

The Churches of Christ Bible Bowl of North East Texas - Guidelines

(Originated at initial planning meeting in September, 2007)

I. Name – “The Churches of Christ Bible Bowl of North East Texas” (BBNET)

- A. It is desired that we adopt a name for our Bible study program that is both descriptive of its purpose and inclusive of the congregations involved, hence the name, “The Churches of Christ Bible Bowl of North East Texas.”
 - 1. However, since the name is long, we will also adopt the easy to remember acronym of “BBNET” (pronounced BB-NET) to provide a shorter, more convenient, and more memorable name to use in announcements and advertising concerning our Bible study program.
 - 2. “The Churches of Christ Bible Bowl of North East Texas” (BBNET), as the name suggests, is open to young people from all faithful congregations of the Lord's church, in the North East Texas and surrounding region (See Article IV for additional eligibility rules).

II. Oversight

- A. This Bible Bowl was initiated through the efforts of the brethren at the North Jefferson church of Christ, in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, in 2007, and will continue under the oversight of the North Jefferson congregation's eldership, until such time as they relinquish their oversight to another participating congregation's eldership.
- B. Planning and operation of the Bible Bowl each year will rest with the North Jefferson elders, as long as their oversight continues.
 - 1. The North Jefferson elders through their representative/s will seek the input of elders/deacons/preachers/youth workers/ & members from other congregations, who are actively involved in the Bible Bowl program, concerning all phases of planning and operation of the competitions.
 - 2. Planning - This will include selection of the Biblical text to be studied, selection of a Test-Preparer, a Master Of Ceremonies, and a Statistician, scheduling of host congregations for the competitions, selection and purchase of awards, advertising to promote the participation of all North/East Texas area congregations, and suggestions for amendments to these guidelines, to keep them up to date.
 - 3. Operation - The North Jefferson elders through their representative/s will work closely with the host congregations, offering whatever assistance is necessary, in order to promote the smooth operation of the monthly competitions.

III. Purposes And Goals

- A. To promote and facilitate Bible study in order to increase the Bible knowledge of the participants:
 - 1. By encouraging regular use and study of the Scriptures,
 - 2. By introducing helpful methods and habits of personal Bible study, and
 - 3. By encouraging the memorization of Scripture, and of important Bible facts.
- B. To encourage a close personal relationship with Christ, in order to gain eternal salvation:
 - 1. By encouraging obedience to the Gospel,
 - 2. By encouraging faithfulness to the Lord and His church, as the number one priority in life, and
 - 3. By equipping the participants for faithful service in the Lord's kingdom.
- C. To provide occasions for inter-congregational fellowship, in order to promote unity among the body of Christ in the North East Texas area:
 - 1. By helping our young people to get to know their Christian peers, and
 - 2. By promoting an atmosphere of love and cooperation among participating congregations.

IV. Participation And Eligibility

- A. Participation in the Bible Bowl is open to all faithful congregations of the church of Christ, with the approval of the North Jefferson elders.
- B. Eligibility rules:
 - 1. All participants must be school age young people, who are currently enrolled in grades 1 – 12, of a public, private, or home school.

2. No one who has completed the 12th grade can participate as a team member.
3. Participants do not have to be members of the congregation in order to participate (friends of your young people are welcome to participate).
4. Participants should wear clothing suitable for a Christian - modest clothing. Shirts with sleeves, nothing low cut, and pants with legs that come no higher than the knees (this applies to both boys and girls). Girls may also wear modest dresses. Please do not wear clothing with unchristian phrases or wording.

V. Nature Of The Monthly Competitions

A. The format:

1. The Bible Bowl will be conducted once each month for seven or eight months (October - April/May):
 - a. The competitions will be conducted generally on the 2nd Monday night of each month, from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m., unless by previous announcement the day is changed due to conflicts, holidays, or inclement weather.
 - b. The final competition for each year will be conducted in April, or May, either on the 2nd Monday night of the month, or on a Saturday if agreed upon by the participating congregations.
 - d. The competitions will all be held at the centrally located North Jefferson church of Christ building, however a different congregation will serve as the host congregation for the Bible Bowl competition each month.
2. Each congregation will field one team to represent their congregation at the monthly competitions.
3. Each team will be given 20 minutes to take a written test over the assigned Biblical text:
 - a. The test will consist of approximately 50 questions, and 5 tie-breaker questions, and will incorporate a variety of question types, such as: matching, multiple choice, short answer, true & false, fill in the blank, who said it, notable "memory verse" quotations, etc.
 - (1) The questions on the main body of the test will be "objective" in nature (covering only the facts and information contained in the actual New King James Version text).
 - (2) The tie-breaker questions, which will only be used to break a tie between two or more teams with the same score on the main body of the test, will consist of the most difficult questions, which may occasionally make use of questions which are "subjective" in nature (questions which require the application of logic or reasoning to determine the correct answer).
 - b. During the test time, the team may discuss the questions and decide on the correct answers in any way they choose, so long as reasonable order is maintained.
 - c. During the test time, the only resource for answering the questions will be the team's collective memory - no Bibles, study sheets, or notes are to be used in the completion of the test.
4. The tests will be graded and ranked according to score, and awards will be given for the top eight places (Note: if more than eight congregations participate, consideration will be given to awarding additional awards if such can be secured).

