

Greater Mt. Carmel Baptist Church

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Membership Manual

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From The Pastor's Desk:

Dear Church Family,

God has been graciously good unto us; with the aid of the Holy Spirit he has provided leadership to a dying congregation, which has grown both spiritually and physically. Remember that we are a body of believers committed to worshipping and serving Jesus Christ. Christ reached out to people of all ages and backgrounds, and at the place of our worship, we have a desire to do the same thing. Greater Mt. Carmel is the place where everyone can study the scriptures, fellowship together and minister to others through service opportunities. It is one thing to gather and it is another thing to be together. Let us be together. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them (Matt. 18:20)

I am anticipating the blessings of the Lord. It is my prayer that you faint not in this walk with Christ. A walk in which you may encounter a number of trials and stumbling blocks; But those who wait on the Lord will find new strength. They will fly on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31) Remember that while Build Each Other Up Through the Word of God, We have God's Revelation – God's Illumination – and God's Inspiration. Victory is not in the goal that you achieve, but in the blessings that you receive.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor: M.N.Guillory Jr.

From the Associate Ministers

On behalf of the members of the Pastor and church family, we are delighted that you have become a part of our fellowship. It is our desire that you find God's will for your life and help to advance the kingdom of God.

We hope to assist and develop you in the following areas:

- : You will gain an understanding of the word of God and the privilege and responsibilities of church membership.
- : We help each to become a growing participant in the life and ministry of the Christian fellowship and witness the Word.
- : You enter into the mainstream of church life and lock arms with us as we advance the cause of Christ.

It is our desire and responsibility to help you find your God given gift and use it to build up the body of Christ. We strongly urge you to attend every session that we may help one another to make the kingdom of this world the kingdom of our Christ.

May the Lord richly bless you and keep you, may he cause his face to shine upon you and grant you peace.

Church History

The history of GMCMBBC dates as far back as creation, but in the year of 1911 A.D. God saw fit to make her known to a dying world. A group of dedicated Christians, lead by the aid of the Holy Spirit too a step forward under the guidance of Dr. L.L. Love, Deacon John Simmons, Henry Gouden Sr. C. Louis, George Washington, Richard Blackman and Amozie Hargrove, the Greater Mt. Carmel MBC was organized. There were forward steps made both spiritually and physically. While the church was being Pastored by great preachers, such as G.W. Mitchell (12yrs), G.H. White (10yrs), Rev. Calvin Scott (8yrs), Rev J.D. Nash (3yrs), Rev A.W. Johnson (2yrs), and Rev. E. Croven (7yrs). In the year of 1941 the church was destroyed by a storm and she was rebuilt under the leadership of Rev. S.A. Johnson. In 1949 the Lord sent Rev. Radio James as Pastor of the church. With Rev. James came his wife and daughter who were faithful workers. While Rev. James worked with us faithfully for ten years, the church was moved from a dead end street to Washington Avenue near HWY 3. In the year of 1960, Rev. L.D. Harris was called to Pastor. Rev Harris stayed with the church for eight years. The church was left under the guidance of Rev. Jake Horne (an evangelist and one of our own); Rev. Horne would not accept leadership of the church due to his age. Rev. Horne carried on the services until 1968. In 1868, Rev. M.B. Boyd was called as Pastor. Under the leadership of Rev. Boyd the church made a great move. The church that sat on one lot was moved off of Washington Avenue, The church was rebuilt on the corner of Oklahoma and Strawberry, where we now sit on eight lots. The name of the church was changed from Mt. Carmel to Greater Mt. Carmel MBC. Under the leadership of Pastor Boyd the building, furnishing and land was all completely paid off. The associate ministers that worked with Rev. Boyd were Rev. Don Ceskis and Rev. J. Edmond. Rev. Boyd left the church and moved on. In 1990 Rev. R.O. Webb was called to Pastor the church. Under Rev. Webb the church obtained another building, which was the fellowship Hall.

In February 2006, the Lord saw fit to send Rev. Milton N. Guillory Jr. to Greater Mt. Carmel MBC. In the short time that Pastor Guillory has been with us, we have accomplished many great things. The Church purchased a 13 passenger van, Upgrades were done in the sanctuary, A Complete AC Unit was installed, and a fellowship hall was purchased. But much greater than physical repair of the building, Pastor Guillory through the aid of the Holy Spirit has revived a dying church. When Pastor Guillory came to Greater Mt. Carmel we had two deacons, now the church has been blessed with six deacons and eight preachers. Under Pastor Guillory's leadership the male chorus has been rejuvenated, the youth department was organized, and the church has grown in spirit and numbers. *Greater Mt. Carmel has been blessed with a Man After God's Heart.*

Origin of the Bible ***How We Got Our Bible***

A. Divine Source – (II Timothy 3:16)

The Bible came from God. It is the greatest book that has ever been written. In it, God himself speaks to man. It is a book of divine instructions. It offers comfort in sorrow, guidance in perplexities, advice for our problems, rebuke for our sins, and daily inspiration for our every need.

B. Human Writers

1. God used about forty men in writing the Bible. Some of these writers are unknown , such as the writers of Deuteronomy, the Book of Job, and some of the Psalms. In round numbers, the time in which the forty worked Included about sixteen hundred years, from 1500 B.C. To 100 A.D.

2. The perfect harmony of these writings is convincing evidence that all of them were guided by a single mind – the mind of God. Men so guided by God’s Spirit are called inspired men. These men wrote just what God wanted them write. They wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:21). They wrote not words of human Wisdom but in words taught by the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 2:13).

God

The Source of the Bible

Inspired Writers

Guided by God so they wrote exactly what he wanted

The Bible

The Bible is not simply one book. It is an entire library of books, covering the whole range of literature. It includes history, poetry, drama, biography, prophecy, philosophy, science, and inspirational readings.

