

# Discovering Church Membership

*presented by Dr. Tony Evans - Senior Pastor*

## 1. Salvation and Church Membership

Church membership is open to all who profess faith alone in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and the free gift of eternal life based on His substitutionary death on the cross and resurrection from the dead.

*Q. Based on your understanding of the following passages, list the spiritual state of mankind:*

- According to Romans 3:23, \_\_\_\_\_ are sinners.
- According to Romans 6:23, the wages of sin is \_\_\_\_\_.

*Q. Please describe the Bible's response to the ways that people think an individual can enter heaven.*

- Doing good deeds (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5)

- Joining a church and being religious (Romans 10:1-4)

- Keeping the Law and Ten Commandments (Romans 3:30; James 2:10)

*Q. Based on your understanding of the following passages, what is the solution to the sin problem?*

- According to Romans 5:8, God demonstrated His \_\_\_\_\_ for us that while we were still \_\_\_\_\_ Christ \_\_\_\_\_ for us.
- According to Ephesians 2:8-9, it is by \_\_\_\_\_ you have been saved through \_\_\_\_\_, and that not of yourselves, it is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, not of \_\_\_\_\_, that no one should boast.
- According to 2 Corinthians 5:21, what was the spiritual transaction that took place on the cross?

*Q. How does one come into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ according to John 3:16, 5:24, and Acts 16:31?*

## Sinner's Prayer

*Dear Heavenly Father,*

*I acknowledge to you that I am a sinner and cannot save myself. I believe that your Son, Jesus Christ, died on the cross in my place for my sins and rose from the dead to give me salvation.*

*I now accept the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Savior, trusting Him alone to give me the forgiveness of sin, eternal life, and a personal relationship with You.*

*Thank you for saving me, and help me from this day on to turn from my sins and live a life pleasing to You. Amen*

## 2. The Local Body and Church Membership

Church membership is the commitment of the believer to be identified and dynamically involved with a local body of Christians who have placed themselves under the authority of Jesus Christ.

*Q. Based on your understanding of the following passages, what is the believer's relationship to the local church?*

- According to Romans 12:4-5 and Colossians 1:18, the church is to function like a \_\_\_\_\_.
- According to 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, the church is made up of many \_\_\_\_\_, but is \_\_\_\_\_ body drinking from one \_\_\_\_\_.
- Why is it important to be a member of a local church according to Hebrews 10:22-25?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- According to Ephesians 3:21 the purpose of the church is to bring \_\_\_\_\_ to God.

## 3. The Bible and Church Membership

The Bible is the only absolute authority that governs the functioning of the church and its members, both corporately and individually. The Scriptures are to serve as the final court of appeal, in all matters of life.

*Q. Based on your understanding of the following passages, how does the Word of God relate to church membership?*

- According to 2 Timothy 3:16, how much of the Bible is God's Word? \_\_\_\_\_
- According to 1 Timothy 3:15, the church is the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of truth.
- According to James 1: 22-25, we must not just hear the Word of God, but also be \_\_\_\_\_.

## 4. Discipleship and Church Membership

### The Goal of a Christian

It is God's expressed desire that each member of His Church becomes a disciple of Jesus Christ. Discipleship is the local church's developmental process of progressively moving Christians from spiritual infancy to spiritual maturity so that they are able to repeat the process with someone else. It is learning to progressively live all of life under the lordship of Christ.

*Q. Based on your understanding of the following passages, describe a disciple of Jesus Christ.*

- According to Matthew 10:24-25, the goal of a disciple is to become like his \_\_\_\_\_ and for servant to become like his \_\_\_\_\_.
- According to Matthew 16:24 and Luke 9:23, what are the three requirements of a disciple of Christ? A disciple must \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

### The Experiences of a Christian

The goal of discipleship is achieved as believers grow in the four vital experiences Christ has for His church.



**A. Worship (Acts 2:42c):** Worship is the celebration of God for who He is, what He has done, and for what we are expecting Him to do. Each member is to demonstrate the exaltation of God by faithful participation in the corporate gathering of the church on Sunday and regular partaking in communion.

