

BAPTISM

1. There is only one baptism (Eph. 4:5).
2. Scriptural baptism is by immersion. The Greek word for "baptize" means immerse and never means sprinkle or pour. Scriptures about baptism also make immersion absolutely necessary in the ordinance. Baptism must be in water (Matt. 3:11,13; Mark 1:5). It requires much water (John 3:23; Mark 1:9), going down into the water (Acts 8:38), burial in water (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12), resurrection from the water (Col. 2:12), and coming up out of the water (Acts 8:39; Mark 1:10).
3. Most Baptists agree that four things are necessary for the administration of the ordinance of baptism.
 - a) There must be the proper subject, a saved person;
 - b) The proper authority, a church of the Lord Jesus Christ;
 - c) The proper purpose, to show salvation, not procure it;
 - d) And the proper mode, immersion. Any so-called baptism that does not meet these four conditions is not accepted as spiritual,
4. Baptism set forth the burial and resurrection of Christ and shows the individual's salvation by death to sin and resurrection to new life in Christ (Rom. 6:4,11). It is an illustration by figure or symbol of salvation (I Peter 3:21) or putting on a uniform showing that we are saved (Gal. 3:27), done in obedience to Christ's command (Matt. 28:19-20).
5. Baptism is not essential for salvation. There is not one passage in the Bible that teaches that baptism is necessary for salvation. Some passages have been wrongly interpreted to teach it, but there is not one that really teaches it. There is no passage which says "except ye baptized ye be lost." This is said of both repentance and faith (Luke 13:3, Mark 16:16). There are many passages which plainly teaches that salvation is without baptism (Matt. 28:19; Acts 10:43; 16:31; Eph. 2:8; Titus 3:5-7; John 1:12; 3:16,18, 36; 5:24; 6:35-40)
6. In the New Testament only believers were baptized, and believers are saved (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 16:31-33; 18:8; Mark 16:16; Matt. 28:19; John 3:16). Paul clearly teaches that baptism is not a part of the gospel message of salvation. In I Corinthians 4:15, we are told that Paul had begotten (led to be born again) the Corinthians through the Gospel, They have been saved without baptism, for Paul had not baptized them (1 Cor. 1 -.14-17), Paul also said here that he was sent to preach the gospel, not to baptize. This plainly teaches that baptism is not a part of the gospel, but Paul taught in Romans 1:16 that the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation".
7. Every Christian should be baptized, not in order to be saved but because he is saved (Acts 10:48; Matt. 3:15-17; 28:19; Mark 1:9).
8. There is not one passage in the New Testament that in any way teaches infant baptism either by word or example.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. General references (Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor, 11:17-29).
2. Consider these questions:
 - a) Whose Supper? It is the Lord's (1 Cor. 11:20).
 - b) What is its purpose? It is a memorial of Christ's death (1 Cor. 11:23-26).
 - c) To whom was it given? It was given to the church (Acts 20:7; cf. "general references" above).
 - d) Who is to partake? Church members are to partake (Acts 2:41-42; 20:7).
Christian denominations generally agree that only the baptized should take the Supper. Baptists do not accept anything as baptism except immersion on profession of faith. Most Southern Baptist; also believe that a Baptist church must administer this. Churches who do not Invite others to partake of the Supper are thus being consistent with convictions about baptism.
 - e) Is open communion possible? No! Paul's statement in I Corinthians 11:18-20 shows that open communion is impossible! "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they are approved maybe made manifest among you. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper." Suppose the four denominations are gathered together in "open communion". There are divisions and heresies there, for they certainly do not believe and teach the same doctrines. Paul says that such a group cannot eat the "Lord's Supper", for it will not be the "Lord's Supper". Open communion is impossible!
 - f) How often should the Lord's Supper be observed? There is no command as to this. The Scriptures simply say "as often as ye eat". Some churches observe it yearly, some quarterly, others more often.

