

BETHANY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
NEW MEMBER'S TRAINING and GROWTH GUIDE
INSTRUCTORS GUIDE



**Welcome to the Lord
And
The Church whose Center is Christ, Purpose is Praise and Mission is the Gospel**

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You have made the most important commitment a person can make in life. As a result of receiving Jesus as your Savior and Lord, you have experienced a new birth, a spiritual birth. You now need to grow into a mature follower of Jesus. To assist in your continuous spiritual growth, Bethany Primitive Baptist Church offers orientation and training for new members, Sunday School classes and weekly Bible Study.

We, at Bethany believe unequivocally that God sends persons to this church to build upon its ministry. The value of each member cannot be measured, for we see ourselves as members of one Body, the Body of Jesus Christ. As you begin your spiritual journey, be aware that Satan will seek to halt your study and Christian growth. Ask God to give you strength to continue and complete your study. The subject and instructor of each session are described below:

Session	Subject	Instructor
I. First Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan of Salvation Discipline/Doctrine and Church Covenant and The Meaning of Church Membership 	Pastor Battle and Deacon Board
II. Second Wednesday	<u>Baptist Ordinances:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baptism Holy Communion (The Lord's Supper) Feet-Washing Rites 	Pastor Battle and Deacon Board
III. Third Wednesday	Ministries of the Church	Ministries Chairpersons/Presidents
IV. Fourth Wednesday	Ministries of the Church (continued) Q&A: New Members opportunity to discuss faith-based issues with the Pastor	Ministries Chairpersons/Presidents New Member

Session I: (First Wednesday Night)

- A. Plan of Salvation**
- B. Church Covenant**
- C. The Meaning of Church Membership**

A. Plan of Salvation – “Being sure of your salvation”

Session Objective: Ensure that the member fully understands the Biblical basis for receiving salvation.

Step one in understanding the Plan of Salvation is to understand the **word, promises, character and spirit of God** as related to salvation. **Read and emphasize the following scriptures with the new members:**

The **word** of God (John 3:16; 1 John 5:11-13)
God wants you to know that you have _____ life.

The **promises** of God (Rom 10:9; John 5:24)
What are the promises found in these two verses?
1.
2.

The **character** of God (1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; Hebrews 10:23)
What do these verses tell you about God’s character?
God is _____!

The **Spirit** of God (Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Corinthians 5:17)
What is the seal given by God as a guarantee of His promise?

The Holy Spirit at work within you is indisputable proof of your salvation. The Holy Spirit’s work in your life will bring changes. Some changes will be gradual; some changes will be instant. The inward and outward changes that result are the final proof of your salvation.

Provide the Student with other scripture to enhance their understanding of what is God’s plan of salvation. Select from the scripture below. The New Members can take notes in his/her New Member’s Workbook.

Scripture	Emphasis	Purpose of Scripture
God's Plan		
Revelation 22:17	Tells us that "Whosoever will" may come to Christ for salvation.	These passages plainly teach that God's plan of salvation will reach whosoever. Any plan that will not reach "any man in any condition, who calls on the Lord" is not God's plan.
Romans 10:13	Tells us, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved".	
John 3:16	Says, "Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life".	
Eternal Life		
John 3:16-18	GOD promises and gives eternal life	God wants you to know for sure that you have eternal life. Eternal life is not based on your feelings but on the facts found in the Bible. Review the following scriptures:
I John 6:47, I John 5:13	The believer has everlasting life	
John 10:28-29, John 24:25	Christians do not keep themselves	
Colossians 3:3	The Christian is hidden with Christ in GOD. If the devil could get us, he would be stronger than GOD. If he could get one of us, he could get us all.	
John 3:5	We are born the children of GOD, and we cannot be unborn	
Romans 8:35-39	Nothing can separate us from the love of GOD	
Galatians 6:7 Hebrews 12:6-7, Psalms 89:30-33	When Christians sin, GOD chastises them and keeps them	
Romans 4:7-8	Sins of Christians are not charged to them, so they do not have to die for them	

B. Primitive Baptist Church Covenant and Discipline/Doctrine

B-1: Primitive Baptist Church Covenant

Session Objective: Ensure that the member fully understands the Biblical basis of the Church Covenant of the Baptist Church as well as how it is practiced at Bethany Primitive Baptist Church.

The church covenant is a voluntary agreement by members of a Baptist church whereby they promise to conduct their lives in such a way as to glorify GOD and promote the ongoing of His church. Every member should study it carefully, refer to it often, and seek to live by it. It clearly outlines the obligations of church membership. The covenant in use at Bethany Primitive is as follows:

Review the Church Covenant with New Member's

B-2: Primitive Baptist Discipline/Doctrine Book

Give an over of the Primitive Baptist Discipline/Doctrine Book

Conclusion: The following questions are based on our church covenant and Primitive Baptist Discipline/Doctrine. Discuss these questions with the New Member's

What are some of our duties and responsibilities as members of the body of Christ?

To strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines;

What pledge do we gladly make as stewards of that which God has entrusted to us?

We promise to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel, through all nations.

For the sake of our home and loved ones, what tasks do we humbly assume?

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances;

For the sake of the unsaved for whom Christ died, to what manner of life and conversation are we solemnly pledged?

To walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings; faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of destructive drugs or intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to shun pornography; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

For the sake of our continued spiritual development, what do we promise to do if we should move beyond the reach of this church?

We engage, finally, that when we remove from this place, we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

Conclusion:

Jesus Christ, the Living Word, is God's full revelation of Himself. The Bible is our only record of His incarnation and atonement. As a summary on Baptist doctrine we thus can say that Bethany Primitive Baptist Church accepts the Bible as the whole Word of GOD and the whole Bible as the Word of GOD. Praying to God's leadership and giving our best effort toward understanding, we seek to teach everything that the Bible teaches. Our doctrines are based on the Scriptures, not on man-made traditions.

Scripture	Emphasis
Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5-7	Salvation is given by GOD in grace, apart from human works or merit
Matthew 4:17, Luke 15:9, Acts 3:19	Salvation received by man through repentance and faith. Repentance is absolutely necessary for salvation
John 3:16-18, 36, Acts 10:43, Romans 5:1	Faith is absolutely necessary
Romans 10:9-10, Acts 8:35-37	And finally, salvation is not just assent of the mind, but must be from the heart

C. The Meaning of Church Membership and Church Accountability

Church Membership

Membership in Bethany Primitive Baptist Church involves commitment to worship the Lord corporately, edifying brothers and sisters through the word of God, cooperating in the vision God has given our Sheppard (the Pastor), and holding each other accountable to walk in a manner pleasing to the Lord as a witness to the truth of Christ in the world.

We (Bethany) believe that covenant church membership is a wise and helpful path for those who desire to walk together in obedience to the Lord and in a manner that is worthy of the gospel of Christ (Philippians 1:27). This becomes evident when we consider how the New Testament teaching on church government and church discipline relate to mutual accountability and thus to the concept of covenant membership.

The New Testament teaching about church government and church discipline would be meaningless if some form of commitment to mutual accountability in a body of believers were not expected.

Membership Accountability

The New Testament teaches that the local church has elders or overseers who have special responsibility to equip (Ephesians 4:11) and care for (Acts 20:28) and teach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9) the members. The New Testament teaches that the members are to respect (1 Thessalonians 5:12f.) and be submissive to (Hebrews 13:17) these leaders, but not to treat them as infallible for they are not perfect (1 Timothy 5:20) or in the place of Christ (Matthew 23:8-12). They are servants, not masters (Luke 22:26), and their leadership comes from their divine call to serve (Acts 20:28), not from their desire to rule. Their leadership does not replace the congregation of believers as the body with final authority under the Lord (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:4; Acts 6:3; 15:22).

This whole picture of called leaders, and people who affirm that leadership, assumes the existence of “church membership” that consists in a corporate life of mutual accountability. Leadership and submission have no meaning where there is no commitment to accountability (that is, to membership).

Church Discipline Implies a Membership of Accountability

Jesus said, “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector” (Matthew 18:15-17).

What this implies is that Christians are to be members of churches where they are held accountable to walk in a way that pleases the Lord. If there were no relationship of accountability, it would be meaningless to “tell it to the church,” because the offending person would simply say, “That church has no jurisdiction over me.”

The same thing is implied in 1 Corinthians 5. A man in the church is living in blatant immorality and is proudly unrepentant (v. 2). Paul writes, “Let him who has done this be removed from among you” (v. 2). He goes on to say, “When you are assembled . . . you

are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (vv. 4-5).

None of this would be feasible if the immoral man could simply say, "I am not accountable to you. I can do what I please. You have no authority or rights over me." In other words, the teaching of the New Testament on church discipline implies that church membership (involving mutual accountability among the members) is the will of God for all Christians.

The Church Covenant

The biblical call for a membership of mutual accountability in a local body of believers suggests the need for believers to make a covenant with one another. This is simply implied in agreeing to hold each other accountable to walk in a manner pleasing to the Lord.

The church covenant is a written summary of biblical practice that a church agrees should be the basis of its accountability. The covenant allows for freedom of conscience in areas where the Bible is not definite in its guidance. The covenant focuses on principles, especially as they relate to our corporate life together. Bethany's Church covenant is as follows:

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST COVENANT



For as much as Almighty God by His Grace has been pleased to call us out of darkness into his light, and having been baptized upon a profession of faith in Christ Jesus, and having given ourselves to the Lord and one another, in a Gospel Church way, to be governed and guided by a proper discipline agreeable to the Word of God; we do Covenant together by the help of God to keep up the discipline of the Church of which we are members in brotherly affection toward each other, to watch over one another, and, if need be, in the most tender, and affectionate manner, to reprove one another; we also agree with God's assistance to attend our Church meetings, and not absent ourselves from the Communion of the Lord's Supper without a lawful reason; To be ready to communicate to the defraying of the Church's expenses. And for the help of the ministry; not to irregularly depart from the fellowship of the church without a regular letter of dismissal and placing it in the Church in which we hold membership.