B. The teams:

1. All participants from each individual congregation will combine themselves together to form one Bible Bowl team representing that congregation:
 - a. There are no upper or lower limits to the number of participants on each team.
 - b. The team will be as large or small as the number of your participants.
 - c. All participants must meet the eligibility requirements stated in Article IV.
2. Each team will select a captain to represent them at the monthly competitions:
 - a. **Considering the Lord's teaching on male leadership of the church, it is strongly recommended that a young man be selected to be the captain, if at all possible.**
 - b. The captain will pick up the test and pencils for his team at the opening assembly.
 - c. The captain (or a reader chosen by the team) will be responsible for reading the test to his team, directing the team's discussion of each question, and recording the team's answers on the test.
 - (1) After the starting bell rings, the captain may begin reading the questions to his team, and directing the discussion of the correct answers.
 - (2) When the team is agreed on the correct answer, the captain should record the team's answer in the appropriate blank.
 - (a) The captain should be very careful to write legibly, and to place the correct answers in the correct spaces provided, or the answers will be counted wrong.
 - (b) Incorrect spelling will not count off, so long as the grader can tell what is meant.
 - (c) The team and captain should be very careful to word their answers correctly, using the exact and appropriate New King James Version terminology (See grading guidelines, Article VI., Section P).

- d. At the last bell, the captain will turn in the test & pencils to the monitor and the team will return to the assembly.
- e. The captain will be responsible for helping to maintain order and discipline of his team during the test.
- f. The captain will receive any awards for his team at the closing assembly.

C. The host congregation:

1. The host congregation/s will be responsible for hosting the monthly competition at the North Jefferson church building (chosen because of its central location to the participating congregations) - smaller congregations are welcome to combine together to serve as joint hosts of one of the monthly competitions.
2. The host congregation's responsibilities include:
 - a. Plan a short devotional for the opening assembly, to consist of one or two songs, a Scripture reading, and a prayer (preferably led by some of the young men if possible) (no female leadership allowed).
 - b. Plan a 20-minute spiritual program for the edification of the non-participants (parents and chaperones), who have accompanied the team members to the monthly competition:
 - (1) Remember the purpose of this time is to bring **sound Biblical edification** for those assembled, and to offer a time of reverent worship unto the Lord.
 - (2) This can consist of a guest speaker (**sound in the faith**), congregational singing, Bible reading, or prayer service (**please, no singing groups, drama or entertainment groups, and absolutely no women speakers or leaders**).
 - (3) Guests speakers must be men who are familiar to the hosting congregations and known for being sound in the faith.
 - (4) This first program will be conducted during the time the teams are taking the test. The message should correspond well with the Bible Bowl theme and the chapters over which the students are being tested.
 - c. Plan another 20 - 30 minute spiritual program for the edification of the entire assembly, to be conducted while the tests are being graded and scored (see guidelines b. (1) & (2) above).
 - g. Prepare refreshments to be served after the closing awards assembly.
3. Sample schedule:

7:00 - 7:05	Welcome and opening devotional
7:05 - 7:10	Announcements and classroom assignments
7:10 - 7:30	Participants take the test, while non-participants receive edification in preaching
7:30 - 7:55	Monitors will grade the test, while the entire assembly is edified
7:55 - 8:00	Presentation of awards and closing announcements
8:00 - 8:30	Refreshments and fellowship (congregations can leave as soon as they need to do so)