BASIS OF COVENANT

The obligations of church membership outlined in the covenant are all scriptural, as may be seen from the following study.

- I. Salvation and Baptism (John 1:11-12; Matt. 28:19-20)
- II. Duties to the Church
 - A. To walk together in Christian love (1 Cor. 13:4-7; John 13:34-35)
 - B. To strive for the advancement of the church and promote its prosperity and spirituality (Phil. 1:27; 2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Cor. 7:1; 2 Peter 3: 11)
 - C. To sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrine (Heb. 10:25; Matt. 28:19; 1Cor.11:23-26; Jude3)
 - D. To give it pre-eminence in my life (Matt. 6:33)
 - E. To contribute cheerfully and regularly (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor 8:6-7)
 - F. To carry my membership when I move and be active in church work wherever I live (Acts 11:19-21; 18:24-28)
- III. Duties in Personal Christian Living
 - A. To maintain family and secret devotions (1 Thess. 5:17-18; Acts 17:1 1)
 - B. To religiously educate the children (2 Tim. 3:15; Deut. 6:4-7)
 - C. To seek the salvation of the lost (Acts 1:8; Matt. 4:19; Psalm 126:5-6; Prov., 11:30)
 - D. To walk circumspectly in the world, and to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment (Eph. 5:15; Phil. 2:14-15; 1 Peter 2:11-12)
 - E. To avoid gossip and excessive anger (Eph 4:31; 1 Peter 2:21; Col. 3:8; James 3:1-5)
 - F. To abstain from the sale and use of liquors (Eph. 5:29; Hab. 2:15; Prov. 20:1)
 - G. To be zealous in our efforts for Christ (Titus 2:12-14)
- IV. Duties to Fellow Members
 - A. To watch over one another in love (1 Peter 1 :22)
 - B. To pray for one another (James 5:16)
 - C. To aid in sickness and distress (Gal. 6:1-2; James 2:14-17, 5:14-15)
 - D. To cultivate sympathy and courtesy (1 Peter 3:8-12)
 - E. To be slow to take offense, always ready for reconciliation (Eph. 4:30-32)

QUALIFICATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS

- I. Workers Must Be Christian (Unless one is soundly converted, understands Christian; experience and doctrines, he will be powerless to help others.)

How to Become a Christian

- A. **Recognize** that you are a sinner and hopelessly lost without God (Rom. 3:12,23)
- B. **Believe** the good news that God sent Jesus Christ to take your place, die in your stead, and pay the full penalty for sin (Rom. 5:8), that He not only died, but was buried, was resurrected, and is alive forever to be your advocate before God (1 Cor. 15:15; 1 John 2:1-2); and that "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him (Heb. 7:25)
- C. **Confess** that you are a sinner, guilty before God hopelessly lost. As you pray, realize that "If thou shalt CONFESS WITH THE MOUTH, the Lord Jesus, and BELIEVE IN THINE HEART, that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou ' shalt be saved. For WITH THE HEART man believeth, unto righteousness; and WITH THE MOUTH confession is made unto salvation. For WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:9-10; 1 John 1:9)
- D. **Rely** in God's promises, not upon your own feelings of Theories (Romans 1:16)
- E. **Declare and realize** that you are saved by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ and the gospel, and that you are forgiven by God and cleaned from all sin because you have met the terms of God which are proper faith and confession of sin (John 3:16; Rom. 3:25; Eph. 2:8-9; 1 John 1:9)

- II. Christians Workers Must Live Right (How to get converted is the first part, but to live a Christian life is the last part. It is the important part.)