**B. Christian Education (Acts 2:42a):** Education is expanding your knowledge of God through His Word because you can't grow beyond what you know. Each member is to know and apply the Bible to their daily living. Each member is encouraged to participate in the Kingdom Agenda Bible Institute.

**C. Fellowship (Acts 2:42b):** Fellowship is the mutual sharing of our relationship with Christ with believers. Each member is responsible for building quality Christian relationships that strengthen their spiritual walk through love and sharing with one another. This is accomplished through participation in monthly ministry meetings as well as gender-based and/or seasons-of-life fellowships.

**D. Outreach (Acts 2:47):** Outreach recognizes that spiritual development occurs as God works through His people to impact the lives of others. Each member is to further the ministry of OCBF internally through their service to our membership for the building up of our local body, and externally through evangelism to the world for the salvation of souls and the improvement of society.

*Q. After reading Acts 2: 42-47, state some of the effects the four vital experiences had on the first century church.*

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**The Accountability of a Christian**

When a person becomes a member of the local church, he/she is responsible for pursuing godliness and spiritual maturity through the application of the Scripture in their daily lives. It is the responsibility of the church and its leadership to assist the believer in achieving spiritual maturity and holding him/her accountable through the process of church discipline when the believer refuses to submit to biblical authority.

*Q. Based on your understanding of the following passages, how is accountability built into the believer's life?*

a) According to Matthew 18:15-20, what are the steps that a believer must follow in order to biblically address the sin of another believer?

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b) According to James 5:19-20, why is it important to correct believers who are trapped in sin?

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**The Christian's Expressions of Accountability**

The believer's willingness to be accountable to the local church and its leadership is reflected in the two symbols or expressions of faith in Jesus Christ, which is baptism and communion.

**A. Baptism** is where a believer publicly identifies with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As such, the believer pledges to publicly live under the authority of Jesus Christ in the context of the local church.

**B. Communion** is the ongoing renewal of the believer's commitment to Jesus Christ. It is a continuous pledge of faithfulness to Christ through confessions of sin and a renewed dependency on an experience of God's grace.

*Q. After reading the passages below, what is your understanding of baptism and communion in the believer's life?*

a) According to Romans 6: 3-4, how should the spiritual principle of baptism affect our life?

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b) According to Matthew 28:19-20, we are to be baptized in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

c) According to 1 Corinthians 11:23-25, we are to take communion in \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ and the new \_\_\_\_\_ He has established with us.

d) According to 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, when we take communion, we become sharers in the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.

**5. The Kingdom Agenda and Church Membership**

The Church has been established to be a spiritual community that models the Kingdom of God on earth. Our members are taught the principles of the Kingdom of God so they learn to function under the authority of the Kingdom in every dimension of life. Through the proper blending of God's Word with good works, our church and its members are to provide a divine alternative of God's activity in the world without becoming a part of it.

*Q. Based on your understanding of the following passages, how does the Kingdom Agenda position the Church and its members in the world?*

a) According to Matthew 16:18-19, God has entrusted to the church the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ in order to exercise spiritual authority in history.

b) According to Matthew 6:33, believers are to seek \_\_\_\_\_ God's \_\_\_\_\_ and His \_\_\_\_\_.

c) According to Psalm 103:19, God's Kingdom authority means His \_\_\_\_\_ over all.

d) According to Hebrews 12:28, believers are a part of a \_\_\_\_\_ that cannot be \_\_\_\_\_ and they are to show \_\_\_\_\_ and offer acceptable \_\_\_\_\_.

e) According to Matthew 6:10, believers are to pray thy \_\_\_\_\_ come thy \_\_\_\_\_ be done on \_\_\_\_\_ as it is in Heaven.



## 6. The Mission and Church Membership

Since it is the role of the Church to model God's Kingdom in history, then it is the mission of OCBF to "disciple the church to impact the world" through comprehensive programs that touch every area of life, i.e. spiritual, social, health, economics, education, and politics, etc. Each disciplined member is to demonstrate the sovereignty and supremacy of Christ through his/her spiritual impact through "good works" in their home, community, country and/or the world.