VI. Operational Rules For the Monthly Bible Bowl Competitions

- A. The North Jefferson elders, with input from the participants, will select a section of Scripture to be studied for the season:
 1. The text for study will consist of an entire book in the Bible, a combination of books, or a section out of one of the longer books, from either Old or New Testaments.
 2. Consideration will be given to select a reasonable amount of Scripture text to be covered in each month's competition, but probably not to exceed four chapters a month.
- B. The Bible Bowl will use the **New King James Version (NKJV)** of the Bible, as the standard for all tests:
 1. All questions, quotations, and answers will be taken from the NKJV translation.
 2. Answers taken from other translations, which are in conflict with the NKJV, will be considered as incorrect (See grading guidelines, Article VI., Section F, 1, e).
 3. It is strongly suggested that all study for the Bible Bowl be done from the NKJV.
 4. There will be no official printed material or study guides used, other than the NKJV Bible.
 5. Congregational sponsors are free to prepare and use whatever study sheets, practice tests, or other study helps they desire, in order to aid your young people in preparing for the monthly tests, but all questions will come directly out of the text of the NKJV Bible.
- C. A Test-Preparer to be approved by the North Jefferson elders will be selected for each season's competition:
 1. The Test-Preparer should be:
 - a. A faithful Christian man, who is knowledgeable in the Scriptures,
 - b. Someone who is capable of preparing a challenging, but fair and suitable test over the study text,
 - c. Someone from among the participating congregations, who is active in the Bible Bowl program, and
 - d. Someone who can be present at the monthly Bible Bowl competitions, in order to give instructions about the test, and to oversee the grading and scoring process.

2. The Test-Preparer's responsibilities are as follows:
 - a. Careful study of the text in preparation for making a comprehensive test over the study materials.
 - b. Preparation of a typewritten test over the study text, which should be:
 - (1) Comprehensive in nature, covering all of the major facts of the text,
 - (2) Fair and suitable for the age groups involved,
 - (3) Of reasonable length, so as to be easily completed during the 20 minutes allotted for each month's test (usually 50 questions, and 5 tie-breakers), and
 - (4) Consisting of various testing methods such as: matching, multiple choice, short answer, true & false, fill in the blank, who said it, quotations, etc.
 - c. Preparation of a test-grading key with the correct answers, including Scripture references, to be used by the monitors in grading the test.
 - d. Supervision of the test grading and scoring process.
 - e. Provide enough copies of the test, enough pencils, enough red grading pens, and enough grading keys for all participating congregations.

- D. A Master-of-Ceremonies, and a Statistician for the season's competition will be selected by the adult sponsors:
 1. The Master-of-Ceremonies:
 - a. He should be a faithful Christian man, who is active in the Bible Bowl program.
 - b. He should be capable of directing the public portions of the monthly competitions.
 - c. His responsibilities include:
 - (1) Organizing the monitors and room assignments prior to each competition,
 - (2) Calling the monthly competitions to order,
 - (3) Introducing the devotional leaders,
 - (4) Making the room assignments,
 - (5) Presiding over the awards ceremonies, and
 - (6) Making the closing announcements about the next month's competition.
 2. The Statistician:
 - a. He should be a faithful Christian man, who is active in the Bible Bowl program.
 - b. He should be capable of keeping an accurate statistical record of the test results and team standings of the monthly competitions.
 - c. His responsibilities include:
 - (1) Recording the monthly test scores and point totals for each team,
 - (2) Ranking the teams according to cumulative point scores,
 - (3) Providing a comprehensive monthly report of each team's test scores, cumulative point totals, and year-to-date ranking,
 - (4) Counting total attendance at each competition and keeping accurate attendance records, and
 - (5) Compiling a complete statistical report at the end of the season, to help plan the following year.

- E. Monitors:
 1. Each participating congregation will provide an adult male from their congregation to serve as a congregational representative, a room monitor, and a test grader.
 - a. He should be a faithful Christian man, who is active in the Bible Bowl program.
 - b. If at all possible, he should be knowledgeable of the Scriptural text for the current test, and familiar with the Bible Bowl procedures and operational rules.
 - c. He should be capable of maintaining discipline in a setting where he will be monitoring the test for another congregation's team.
 - d. He should be capable of grading and scoring the test, and participating in any discussions of challenged questions or answers.
 - e. He should be capable of reviewing his team's graded test, and representing their interests before the final recording of the scores and rankings.
 2. The monitor's responsibilities include:
 - a. Upon arrival at the monthly competitions, he will sign-in for his team at the registration table, giving his name as monitor, the name of his congregation, and the number of participants from his congregation,
 - b. When the room assignments are made, the monitor will go with a team, other than his own, to the assigned room to monitor the test taking process,
 - c. He will maintain discipline and an orderly atmosphere during the entire test time:
 - (1) He should encourage and enforce quietness, so as not to disturb other teams, so that all team members can hear the captain read the questions, and so that the captain can hear their answers.