How to Live a Christian Life

- A. **Believe** the gospel and the entire Word of God at all times', and walk in the light as you receive it (1 John 1:7).
- B. **Walk** by faith in newness of life not by sight or by feelings, for "the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb. 10:23-29; Rom. 6:1-23; 8:1-3; Gal. 5:16-26).
- C. **Read** the Bible daily. Search it. Meditate in it day and night to feed and nurture the spiritual life (Psalm 1:1-3; 119:105; 2 Cor. 10:4-7; Eph. 6:10-18; 1 Pet. 2:2).
- D. **Pray** to God daily as your heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ, casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you (1 John 16:23-26; Phil. 4:5-6; 1 Pet. 5:7).
- E. **Claim** all the benefits of the promises of God and appropriate by faith all that He has promised (2 Cor., 2 Pet. 1:1-4).
- F. Keep your mind stayed upon God (Isaiah 26:3) and grow in grace in all virtues of the grace and of God (Phil. 4:8; 1 Pet. 2:4-10; 2 Pet. 1:4-11; Jude 20-24).
- G. **Recognize** at all times your own weaknesses as well as God's strength and keeping power (1 Cor. 10:12-13; 1 Pet 1:5). Faith is our victory that overcomes the world (1 John 5:1-4; James 1:13-15).

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- H. Confess the Lord Jesus Christ frequently and daily as your personal Savior (Matt. 10:32-3); Be busy at Soul-winning and keep occupied in all phases of the Christian work possible (Prov. 11:30; Dan. 12:3). I. Avoid temptations and shun evil companions (Psalms 1; Proverbs 1:10-16;! Timothy 4:6-16), Resist sin and Satan (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9), make friends with God's people and strive to be a blessing to them and all others (Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 13; Colossians 3:5-10).
- J. Attend church regularly (Hebrews 16:25). Co-operating with the pastor in all of his many labors (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 6:1; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:15-17).
- K. Seek God constantly for the full anointing of the Holy Spirit, the fruit and gifts of the Spirit, and yield to, and obey the Holy Spirit in all things (Luke 11:13; 24:49; John 7:37-39; 14:12-17; 15:26; 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; 2:38-39; 2:32; Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; Galatians 5:16-28; Ephesians 5:18; 6:10-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19).
- III. Christian Workers **MUST** Know the Bible
- IV. Christian Workers **MUST** Work in Love
God desires work from a loving and willing heart (John 3:16).
- V. Christian Workers must have complete belief in God's Word (Matthew 17:20)
- VI. Christian Workers Must Use Wisdom (Matthew 10:16; James 1:5-8)

CHURCH DISCIPLINE

In keeping with the Lord's commandment to "Get Our House in Order", we should remember that while visiting God's House we should:

*NEVER walk while scriptures are being read, during prayer or while speakers are addressing the congregation:

*NEVER allow children to disrupt any part of the Church service;

*NEVER bring food or candy into the Sanctuary;

*NEVER leave bulletins, paper or trash in the Sanctuary;

*NEVER chew gum in God's House;

*NEVER walk across the pulpit unless directed by the Pastor;

*NEVER dress distractingly or offensively;

*NEVER engage in conversation during sermons, scriptures or prayers;

*NEVER smoke in any part of the Church; and

*NEVER mistreat hymnals, benches, chairs or other Church property.

We take pride in the Lord's House and are always doing whatever we can to beautify and maintain the appearance of the building. Thus, while visiting God's house we should remember to:

*ALWAYS respect the House of Worship;

*ALWAYS greet our family, visitors, friends and neighbors with a smile and a Christian, hug;

*ALWAYS be on time and seated before service starts;

*ALWAYS bring our tithes and offerings into God's Storehouse;

*ALWAYS expect a MIRACLE;

*ALWAYS enter to worship and depart to serve; and

*ALWAYS PRAISE God in Spirit and Truth.

As part of the Body of Christ, we must, we must, we must take care of our Father's House. If we love our Lord, we will take care of HIS HOUSE!

