it out in our daily lives. Titus 2:7 tells us that we must be pure in doctrine, believing (and teaching) only that which the Bible teaches. A genuine follower of Jesus Christ embraces, obeys, and practices Jesus' teaching. Below are twelve (12) foundational beliefs of fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

### **1. God's Glory** (1 Corinthians 10:31; cf. Col. 3:17; Rom. 8:29)

I believe that my purpose in life is to glorify God by desiring Him above all I know and displaying Christ-likeness in all I do.

*Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

### **2. Authority of the Bible** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

I believe that all the words in the Bible are God's words, and therefore to disbelieve or disobey any word in Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.

*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

### **3. Trinity** (2 Corinthians 13:14)

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God, existing eternally in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - yet remaining one God.

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.*

### **4. Personal God** (John 17:3)

I believe God is present and active in my life and I can know Him as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through a real and personal relationship.

*"This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."*

### **5. Humanity** (Ephesians 2:1-3)

I believe humans were created in the image of God, but through the Fall became sinful, guilty, and corrupt.

*And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.*

### **6. Salvation by Grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe I have been reborn into a right relationship with God by His grace through faith - faith demonstrated through my response to the gospel call, in which I sincerely repented of my sins and placed my complete trust in Christ's death and resurrection for my sins for salvation. I am justified, being sanctified, and will be glorified.

*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

### **7. Identity in Christ** (Galatians 2:20; cf. Rom. 6)

I believe God has declared me righteous by faith and has placed me in a spiritual union with Jesus Christ so that I am now once and forever a child of God who endeavors to live a holy life by His power.

*"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."*

## **8. Church** (Ephesians 4:11-13, 15-16; cf. 1 Pet. 2)

I believe the church is to be a community of true believers whose purpose is to worship God, nurture and equip believers, and declare the gospel to the world through ministries of outreach, love, and mercy.

*And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ...but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.*

## **9. Trials and Suffering** (James 1:2-5)

I believe God exposes me to strong attacks from the world, the flesh, and the devil, so that my trust in His power might grow stronger and my life and character more holy.

*Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

## **10. Eternity** (John 14:2-3; cf. Acts 10:42-43)

I believe a person lives forever in heaven or hell and that Jesus will return to judge the earth and establish His eternal kingdom.

*In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.*

## **11. Evangelism and Missions** (Matthew 28:18-20)

I believe it is my duty and privilege as a follower of Jesus Christ to do my part in making disciples of all people and nations.

*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."*

## **12. Stewardship** (1 Timothy 6:17-19)

I believe that all my time, talents, and treasures come from God and must be given generously for His priorities and eternal purposes.

*Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.*

## CONFORM: 12 CHRIST-LIKE VIRTUES

“By this we may be sure that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked” (1 John 2:5-6). Our beliefs and practices are meaningless unless they are used by God to transform us to the image of Jesus Christ. Life change is an impossible task without God working in our lives. Thankfully, the Bible presents life transformation as a guaranteed promise from God to Christians. Below are twelve (12) Christ-like virtues to which fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ seek to conform by relying on the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.” (Luke 6:40)

### 1. Love (Matthew 22:37-40)

I possess a supreme love for God, who is deserving, and a sincere, sacrificial love for my fellow man and enemy, who is undeserving.

*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.’ On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”*

### 2. Holiness (2 Corinthians 7:1)

I am growing more and more free from sin and like Christ in my motives, attitudes, words, and actions as I obey the Bible. Seeking intimacy with God is my passion.

*Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

### 3. Joy (John 15:11)

I experience a genuine and deep delight in life that runs deeper than circumstantial pain or pleasure because it’s a gift from God and is based on my hope of being with Him forever in heaven.

*“These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.”*

### 4. Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety and know wholeness because things are right between God and me, and between others and me.

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

### 5. Patience (Galatians 5:22-23)

I endure difficult circumstances without retaliation and bear with difficult people by faith in God, trusting in His providence and sovereign rule.

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

### 6. Kindness / Goodness (Colossians 3:12-14)

I desire to show God’s grace in my life by being gracious to others.

*So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.*

### **7. Gentleness (Ephesians 4:1-3)**

I am thoughtful, considerate, selfless, and calm in dealing with others.

*Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

### **8. Faithfulness (Matthew 25:20-21)**

I trust in God and am faithful to fulfill His will for my life and to keep the commitments I make to others in light of Christ's return.

*"The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'"*

### **9. Self-Control (Romans 8:12-13)**

I have found personal restraint through the power of the Holy Spirit and am no longer controlled by my sinful and selfish desires.

*So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh --for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

### **10. Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)**

I attribute any perceived good in me to the grace of God and put the interests and needs of others above my own.

*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*

### **11. Hope (Lamentations 3:22-24)**

My confidence is in the living God and His Word so that I can persevere through any difficulty and face death with the assurance that my life is secure in Christ.

*The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him."*

### **12. Thankfulness / Contentment (Philippians 4:11-13, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)**

I am continually grateful for God's grace, knowing Jesus, my future in heaven, as well as God's goodness, love, blessings, and faithfulness. I have learned to be content with my life circumstances trusting God to provide as He sees fit.

*Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*

*Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*