- (2) If a participant is unruly and will not behave, the monitor will have the authority to dismiss the unruly participant from the test room.
 - (3) If the whole team is unruly and will not behave, the monitor may threaten to collect the test, and to send the whole team back to the assembly, without having completed the test.
 - (4) If order cannot be maintained, the test is to be collected at that point, and the team sent back to the general assembly.
 - d. He will make sure that the team does not begin the test until the starting bell has sounded, and he will collect the test immediately upon the sound of the final bell,
 - e. He will make sure that no Bibles, study sheets, or notes are used in the completion of the test, so as to insure a fair and honest competition,
 - f. As long as he does not give the team he is monitoring any unfair advantage over the other teams, he may use his own good judgement and discretion to assist the team in any of the following ways:
 - (1) To help in the comprehension of the test questions, he may explain something they do not understand, or help them with the pronunciation of difficult words,
 - (2) To keep the test moving, if they are spending too much time on a difficult question, he may suggest they skip the question and come back to it later, and
 - (3) He may recommend a review of the test if they finish early.
 - g. Upon the completion of the test, he will collect it and the pencils, and go to the grading room to grade and score the test for the team he has monitored,
 - h. During the grading process, he may challenge any questions or answers that he thinks are unfair, poorly worded, or incorrect (See grading guidelines, Article VI., Section F, 1, f),
 - i. After the graded tests have been returned to the appropriate monitors, he will review his own congregation's test, to check for any grading or scoring errors,
 - j. He will make sure his team's score and rank is correctly recorded by the Statistician,
 - k. He will return with his team's test to the auditorium, but will keep the results in confidence until after the award ceremony.
3. If at all possible, it would greatly facilitate the test monitoring process, as well as help to speed up the grading process, if each congregation would select the same monitor to represent their congregation each month.

F. Grading, Scoring, And Awards Guidelines:

1. The grading and scoring process:
 - a. The Test-Preparer will oversee and direct the grading process,
 - b. The Test-Preparer will pass out, to all the monitors, a grading key, which contains the correct answers and Scripture references,
 - c. Each monitor will grade the test for the congregation he monitored,
 - d. As the Test-Preparer reviews each question and gives the correct answer, the monitors will grade the test by marking with a check mark or "X" only the incorrect answers,
 - e. Correct answer guidelines:
 - (1) To always be counted as correct, the answer should employ the exact and appropriate terminology of the NKJV text (Incorrect spelling will not be counted as incorrect, as long as the grader can tell what is meant),
 - (2) Answers which employ synonyms to the exact NKJV terminology, may be counted as correct, depending on the following:
 - (a) If the Test-Preparer and monitors agree that the answer accurately represents the correct NKJV response, it will be counted as correct (See section VI., F., 1., f. below, for guidelines on how this will be determined),
 - (b) This guideline will apply to all sections of the test except the "Scripture Quotations" and "Tie-Breakers" sections of the test,
 - (3) The answers for the "Scripture Quotations" section of each test, will always have to employ the exact NKJV terminology, in order to be counted as correct (This section will quote the notable memory verses of the text, leaving out some of the more notable words, which must be supplied exactly to be counted correct),
 - (4) The answers for the "Tie-Breakers" section of each test will always have to employ the exact NKJV terminology, in order to be counted as correct (This will make the "Tie-Breakers" section more challenging, which will cause it to be more effective in breaking a tie between teams of equal scholarship).
 - f. The Test-Preparer will review one section of questions at a time, pausing between sections to call for any discussion of the questions and answers:
 - (1) If there is an objection about any poorly worded questions, or any incorrect answers on the Test-