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HOW TO MINISTER TO YOUR MINISTER

I. Will You Follow Him? "Obey those who rule over you..."

Our willingness to obey is to be:

(1) Conditioned by Scripture

"Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the Word of God to you... "(Hebrews 13:17)

(2) Limited by Conscience

"But Peter and the other apostles answered and said, 'We ought to obey God rather than men'." (Acts 5:29)

(3) Secured by Prayer

"Therefore I exhort... that prayers ... be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet, peaceable life..," (Timothy 2:1-2)

II. Will You Support Him? "... and be submissive,"

•Our willingness to submit will be seen in the way we:

(1) Exercise Deference

"The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord's anointed. To stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is anointed of the Lord." (Samuel 24:6). "They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them '... Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?' and when Moses heard it he fell in his face and spoke. "Tomorrow morning the Lord will who in His and Who is holy..." (Numbers 16:3-5)

(2) • Communicate Differences

III. Will You Appreciate Him?

"... for they watch for your souls, as those who must give account." IV.

IV. Will You Encourage Him?

"Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you."

(1) Give to Him

WHY DO WE TITHE?

1. It is a Direct Command from God, God Blesses the Tithe,
2. We tithe because the tithe is "Holy unto God" (Leviticus 27:30). The Bible is called the Holy Book, God's house is a holy place and God's Spirit is the Holy Spirit, now the same scriptural word which says "Holy Bible" and "Holy Spirit" also says "Holy Tither",
3. We tithe because God commands His people to do so (Deuteronomy 14:22).
4. It is an evidence of consecration.
5. We tithe because it makes us conscious of our partnership with God, the Lord furnishes the natural resources and even creates the intelligence and energy within us by which natural resources are transacted into wealth (Deuteronomy 8:17-18).
6. We tithe because if after getting nine-tenths (9/10) for ourselves, we should then not use any or all of God's one-tenth (1/10). That would be the same as an employee receiving his salary and then taking additional money from the part belonging to his employer. God calls that robbery (Malachi 3:18).
7. We tithe because God promises a curse upon those who rob Him refusing to tithe (Malachi 3:9), God is a good collector. If we refuse to pay the tithe voluntarily, we must involuntarily give it up one way or another (Joel 1:4).
8. We tithe because we believe in prayer and we stand in the need of God's help every day. but if we disobey God and rob Him refusing to tithe, we are in no position to ask him for anything.
9. We tithe because we need and want a blessing, which God promises to those who tithe (Malachi 3:10). He promises material, personal, natural and spiritual blessings to those who obey Him by tithing.
10. We tithe because the tithe is a debt which every man owes to God (2 Kings 4:7). God is the first creditor and debts to Him should be paid first (Exodus 23-19).

TEN REASONS WHY I TITHE

FIRST, I tithe because I love God for who He is. He is the Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, and Friend of mankind. I recognize Him as the Eternal One, one who created this universe and all there is within it, including man. Therefore, He is the only one qualified to know what is best for me.

SECOND, I tithe because of what God has done for me individually. He gave His only Son that I might have life. He saved my soul from destruction. He keeps me safe from many 'of the hazards of this life, and he has blessed me with more of this world's possessions than I deserve or probably have need of. He said: "Prove me" (Malachi 3:10), I have proven Him. I am convinced.

THIRD, I tithe because it is God's plan of finance for His kingdom. I do not question what is best or fairest for everyone. After many years in tithing, I am sure that God knew what He was talking about when He said "Tithe is holy unto the Lord" (Leviticus 27:30). It not only is holy unto Him, but it belongs wholly to Him.

FOURTH, I tithe because tithing brings me real joy. I doubt that the real joy of a Christian exists in life of a church member who does not tithe. The knowledge of doing God's will in this matter brings peace of mind and joy to one's heart.

FIFTH, I tithe because my church needs it. I am a church-minded Christian. Some people put very little emphasis upon church, but Christ puts lots of emphasis upon it. Therefore, I am church-minded because I am Christ-minded.

SIXTH, I tithe because lost souls need the gospel. The Bible says: "Bring ye all the tithes ... that there may be meat in mine house" (Malachi 3:10). How will people be reached and saved unless God's people bring the tithe into the storehouse.

