

The Church

Church Members

Now that we have looked at the leadership and government of the church, we will look at what it is to be a member of a local church.

I. Requirements

A. * Note: These two requirements are KEY to the Baptist identity.

B. Salvation

1. A personal salvation - Romans 10:9
2. By grace through faith - Ephesians 2:8-9

C. Baptism

1. As testimony of salvation, not for it! - Acts 8:36-37
2. Administered properly (immersion, etc.) in a church of like faith
 - a) Baptist churches almost always accept baptisms by other Baptist churches
 - b) Baptist churches should never accept infant baptisms
 - c) Baptist churches should never accept baptisms by groups that claim it is essential for Salvation (Church of Christ, etc.)
 - d) Baptist churches should never accept baptism by any mode except immersion.

II. Methods of Joining a Church

A. Through Baptism - Acts 2:41

B. Church Letter

1. In "olde" times, this was actually a letter sent with an individual as they left one church for a new area.
2. Today, its basically a form that is mailed acknowledging membership.
3. Joining by this method should require a church vote.

C. Statement

1. In this method, a person joins simply by their testimony of salvation and baptism.
2. Joining by this method should require a church vote.

D. NOT THROUGH:

1. Attendance
2. Salvation
3. Donations
4. Popularity

III. Responsibilities of a Church Member

A. Note: I'm borrowing this outline from one of my teachers, Bro. Dave Noffsinger.

B. To Love

1. The Lord - Matthew 22:37
2. The brethren - I John 4:7
3. The church

C. To be Loyal

1. To the Precepts of the church

2. To the Practices of the church
 3. To the Principles of the church
 - D. To be Liberal in Giving
 1. Giving through a sincere heart - Romans 12:8
 2. Giving through a single heart
 3. Giving through a serving heart
 - E. To Learn
 1. Learn the truth to be free in Christ - John 8:31
 2. Learn the truth to worship the Lord
 3. Learn the truth to share it - I Timothy 3:15
 - F. To Labor
 1. Fulfilling God's will for their lives
 2. "Church members are to be working people, doing that which is ordained of the Lord."
- IV. Privileges of a Church Member
- A. Note - I'm purposing using the word "privilege" instead of "rights" because it better conveys the spirit in which a church member should operate.
 - B. Voting on church business
 - C. Serving in leadership or ministry capacities
 - D. Receiving pastoral care