

Scriptural Course in Baptism

Church of Christ

With Headquarters on the Temple Lot

Independence, Missouri

By Apostle Joel Yates

Lesson #1

Membership in the Local Church

In this lesson you will study...

- The concept of membership
- The membership in the New Testament Church

This lesson will help you to...

- Describe a member of a Local Church
- Know the characteristics of the members of the primitive church.

I. THE CONCEPT OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. The word "member" comes from the Latin word Membrum and means, "an individual who belongs to a group or organization, or any extremity of a man or animal". The word, which is used in the New Testament for "member", is the Greek word Melos and it is, used a majority of the time to define two concepts.
 1. It refers to the different parts that form the human body, i.e. 1st Corinthians 12:12-22, 27-29
 2. It refers to the Christians that make up part of the Church or the body of Christ. Romans 12:5-8; 1st Corinthians 12:27

II. THE MEMBERSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

- A. Not every human being was a member of the Body of Christ. The proof of membership was the order that Jesus Christ gave to those that were His disciples. Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 7:21-23; 3rd Nephi 5:43
- B. Those that were considered members of the Church of Christ-
 1. Believed and confessed that Jesus is the Savior. Romans 10:9; 3rd Nephi 5:34-35
 2. Repented and confessed their sins. Acts 2:38; Romans 10:13-17; 2nd Corinthians 7:9-11; 3rd Nephi 5: 32-35,66;
 3. Were baptized in water by one having authority from Christ. Matthew 3:13-16; Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:5; Acts 2:38,41-42; Acts 8:38-39; 3rd Nephi 5:21-28, 44-46; 2nd Nephi 13:7-11; Mark 3:13-14; Luke 6:13

4. Were baptized, or born again by the Spirit. This was done by the Laying on of Hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. John 3:3-6; Acts 2:38-39; Acts 8:14-17; Acts 9:17; Acts 19:2-6; Moroni 2:1-3; 2nd Nephi 13:16
 5. The New Testament taught that if a man did not satisfy the previous requirements, they weren't considered a member of the Christian church. Romans 6:3-4; 1st Corinthians 12:12-14; 3rd Nephi 12:12-13; Moroni 6:2-5
- C. All those that were members of the Church had responsibilities such as:
1. Endure and continue in the doctrine. Matthew 10:22; Matthew 24:13; Acts 2:42; 3rd Nephi 5:29-43; 3rd Nephi 7:10; 2nd Nephi 13:27-32
 2. Continue in Christian fellowship and partaking of communion. Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:23-25; Luke 22:19-20; Moroni 6:6; 3rd Nephi 8:53
 3. Continue in prayer. Acts 2:42; 1st Thessalonians 5:17; 3rd Nephi 8: 47-54; Alma 16:219-222; Omni 1:46-47
 4. Praise God together. Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Romans 15:9-11; 2nd Nephi 3:30-50; Mosiah 1:51-66; Alma 14:88
 5. They supported the work of God, i.e. tithes & offerings etc. Malachi 3:8-11; 1st Corinthians 16:1-4; 3rd Nephi 11:11-15,29; 4th Nephi 1:3-4
 6. They were subject to the authorities of the Church, i.e. ministry, teachers, etc. 1st Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:7,17; 3rd Nephi 5:42-45; Acts 2:42; 4th Nephi 1:1
 7. They exhorted and encouraged one another. 1st Thessalonians 5:14; Hebrews 10:23-25; Mosiah 9:39-41; Moroni 6:9
 8. They kept order in the Church. 1st Thessalonians 5:15; Titus 1:5-9; Moroni 6:7-8; 3rd Nephi 12:11; 4th Nephi 1:3; Alma 4:1-4
 9. They became submissive as little children. Matthew 18:3-4; Mark 10:13-15; 1st Peter 2:1-3; 1st Corinthians 14:20; Mosiah 1:120; 3rd Nephi 5:39-40
- D. The members of the Church not only had responsibilities, but they also enjoyed the privileges and rights of membership.
1. They participated in the Lord's Supper. Acts 2:42,46; 1st Corinthians 11:23-28; John 6:35,48-58; 3rd Nephi 8:28-43; Moroni 6:6
 2. They participated in the programs of the Church according to their gifts and talents. Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 12:4-8; 1st Peter 4:10-11; 1st Corinthians 12:4-11; Mosiah 1:48-50; Moroni 10:10
 3. They preached the gospel. Acts 8:4; Acts 18:24-28; Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19-20; Matthew 24:14; 2nd Nephi 11:95-105; Alma 4:5-6; 3rd Nephi 9:1-3; 3rd Nephi 12:14
 4. They were able to be candidates for positions of responsibility in the Church, i.e. secretary, treasurer, teacher etc. Ephesians 4:16; 1st Corinthians 12:28