- Preparer's grading key, or if there is a question about an alternate answer which could be counted as correct, the monitors should make it known at this time,
- (2) After discussing the objection, hopefully the monitors and the Test-Preparer can unanimously agree on a solution to the problem,
 - (3) If, after a reasonable discussion, there is still disagreement about a question or an answer, one of the following solutions will be employed:
 - (a) The Test-Preparer will concede a poor question and throw it out (the question will not be counted as a part of any team's test score),
 - (b) The Test-Preparer will concede an incorrect answer on his grading key, and the correct answer will be substituted,
 - (c) The Test-Preparer will agree to accept an alternate answer, which will be counted as correct,
 - (d) The Test-Preparer can call for a vote on the question or answer, which will be decided by a simple majority (51%) of the monitors,
 - (e) Any monitor can call for a vote on the question or answer, which will be decided by a simple majority (51%) of the monitors,
 - (f) The Test-Preparer will not vote in either case, except to break a tie.
- g. When the grading is complete, the monitors will compute the test scores:
 - (1) The number of answers on the main body of the test which were incorrect will be totaled, and that number will be recorded at the top of the first page of the test, in the appropriate space,
 - (2) The number of tie-breaker answers that were incorrect will be totaled separately, and that number will also be recorded at the top of the first page of the test, in the other appropriate space.
- h. When the scoring is completed, the tests will be given to the appropriate congregation's monitor for review, to check for any grading or scoring errors,
- i. If there are any errors on his congregation's test, the monitor should call this to the attention of the Test-Preparer at that time, before the scores are recorded (Note - Once the monitors leave the grading room, no further changes will be made to the scores or ranks of any team),
- j. After all corrections in grading and scoring have been completed, the Test-Preparer will call the role asking for each team's score, and the Statistician will record the scores and the number of points awarded by rank for that month's competition:
 - (1) If there is a tie in scores between two or more teams, the scores on the tie-breaker portion of the test will be employed to try to break the tie for the teams involved,
 - (2) If those teams happen to tie on the tie-breaker scores as well, then the tie will remain, and each team involved will be awarded that rank and the corresponding number of points.
2. Yearly Scoring Guidelines:
- a. The North/East Texas Bible Bowl will employ a 10 point scoring system:
 - (1) As long as there are 10 or less teams involved in the Bible Bowl, the scoring guidelines will employ this 10 point system,
 - (2) If participation grows in the future to include more than 10 congregations, then the point system will be adjusted upward appropriately, in increments of 5 points,
 - (3) If a change in the point system is required in the middle of the year, the new point system will be applied retroactively for the scores of all teams for the earlier competitions of the year,
 - b. The 10 point scoring system will be applied as follows:
 - (1) The First Place team (the team with the least number of incorrect answers) will be awarded 10 points for that month's competition,
 - (2) The Second Place team (the team with the second lowest number of incorrect answers) will be awarded 9 points for that month's competition,
 - (3) This point system will be then be applied on down the line through the last place team with consecutively lower numbers (3rd Place - 8 points, 4th Place - 7 points, 5th Place - 6 points, 6th Place - 5 points, etc.),
 - (4) If there is a tie in the scores on the main body of the test, between two or more teams, then the following guidelines will be applied:
 - (a) If possible, the tie will be broken by using the scores on the "Tie-Breaker" section of the test:
 - i) The team with the least number of incorrect answers on the "Tie-Breaker" section will be awarded that particular rank, and the corresponding number of points for that rank,
 - ii) The team/s with the lower score (the higher number of incorrect answers on the "Tie-Breaker" section) will be moved down to the next lower rank, and given the corresponding number of points for that rank.
 - (b) If the tie cannot be broken by using the scores on the "Tie-Breaker" section of the test (meaning the scores are also equal on the "Tie-Breaker" section), then the tie will remain,

and both or all of the teams involved will be awarded that rank, and the corresponding number of points for that rank,

- (c) Each place or rank and the corresponding number of points will be awarded consecutively, no matter how many teams tie in the higher ranks - for example:
 - i) Team A, scores (-0) on the main test, and is awarded 1st Place & 10 points,
 - ii) Team B, scores (-1) on the main test, and (-0) on the Tie-Breaker section, and is awarded 2nd Place & 9 points,
 - iii) Team C, scores (-1) on the main body of the test, tying team B, but scores (-2) on the Tie-Breaker section, and therefore is awarded 3rd Place & 8 points,
 - iv) Teams D, E, & F, all score (-2) on the main test, and all score (-1) on the Tie-Breaker section, - all three teams tie and are each awarded 4th Place & 7 points,
 - v) Team G, scores (-5) on the main test, and is awarded 5th Place & 6 points,
 - vi) Team H, scores (-6) on the main test, and is awarded 6th Place & 5 points,
 - vii) Etc.
3. Awards:
- a. At each monthly competition, a beautiful rosette award ribbon will be awarded to each team, which places in any of the first eight places (these ribbons can be taken back to that team's home congregation for permanent display).
 - b. At each monthly competition, smaller ribbons will be awarded to each individual team member from the top eight teams.
 - c. At the last competition in April/May, beautiful award plaques, or trophies, will be awarded to the First through Eighth place teams, as determined by the highest cumulative point totals for the year (these plaques can be taken back to that team's home congregation and permanently displayed).
 - e. The awards will be paid for by the North Jefferson church of Christ, Mount Pleasant, TX