These things we do Covenant and agree to observe and keep sacred in the name of, and by the assistance of God.

Amen

Conclusion

TAKE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP SERIOUSLY!

Accountability in Bethany Primitive Baptist church does not mean that the church will ever be perfectly pure (although we should strive to be so). We sin after conversion. The church is a company of forgiven sinners who wrestle against their own remaining sinfulness every day.

- “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)
- “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” (1 John 1:8)
- “When I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind.” (Romans 7:21f.)
- “Not that I have already obtained [the resurrection] or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ has made me his own.” (Philippians 3:12)
- Therefore, church membership does not involve an expectation to live perfectly. Rather, church membership is a commitment to worship and minister in a body of believers where the members covenant together to hold each other accountable to pursue obedience to what Scripture teaches.
- The pursuit of obedience is not the same as perfection. It will involve failure and confession on a regular basis. The mark of a true Christian, and the mark of a church member in good standing, is not perfection, but the persistent fight of faith that recognizes sin as sin, confesses it, and turns from it in new resolves of holiness again and again.

Glossary:

Elder - Leader

Overseers – supervisor, manager

Submissive – obedient & meek (humble & gentle)

Servant – somebody who serves somebody else.

Session II: (Second Wednesday Night)

Session Objective: Ensure that the member fully understands the Biblical basis for the three Primitive Baptist Ordinances: Baptism, Holy Communion and the Feet-Washing Rites of the Primitive Baptist faith.

Primitive Baptist Ordinances:

- A. Baptism**
- B. Holy Communion (Lord's Supper)**
- C. Feet-Washing Rites**

A. Baptism

Discuss with the New Member the meaning and importance of Baptism.

Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water by the proper administrator – one who has been baptized by immersion, in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost. In other words, baptism is an outward symbol of an inner change and transformation that is supposed to take place beforehand. It's very important to emphasize the fact that this can only be accomplished through the power and strength of Jesus! It's not that we have to completely overcome sin before we can be baptized, but we need to repent of our past sins (**Acts 2:28**) and have our mind made up that we want to overcome sin, as we will allow God to give us the victory. In the same way that Jesus went down into that grave, we go down into the water of baptism, which represents our death to sin and the burial of our old life. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." (**1 Corinthians 5:17**)

B. Holy Communion (Lord's Supper)

Discuss with the New Member the meaning and importance of Holy Communion.

Communion is the ceremony of the last supper. I Corinthians 11: 23-26 states, “ *For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*” God is present within the bread and wine, and when you take it into your body; you also take God into

yourself and accept his offerings.

C. Feet-Washing Rites

Discuss with the New Member the meaning and importance of the Feet-Washing Rites

Jesus established the rite of feet-washing in the 13th Chapter of St. John. This chapter states, *“He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, do you wash my feet?” Jesus answered him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.” Peter said to him, “You shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.” Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!” Jesus said to him, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.” For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, “Not all of you are clean.* This Christian ordinance teaches obedience; it teaches submission to Authority. *“If any man serve me, let him follow me”.*

Please see pages 59-62 of the Discipline of the Primitive Baptist Church.

Session III: (Third Wednesday Night)

Session Objective: To provide the member with an opportunity to discuss a variety of faith-based issues with the Pastor of Bethany Primitive Baptist Church.

Sessions III and IV will detail the responsibilities of each church ministry. A representative from each ministry will come and give a 6 minute presentation.

The Ministries of Bethany Primitive Baptist Church

1. **Deacon Board**
2. **Deaconess Board**
3. **Christian Education Department**
4. **Church Administration**
5. **Couples Ministry**
6. **Evangelism Ministry**
7. **Finance Ministry**

8. **Hospitality Ministry**
9. **Men's Ministry**
10. **Music Ministry**

Session IV: (Fourth Wednesday Night)

A representative from each ministry will come and give a 5 minute presentation

A. The Ministries of Bethany Primitive Baptist Church

1. **Nursery**
2. **Recreation Ministry**
3. **Singles Ministry**
4. **Trustee Board**
5. **Usher Ministry**
6. **Van Ministry**
7. **Women's Auxiliary**
8. **Worship Ministry**
9. **Youth Ministry**

B. Questions & Answers

New Members will have an opportunity to discuss faith-based issues with the Pastor. If time does not allow for a full discussion, the member can schedule an appointment with the Pastor.

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