SEVENTH, I tithe because I want God's blessings. Now that's selfish, isn't it? I know that God can and will bless me more with the nine-tenth (9/10) of my salary than I could possibly be blessed with the whole I left God out. He promised to pour us out a blessing such as there would not be room enough to receive it. This is not always and altogether in financial returns, but in blessings that only a dedicated Christian can realize.

EIGHTH, I tithe because I want to reap bountifully. "He which soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6). Also, we must remember that a man reaps what he sows (Galatians 6:7). Some folks have not sent up enough in a lifetime to pour the foundation to their heavenly home.

NINTH, I tithe for the safety of my treasure. "Lay not up yourselves treasures upon Earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal" (Matt. 8:19).

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FACE FUNDAMENTAL FACTS

It will help you now if you will face four fundamental facts and make a positive decision about each of them.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP DOES NOT SAVE.

You have been saved by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Good works cannot save. Culture cannot save. Baptism does not save. Your membership in the Church does not save. Christ has done that and there is none else sufficient to do it. You are to live a consistent life in the Church because Christ has saved you.

CHRISTIANS ARE CONTINUOUSLY TEMPTED.

You must not think you will not be tempted since you have become a Christian. Temptations will be increased and will be more severe. You have just enlisted in the Lord's Army and will now need the Lord's armor (Ephesians 6:11-18).

CHRISTIANS HAVE GREATER JOY.

No joy is taken from the person who becomes a Christian. In fact, to become a Christian places one in position to have real joy, the happiest possible life. Jesus said to believers, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:11), You can now be the happiest person in the world.

CHRISTIANS HAVE LARGER LIBERTY.

It does not take away one's liberty to become a Christian. In fact, the Christian has larger liberty. He is no longer a slave to needless restrictions and endless prohibitions. We read, "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17). The Christian is "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21).

WHAT WE MUST DO IN ORDER TO GROW

- **We must** develop a feeling, an attitude, and a desire, born of a conviction that God wants us to grow.
- **We must** plan for growth. It must be evident in our priorities, in our programs, in our activities, in the training we provide for leaders, in every aspect of our ministry.
- **We must** be willing to pay the price. This must involve Me, the Pastor, and you, the members. We all must be willing to invest time, money and abilities.
- **We must** be willing to risk change. Things do not remain the same when growth takes place. Growth is Dynamic; it brings changes, challenges and opportunities.
- **We must** have high membership standards, growing churches take the work of the Ministry seriously, and we must expect new members to do the same,
- **We must** offer new members' class.
- **We must** find unmet needs in the community and meet those needs.
- **We must** advertise: radio, newspaper, television, etc.
- « **We must** make sure our buildings and grounds invite people. We¹ must give positive answers to questions like: Can visitors find our building; do we have enough parking, does our property look like anyone cares?
- **We must** make sure out visitors are welcome.
- **We must** encourage others to invite friends, relatives, associates and neighbors.
- **We must** emphasize Christian fellowship. We must care about one another. Caring for persons means: sorrowing and rejoicing with them, calling to say you missed them when they were absent, praying for them and with them, helping their families with food, babysitting and house cleaning when they are in the hospital (and after they come home), having fellowship groups for all, inviting them to meetings and fellowship events, visiting them regularly at home.
- **We must** provide the best possible opportunities for Christian education on Sunday and at other times for all ages.
- **We must** see the church as one class of people, the whole people of God engaged in a common ministry.
- « **We must** be humble and unselfish.

MY PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO EXPERIENCE GROWTH

God, I believe you placed me in this community, and in this church to reach the lost and un-churched people of this community.

I believe you want to see every person reached with the gospel message and that you do not want any person to go to hell.

I believe you will empower me with you Holy Spirit to reach these people.

So, I commit myself to this task. I will do everything in my power to spread your good news. Lord, I commit this ministry and myself to you for your glory.

(Signature) _____

(Date) _____