Questions

1. Why isn't everyone considered a member in the Church of Christ?
2. What are the requirements established by the primitive church, for a person to be accepted as a member?
3. What are four responsibilities of church members?
4. What are two privileges granted to church members?

Lesson 2

Baptism in Water

I. DEFINITION OF BAPTISM IN WATER

- A. Baptism comes from the Greek word BAPTISMA
- B. According to the VINE'S Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, the word Baptism means: "baptism, consisting of the processes of immersion, submersion and emergence."
- C. Jesus said that Christian baptism should be performed "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matthew 28:19, 3rd Nephi 5:25

II. THE BACKGROUND OF THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM

- A. Old Testament history-Book of Mormon
 1. The first specific reference to baptism in Old Testament history is found in the vision to Nephi in 1st Nephi 3:70-75

2. Nephi later elaborated on the baptism in 2nd Nephi 13:6-18
 3. The first reference of actual baptism is found in Mosiah 9:41-48; this took place circa 147-123 B.C.
 4. In the Old Testament of the Bible the Jews were commanded to wash when they were unclean and often this meant to wash their whole body. Deuteronomy 23:
 5. The Essenes or writers of the Dead Sea Scrolls in about 200 B.C. were practicing Baptism in preparation for the coming of the Messiah. "Entrance to the community was obtained through repentance and then by baptism by immersion with various baptismal renewal procedures to renew this covenant". This was taken from a book titled THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS by Vernon W. Mattson Jr.
 6. John the Baptist was baptizing in water for the remission of sins, or a washing in preparation for the coming of the Messiah or Christ. This was not a new concept to the Jews who had been commanded under the Law of Moses to wash. Mark 1:3-4; 3rd Nephi 3:67-70
- B. New Testament Church
1. It was instituted by Christ and His disciples. Matthew 3:13-17; John 4:1-2; Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; 3rd Nephi 5:21-27
 2. It testifies that we have received Christ as Lord and have washed our sins with his Blood. Acts 22:13-16; Acts 2:38; Hebrews 10:22; 3rd Nephi 5:49; Moroni 8:29
 3. It demands the explicit invocation of the Trinity. Matthew 28:19; 3rd Nephi 5:25.
 4. Some were re-baptized. Acts 19:3-5; 3rd Nephi 3:68-70; Moroni 6:2.
- C. **Historical Note from the Americas:** The first Spanish priest in America found the Mayan people practicing a form of baptism called Oc Ha, which means to be submerged.

III. ERRONEOUS CONCEPTS ABOUT CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

- A. **Baptism changes a sinner into a saint.** The Scriptures teach clearly that it is not baptism, but the repentance of a person and the blood of Christ, which washes away the sins and the Holy Spirit is that which regenerates. Baptism shows to God and to man our repentance and our covenant with God. (John 3:3,8; Titus 3:5; 1st John 1:7; Mosiah 9:41)
- B. **Baptism is necessary to avoid going to Hell.** For this reason many believe in the baptism of children. However, the Scriptures never teach the baptism of little children, because there are certain requirements for baptism that a child is not able to fulfill. Moroni 8:9-27

Lesson 3

Christian Baptism

I. THE CHRISTIAN BAPTISM OF SUBMERSION IS RICH IN SYMBOLISM

- A. The death of the old man (Romans 6:3-11; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:10; Mosiah 11:186-188; 2nd Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:14-15)
- B. Burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12;)
- C. The resurrection (Romans 6:4-5; Colossians 2:12)
- D. A change of life (Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 4:17-32; Alma 12:173-178; Helaman. 5:96)
- E. Obedience (2nd Nephi 13:7-12)
- F. Covenant with God (Mosiah 9:41-45)