*Q. Based on your understanding of the following passages, how are the Church and its members to relate to the world?*

- a) According to Matthew 28: 19-20, we are to make \_\_\_\_\_ of all nations, \_\_\_\_\_ them in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have \_\_\_\_\_ you.
- b) According to Matthew 5:13-16, what are the two roles God's people ought to play in society? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

## 7. The Culture and Church Membership

Through the Spirit of the Ministry, Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship seeks to cultivate an environment that's conducive to discipling members toward spiritual maturity, ministry excellence and loving relationships. The Spirit of the Ministry sets the tone for how we treat and serve one another as we do the work of the ministry.

*Q. Based on your understanding of the following passages, how are believers to relate to one another?*

- a) According to John 13:34, people will know we are authentic disciples of Christ by our \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_.
- b) According to 1 John 3:18, we are to love with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- c) According to Philippians 2:1-2, the atmosphere of the church should be characterized by \_\_\_\_\_ of love, \_\_\_\_\_ with the spirit, having \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, by being \_\_\_\_\_, having the same \_\_\_\_\_, being \_\_\_\_\_ in spirit and \_\_\_\_\_.
- d) According to Ephesians 4:3, Christians are to be diligent to \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of the spirit in the \_\_\_\_\_ of peace.

## 8. Responsibilities and Church Membership

2 Peter 1:3 states that "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness". God expects us to grow in His Word and show evidence of the fruit of His Spirit in our lives.

Additionally, each member is equipped with at least one spiritual gift that is designed to serve the body of Christ. As believers, we have a responsibility to serve the household of faith with our time and God-given talents by participating in one or more of the ministries of the church.

Finally, we are to give back a portion of our wealth to the One who owns it and has given us the ability to create it out of sincere gratitude and with the purpose of expanding His Kingdom through the local church. At OCBF, members are expected to give at least one-tenth of their household income to support the work of the ministry. In addition, members are invited to participate in the annual Thanksgiving offering where they contribute one week's household income to the ministry.

*Q. From reading the passages below, what does the Bible say about the Christian's responsibility to grow?*

- a) According to 1 Peter 2:2, we are to desire the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Word so we can grow spiritually.
- b) According to 2 Peter 3:18, in what two areas should Christians be growing?  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

*Q. From reading the passages below, what does the Bible say about the Christian's responsibility to serve in the local church?*

- a) According to Ephesians 4:12, 16, your service to the church is important for the \_\_\_\_\_ of the body of Christ.
- b) According to 1 Peter 4:10, God has given every believer a \_\_\_\_\_ in order to serve the church.

*Q. From reading the passages below, what does the Bible say about the Christian's responsibility to give one's financial resources in the form of tithes and offering to the local church for the advancement of the ministry?*

- a) According to Malachi 3: 8-9, refusing to give tithes and offering is equal to \_\_\_\_\_ God.
- b) According to 1 Corinthians 16:2, on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of every week, one should give as he may \_\_\_\_\_.
- c) According to 2 Corinthians 9: 6-8, what is the benefit of contributing your financial resources to the local church?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 9. Benefits and Church Membership

As the saying goes, membership has its privileges. As YOU, a member, become an authentic disciple of Christ, not only do YOU benefit the body of Christ, YOU partake in the spiritual and social benefits offered through our church. YOU, a member, can expect to receive the following:

- A. The faithful teaching and preaching of God's Word that is necessary for your spiritual growth.
- B. Comprehensive children, youth, and adult programs that serve the unique needs of you and your family.
- C. A ministry leader and Touch Point facilitator who will maintain contact with you so that the church is informed about your needs, prayer requests and praises.
- D. Dynamic small groups (men, women, couples, singles and counseling support groups) that can foster your spiritual growth, help you through trials, and/or enable you to develop quality Christian relationships.

