

BEN WASHINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study Series – Part 6

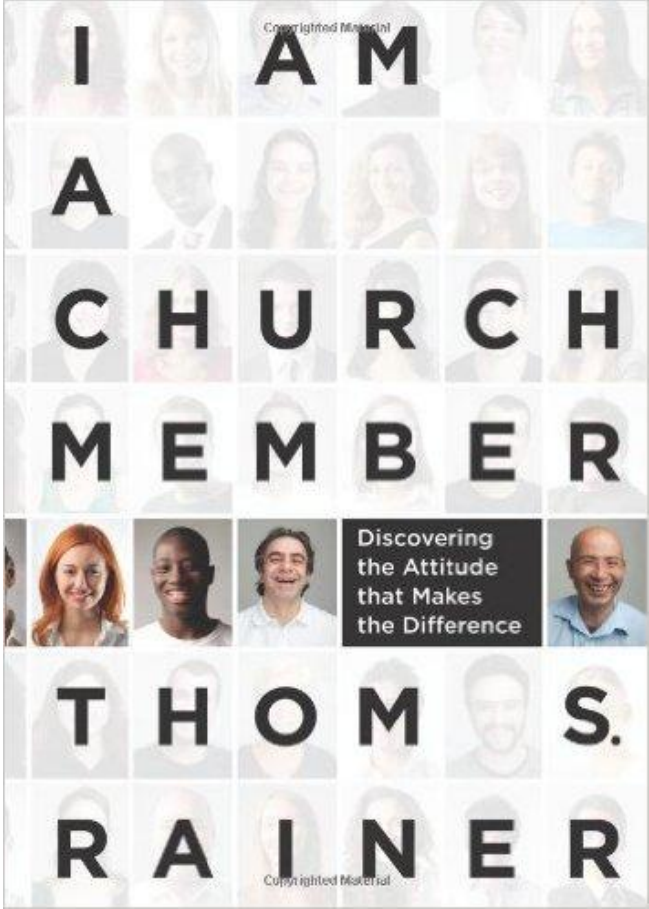
“I am a Church Member”

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I AM A CHURCH MEMBER



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I WILL TREASURE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AS A GIFT BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE.

As a member of the body of Christ, I value my membership. I do not think of membership as a Country Club where it is about being served but I think of it as a privilege and I desire to serve.

Biblical Passage(s) in Focus

I Corinthians 12:27-28; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12-13

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I Corinthians 12:27-28

27. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 28. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

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Ephesians 2:8-9

2. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9. Not of works, lest any man should boast.

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John 1:12-13

12. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

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Life Impact and Lesson Goals

2 Different Perspectives of Church Membership

Country Club – Perspective of Church Membership

The Pastor and Church exist to serve ME.

If it is not what I like...I complain or leave.

Biblical Perspective of Church Membership.

Church Membership is a treasured gift from God.

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Central Truth

Church membership is not a right I demand, a privilege I deserve, or a service I purchase. It is a gift made possible by God's grace, and that gift carries both privilege and responsibility.

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Lesson Objectives

- Understand why church membership should be viewed as a gift.
 - Connect salvation by grace with belonging to Christ's body.
- Distinguish between entitlement and gratitude in church membership.
- Recognize that receiving the gift of membership brings responsibilities.
- Evaluate whether their attitudes and actions demonstrate that they treasure their church membership.

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“What is one gift you have received that you really treasured?”

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What made that gift special?

Was it:

who gave it?

what it cost?

the sacrifice behind it?

what it represented?

the relationship connected to it?

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“How do you normally treat something you treasure?”

We protect what we treasure.

We appreciate what we treasure.

We take care of what we treasure.

We don't casually discard what we treasure.

That introduces today's central question:

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Do I treat my church membership like something I treasure—or merely something I have?

There is a major difference between having membership and treasuring membership.

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Membership Begins with the Gift of Grace

Ephesians 2:8–9

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God...”

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Before we discuss church membership, we must begin with salvation.

We did not earn salvation.

We did not purchase salvation.

We did not deserve salvation.

We received salvation by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

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Then notice what Paul says later.

Ephesians 2:19

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”

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Grace didn't merely change our destination.

Grace changed our relationship.

We went from:

strangers → family
outsiders → citizens
separated → connected
alone → belonging

Salvation brings us into relationship with Christ and into His people.

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Church membership should be understood in light of grace.
We belong to God's family because Christ made belonging possible.

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Membership Is a Gift, Not an Entitlement

This is one of the most important distinctions in the lesson.

There are two very different attitudes a member can bring to church.

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The Entitlement Mentality Entitlement says: “I’m a member, so...”

- somebody should serve me,
- somebody should recognize me,
- my preferences should matter most,
 - I should get my way,
- the church should meet my needs,
 - somebody should call me,
 - somebody should check on me,
- somebody should appreciate me.

Notice the recurring word: ME. Now compare that with gratitude.

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The Gift Mentality Gratitude says:

“God has blessed me with a church family, so...”

- How can I serve?
- Who can I encourage?
- Where can I use my gifts?
- How can I contribute?
- Who needs prayer?
- How can I help protect unity?
- How can I participate in the mission?

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Key Principle

Entitlement asks, “What does membership give me?”

Gratitude asks, “What can I give because I am grateful to belong?”

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Membership Means I Belong to a Body

1 Corinthians 12:12

“For as the body is one, and hath many members... so also is Christ.”

Paul uses the human body to explain the church.

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That illustration teaches us several things.

1. Every member belongs.
2. Every member is different.
3. Every member is necessary.
4. Every member is connected.

Biblical membership means: I belong to Christ, and I belong with His people.

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A Gift Comes with Responsibility

Sometimes we assume that because something is a gift, it requires nothing from us.
But biblical gifts often create stewardship.

1 Peter 4:10

“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another...”

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God gives gifts so they can be used.

Responsibility is not payment for the gift.

We don't serve to earn God's grace.

Rather: We serve because we have received God's grace.

Grace doesn't produce entitlement.

Properly understood, grace produces gratitude.

And gratitude produces service.

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Connecting All Six Commitments

Since this is the final chapter, this is an excellent opportunity to review the entire study.

A healthy church member says:

1. I Will Be a Functioning Church Member

I will participate rather than merely observe.

2. I Will Be a Unifying Church Member

I will protect the unity of my church.

3. I Will Not Let My Church Be About My Preferences and Desires

I will choose Kingdom purpose over personal preference.

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Connecting All Six Commitments

Since this is the final chapter, this is an excellent opportunity to review the entire study.

A healthy church member says:

4. I Will Pray for My Church Leaders

I will intercede for those God has called to lead.

5. I Will Lead My Family to Be Healthy Church Members

I will model healthy membership in my home.

6. I Will Treasure Church Membership as a Gift

I will approach membership with gratitude rather than entitlement.

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Questions?