II. THE NEW LIFE OF A BELIEVER HAS A PRACTICAL MANIFESTATION.

- A. His hatred of sin (Romans 7:14-25; Alma 17:62-65)
- B. His righteous actions (1st John 2:29; Ephesians 4:24; Alma 11:186-188)
- C. His sincere words (Mat. 5:37; Eph. 4:25, 29)
- D. His love for God and man (1st John 4:7-21; 2nd Nephi 13:29)
- E. His testimony to others. (Jude 22, 23; Mos. 9:40)
- F. His desire to study the scripture (John 5:39; Acts 17:11; Alma 12:4)

III. IN THE LIGHT OF THE SCRIPTURE, WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS THAT MUST BE MET IN ORDER TO QUALIFY FOR BAPTISM?

- A. One must hear the Word of God (Acts 18:8; 19:5; Romans 10:14, 17; Alma 3:22)
- B. One must believe (Acts 8:12-13, 36-37; 16:31-33; Romans 10:14; 3rd Nephi 5:33-35)
- C. One must receive the Word of God (John 1:12; 3rd Nephi 4:47; Acts 2:41)
- D. One must repent (Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3rd Nephi 5:39-41; Alma 5:24-28)
- E. One must confess his sins and his faith in Christ (Acts 22:16; Acts 19:18; Romans 10:9-10; Micah 6:2)
- F. One must be accountable and capable of committing sin. (Moroni 8:11)
- G. One must have the law of God and be capable of understanding it. (Moroni 8:25-27; 2nd Nephi 6:51-55; Mosiah 1:106-108; 1st Timothy 1:12-14; Numbers 15:27-28)

IV. THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT THERE ARE TWO BAPTISMS REQUIRED, ONE IS THE BAPTISM OF WATER BY ONE HAVING AUTHORITY FROM CHRIST, AND THE OTHER IS THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST.

- A. The doctrine of baptisms is one of the basic principles of the doctrine of Christ. (Hebrews 6:1-2; John 3:1-7; 2nd Nephi 13:14-17; 3rd Nephi 5:46)
- B. The baptism of water was to be done by those that received authority from Christ to perform this ordinance, this authority was given in New Testament times as well as in the Latter Day. Matthew 28:19; 3rd Nephi 5:21-28, 44-46; Outline history of the Church of Christ, page 36, the testimony of Oliver Cowdery.
- C. The baptism of the spirit was received by the Laying on of Hands of the Elders of the Church, they having been given direction and authority from Christ. (Hebrews 6:2-3; Acts 1:1-5; Acts 8:14-18; Acts 9:10-18; Acts 19:1-6; Moroni 2:1-3)

V. THE IMPORTANCE OF BAPTISM IN WATER

- A. Christ himself was baptized in water and he is our example. Matthew 3:13-16; 2nd Nephi 13:7-16
 - 1. Jesus Christ and his disciples practiced baptism. (John 4:1-2; John 3:22; 3rd Nephi 5:21-29,44-47)
 - 2. Jesus Christ commanded and gave his disciples authority to baptize believers in all the world. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; 3rd Nephi 5:39-41)
 - 3. All those who accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior were baptized in water.
 - a) Three thousand people that were converted on the day of Pentecost were baptized. (Acts 2:37-42)
 - b) Those converted in Samaria. (Acts 8:9-13)
 - c) The Eunuch that was converted. (Acts 8:34-39)
 - d) Saul of Tarsus. (Acts 9:18; 22:12,16)
 - e) Cornelius and his friends. (Acts 10: 44-48)
 - f) Lydia. (Acts 16:14-15)
 - g) The Jailor of Philippi and his family. (Acts 16:25-34)
 - h) Crispus and his house and believers in Corinth. (Acts 18:7-8)
 - i) The disciples in Ephesus. (Acts 19:1-7)
 - j) All those Christ taught in America. (3rd Nephi 9:12-14; 12:12-13; 4th Nephi 1:1-2)

