

ApostolicPentecostal.Com Community Guidelines

ApostolicPentecostal.Com is an online community of Pentecostal pastors and leaders seeking to center their faith, life, and ministry on Jesus Christ. Our goals are to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, renew the church's spiritual life, engage our culture with the truth of the Christian faith, proclaim Jesus as Lord, and continue the Pentecostal revival.

If you have joined and participated in Christian Facebook Groups, you might have witnessed toxic and dysfunctional community environments undermining spiritual growth and the Christian witness to Jesus. The groups, even Apostolic Pentecostal groups, often showcase negativity regarding the Christian faith, its loss of influence, and its failure to be relevant to believers and non-believers in the 21st century. The primary purpose of the groups appears to be to engage in a never-ending debate about cherished church doctrines, past and present, and to chastise group members seeking answers to perplexing questions about the faith they possess.

ApostolicPentecostal.Com seeks to establish a different kind of community. Its primary purpose is not to imitate Facebook and create a freewheeling social network of Christians but to become a place that forms the faith of Apostolic Pentecostals, disciples them to Jesus as Lord, and prepares them for Christian life and witness in our Apostolic Age. ApostolicPentecostal.Com seeks to redeem a digital space. The digital space needs to repent, be baptized in Jesus' name, and be filled with his Spirit. In other words, the digital space we seek must be Apostolic Pentecostal!

Creating an Apostolic Pentecostal digital space requires learning new habits of communication and new ways of engaging in an online forum. Paul challenges the church at Ephesus to speak "the truth in love" so that the body of Christ "builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" (Ephesians 4:15,16). We need to accept Paul's

challenge and develop new ways of reading, interpreting, reacting to, and sharing posts in our forum. Old habits die hard, but I know we will be successful with prayer, Bible study, and working together as a community dedicated to the Apostolic Pentecostal faith.

Here are four guidelines for the ApostolicPentecostal.Com community to help us create an attractive and vibrant digital space with an effective witness to Jesus that empowers disciples for life and ministry.

1. **Discussions are purposeful** – their goal is to promote growth “in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18) and increase fellowship in the community.
 - a. Focus discussions on the goals of ApostolicPentecostal.Com.
 - b. Don't be afraid of new ideas and thought-provoking conversations. They will often guide you to understand better and appreciate your Apostolic Pentecostal faith.
 - c. Think and study before you respond to a discussion. Don't be hasty in your writing and posting. Take some time to reflect on how others might receive your post.
 - d. Don't seek to dominate a discussion with numerous posts. Allow others to speak. Engage in a dialogue that promotes mutual understanding. Do not try to win a debate!
 - e. Avoid belittling other members in ways that make them feel not welcome in the forum. Be patient as they just might be learning.
 - f. Understand that most forums are not the place for self-promotion. Promotions of ministries and sales of books and resources will be limited to the promotions forum.

2. **Discussions demonstrate charity** – they evidence respect for others with different perspectives, experiences, and biblical interpretations.
 - a. Seek to understand a member’s post before responding.
 - b. Express disagreements constructively, acknowledging areas of the agreement you may possess.
 - c. Make the tone of your posts positive. Do not use sarcasm, mockery, and condescending language that demeans members.
 - d. Avoid the use of broad generalizations and exaggerations that lack specificity.
 - e. Always assume that other members have the best intentions when they make a post.
 - f. Do not share any personal information from the community without a member’s permission.
 - g. Avoid gossip, rumors, and speculation in your discussions.

3. **Discussions affirm the Apostolic Pentecostal Faith** – they reflect an Apostolic Pentecostal experience, acceptance of the “Whole Gospel,” and a desire to learn from Holy Scripture.
 - a. Discussions should use Holy Scripture extensively to establish the truthfulness of statements.
 - b. Discussions questioning Apostolic Pentecostal doctrines must be framed in a manner that seeks clarification and understanding. They should not have evidence of malicious challenges or intentions.
 - c. Personal preferences should be subordinated to promoting the “Whole Gospel” and unity of Apostolic witness to Jesus.
 - d. Avoid disparaging comments about other Christians and non-apostolic denominations. Be like the Azusa Street Pentecostals, affirm the faith in

Jesus they possess and guide them to the better understanding Apostolics have.

- e. Make a great effort to post true and accurate information at all times.
Learn to perform research to understand the sources of your faith better.

4. **Discussions are Jesus-Centered** – the Apostolic Pentecostal Faith is about Jesus. Be Pentecostal! Interpret Holy Scripture through a Jesus lens. Read the Bible as the story of Jesus. Focus your discussions on Acts 29, the continuing ministry of Jesus in the church.

- a. Avoid lengthy debates on secondary issues, i.e, the great tribulation, the Millenium.
- b. Share what Jesus is doing in your life and your faith community..
- c. Make requests in the prayer forum.
- d. Participate in the Bible Forum. Read the Psalm of the day and commit to learning the great themes of the Bible with our Bible reading program. Let everyone know how Jesus is speaking to you through Holy Scripture.
- e. Share your favorite Gospel songs
- f. Be devoted to prayer, worship, and the reading of Holy Scripture.
- g. Do not contribute to negative discussions and report them to a moderator or the administrator.

5. Correction and guidance – when guidelines are not followed.

- a. Private contact and discussion by email.
- b. Removal of discussion post(s)/thread(s).
- c. Suspension of membership.
- d. Revocation of membership.

- e. Members should contact a moderator or the administrator ASAP when they perceive a discussion is inappropriate.