Lesson 4

I. SPIRITUAL DUTIES OF MEMBERS

1. Live a life consecrated to the Lord. Ephesians 4:22-24; 4th Nephi 1:2-4,17-19
2. Bring souls to Christ. Acts 8:4; 1st Peter 3:15; Mosiah 9:40; Alma 4:6
3. Work together with your ministry, honoring and respecting them. Hebrews 13:7; 1st Thessalonians 5:12-13; 3rd Nephi 5:42-45
4. Support the work of God with your tithes and offerings. Malachi 3:10; 3rd Nephi 11:11-13; Mosiah 2:43; Mosiah 9:60-64
5. Take part in all the activities of the church with punctuality and consistency. Hebrews 10:25; Luke 24:52-53; Alma 1:37-39; Moroni 6:6
6. Consecrate the Lord's Day to his service. Isaiah 58:13-14; Acts 20:7; Book of Commandments 60:18-24
7. Exhibit reverence in the house of the Lord. Habakkuk 2:20; Psalm 89:5-8; Hebrews 12:28-29
8. Read and Study the scriptures for your own edification. John 5:39; Acts 17:11; 2nd Timothy 2:15; 3:15-17; 2nd Nephi 13:28-31; 2nd Nephi 14:4; 1st Nephi 2:62-69; 1st Nephi 3:68,183-186
9. Cultivate a life of prayer and fasting. Luke 6:12; Alma 12:5; 3rd Nephi 8:50-52; Moroni 6:6; Alma 4:6; Alma 16:219-221
10. Fellowship with the believers. 1st Corinthians 12:12-27; Philippians 1:1-5; Acts 2:34-27; 1st John 1:3-7; Helaman 2:120-121
11. Obey God and be humble. John 14:15; Romans 6:16-19; 1st Peter 5:5-11; Mosiah 8:8-12; Mosiah 1:118-120
12. Visit the sick, support the needy, console the sad and remain in harmony with all. 1st Thessalonians 5:14-15; Hebrews 12:14; Romans 12:9-18; Mosiah 9:39-40, 60-64; Mosiah 2:43; James 1:27; Jacob 2:24
13. Pray for brothers that have committed an error and help restore them. Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20; Mosiah 11:159-207
14. Maintain peaceable relationships with your brothers and sisters. Romans 12:16-18; 1st Corinthians 12:25-27; Mosiah 2:24-28; Moroni 7:3-4; Ephesians 4:1-6
 - a) When one is offended. Matthew 18:15-18
 - b) When one knows someone has something against you. Matthew 5: 23-24; 3rd Nephi 5:71-72
 - c) Don't let your anger cause you to sin. Matthew 5:21-22; Ephesians 4:26-27; 3rd Nephi 5:70

15. Forgive your brethren that have trespassed against you. Matthew 6:12-15; 3rd Nephi 5:107; Mosiah 11:140; Luke 17:3-4
16. Separate yourselves from those who cause division and choose to disobey God and live wickedly. Romans 16:17-18; 2nd Thessalonians 3:6-7; Titus 3:9-11; Ephesians 5:6-12; 1st Corinthians 5:9-13; Alma 3:98-108

II. RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD SOCIETY

- A. Live a faithful life before the world. James 2:14-18; Mosiah 2:18-47; Mosiah 8:39-41; Mormon 4:46-54; Titus 2:1-15; Ephesians 4:17, Ephesians 5:21, Ephesians 6:10; Romans 12:17-21
- B. Pray for and respect constituted authorities. Romans 13:1-7; 1st Peter 2:13-17
- C. Complete your duties as a citizen. Romans 13:1-7; Luke 20:22-25; 1st Peter 2:13-20
- D. Pay your debts punctually. Psalm 37:21; Proverbs 3:27-28; Proverbs 22:7; Luke 6:31; Mosiah 2:46-47
- E. Be honest in your business affairs. Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31; 1st Thessalonians 4:9-12, Romans 12:11; 3rd Nephi 11:8
- F. Be responsible in your work. Romans 12:11; 1st Thessalonians 4:9-12; Mosiah 11:153-155; 2nd Thessalonians 3:10-12; Alma 18:15; Colossians 3:22-25; Alma 1:37-39
- G. The need to defend our liberty. Alma 20:9-10, 33-73; Alma 21:40-49, 128-141
- H. Our duty to vote. Mosiah 13:21-46

III. RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

- A. To be ministered to with the word of God. 1st Peter 5:1-3; 2nd Timothy 4:1-2; Ephesians 20:28; Moroni 6:3-5; Alma 1:37-38
- B. To be visited regularly. Moroni 6:5; James 1:27; Matthew 25:31-46; Alma 16:223-224
- C. Participate in the programs of the Church according to the gifts that the Lord has given you. Romans 12:3-9; 1st Corinthians 12:1-27; Matthew 25:14-29;
- D. Receive the Lord's Supper. 1st Corinthians 11:23-31; 3rd Nephi 8:28-43; Moroni 6:6
- E. Take part in the business affairs of the Church. 1st Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:16

Lesson 5

I. DISCIPLINE IN THE CHURCH

- A. The reasons for discipline within the Church of Christ:
 - 1. Our Lord is a God of order, justice, and righteousness.
 - 2. It is the duty of the ministry and membership of the Church to see that these qualities are reflected before the world. Hebrews 12:5-17; 1st Corinthians 5:9-13; Moroni 6:7-8; Mosiah 11:148-149
- B. The main purposes of discipline within the Church are as follows:
 - 1. The correction of errors within the members (2nd Timothy 4:1-4; 2nd Corinthians 7:9-11) that they do not lose their hope of salvation (Alma 3:97-98; 3rd Nephi 5: 67-68)
 - 2. The restoration of the sinner (Galatians 6:1)
 - 3. The reconciliation of brethren within the body of Christ (3rd Nephi 5:70-72; Matthew 18:15)
 - 4. To be a light to the unbelievers in the world (1st Timothy 3:7; 3rd Nephi 5:61, 63)
 - 5. To protect members of the Church from evil influences (Galatians 5:9; 1st Corinthians 5:5-8; Hebrews 12:11-17)
 - 6. To maintain the holy doctrine of Jesus Christ within His Church (Titus 3:10-11)
- C. Transgressions that could bring about the need for discipline in the Church:
 - 1. Scandalous or immoral conduct such as identified in Galatians 5:19-21, which would result in a loss of salvation for the individual.

Scandal - (Websters' 2nd college edition) - "unseemly conduct of a religious person that discredits religion or causes moral lapse in another"
--

- 2. The teaching of doctrines contrary to our profession of faith (Romans 16:17, 18; Galatians 1:6-9)
- 3. Violation of the laws of the land (Titus 3:1)
- 4. Those actions which disturb the peace or cause divisions within the Church as described in 2nd Corinthians 12:20
- 5. A contentious and/or rebellious spirit (3rd Nephi 5:30-31)

II. WHAT CONSTITUTES REPENTANCE

- A. Remorse and dedication of the heart to sin no more. Mosiah 2:16-17
- B. Remove oneself from the sin. 1st Thessalonians 5:22; 2nd Timothy 2:19
- C. Confess one's faults. James 5:16

- D. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Alma 10:6; Alma 16:137,226; Moroni 8:29; Matthew 3:8
- E. What are the fruits of repentance? Ephesians 5:9-11; Galatians 5:22-25; Alma 16:226
- F. Have witnesses of such repentance. Mosiah 11:159-207
- G. Have a continuous walk in a righteous manner. Matthew 24:13; 2nd Nephi 15:10; 2nd Nephi 13:30; Omni 1:47; 3rd Nephi 7:10
- H. See references in Mosiah 11:140; Luke 17:4; Mark 11: 25-26; Alma 10:6, 12:4-5; Matthew 3:8, 8:11-12, 18:15; Moroni 6:8; 1st Thessalonians 4:14, 5:22; Ephesians 4:22-27, 5:4, 11; Jude 1:7; Galatians 5:22-23; Isaiah 1:18-20