The Bible alone truly answers the greatest questions that men of all ages have asked:

Where have I come from? Where am I going? Why am I here? How can I know the truth? For the Bible alone reveals the truth about God, explains the origin of man, points out the only way to salvation and eternal life, and explains the age ---- old problem of sin and suffering.

The greatest subject of the entire Bible is the Lord Jesus Christ and his work of redemption for mankind. The greatest purpose of the written word of God, the Bible, is to reveal the living word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. (John 1:1-18).

Books of the Bible

Books of the Bible.....	66
The Old Testament.....	39
The New Testament.....	27
Middle Book of the Old Testament.....	Proverbs
Middle Book of the New Testament.....	II Thessalonians

Origin of the Church

The church as we know it today was founded by Christ, and his teaching about what the church was to be and what it was to do makes a radical departure for the religious structure of the day. However, it was not a radical departure from the scriptures. Much of what Christ taught about the church was based in concepts rooted in the Old Testament and on his teachings about persons and their relationship to God.

The Church in the Old Testament

From the beginning, God intended to prepare a people especially for himself. Jesus as Christ, the eternal son of God was always in relation to the Father, so God always planned for Christians to be called the body of Christ and be prepared to be the Bride of Christ. The church as we know it today did not exist in the Old Testament. The Old Testament uses figures of speech and types to express God's ultimate plans for the church; and the people in the days of the Old Testament awaited the coming Messiah who would create the church. (Genesis 9:8-13; 15:1-5)

God's Purpose in a People

On several occasions in the days of the Old Testament God chose persons or groups of persons for a special relationship with himself; and he made covenants containing elements that are a foreshadowing of the New Testament church. God called a people to himself and bound himself into a relationship with him for the purpose of exercising his righteous rule over them. Yet, in none of these covenants did God establish the close, personal relationship that leads to the New Testament description of the church as the body of Christ and his bride. (II Samuel 7:12-14)

Jesus and the Church

When Jesus came into the world, there existed no such entity as the church. During the years of his ministry, he was laying the foundation for the church and bringing her into being. Ten days after his ascension the church was growing and functioning. It follows that the church began to function between those times. Jesus promised to build his church. (Matthew 16:18)

Pentecost as Endowment for the Church

Having been commanded to await the coming of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem, the incipient church assembled in an upper room and held prayer meeting for about ten days. This was the time between Jesus' ascension (about forty days after the Jewish Passover) and the coming of Jewish feast of Pentecost (fifty days after Passover. Although the church was fully constituted, it was not yet functional because it had no power. On the day of Pentecost the power came. The power was the Holy Spirit, who breathed life into the church and filled the individuals who composed it. The fact that about three thousand converts were added to the church that day (Acts 2:41) shows that the church began to function immediately when it received the Holy Spirit.

God's Plan of Salvation

(10 Key Verses to Memorize)

Romans 3:23 Romans 6:23 John 3:16 Ephesians 2:8-9 John 16:7-17
I John 1:9-20 Eccl. 7:20 Rom. 5:8 Hebrews 9:27 John 1:12

If you are not saved or have questions about your salvation, you can be saved and absolutely sure about it right now! Roman 10:9, 13; I John 5:13

God wants you to trust Christ as your Saviour and he will help you understand his Plan of Salvation. God tells us that we cannot understand the scriptures and teachings of the Holy Spirit until we are saved. *(The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. I Corinthians 2:14)*

Remember that God says that everyone is a sinner, less perfect than God. *(For all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God. Romans 3:23).*

(Read Eccl, 7:20)

Now since we are sinners, let us understand that all sin must be paid for, and the results and penalty of sin is death – separation from God, and no sin can enter into Heaven.

How then can you be saved?

Nothing you can do could help you obtain the absolute perfection God requires for eternal life. *(“For by grace are you saved through faith; and not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.” Not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9).*

So then you see that even being a good person, going to church, keeping God's law, etc. does not save you; you must through faith believe Jesus as Lord who paid the price for you and your sins, then you must ask him to personally come into your life as Lord and Master.

PROCESS OF SALVATION

- **ADMIT THAT GOD HAS NOT BEEN FIRST PLACE IN YOUR LIFE AND ASK HIM TO FORGIVE YOUR SINS.**
- **BELIEVE THAT JESUS DIED TO PAY FOR YOUR SINS AND THAT HE ROSE AGAIN ON EASTER, AND IS ALIVE TODAY.**
- **Accept God's Free Gift of Salvation**
- **Invite Jesus Christ To Come Into Your Life And Be The Director (Lord) Of Your Life.**

YOU CAN TAKE THESE STEPS BY PRAYING A SIMPLE PRAYER OF COMMITMENT TO GOD:

Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for loving me, even when I've ignored you and gone my own way. I realize I need you in my life; and I'm sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank you for dying on the cross for me. Help me to understand you more and more, and as much as I know I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept your gift of salvation. Help me grow now as a Christian.

"Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans 10:13

Understanding the Two Natures

Does a Truly Saved Person Sin Anymore?

Much confusion arises from improper teaching of the two natures of man. You need to understand this lesson so that you can effectively live your life for the Lord. The understanding of the Good and Bad or sinful and saved man who occupies residency in your life is needed. Without the understanding you will be confused, doubtful, anxious, and unable to maintain your faithfulness to the cause of Christ (Romans 7).

Lack of understanding of the two natures brings about questions like the following; (1) Does a truly saved person sin anymore? (2) Can I lose my salvation if I keep sinning? (3) what happens to a Christian when he sins? (4) How can a Christian have the power to really serve the Lord? In our series of lessons we will prayerfully and scripturally try to answer these questions. But first of all let us learn something about the New Birth.

The New Birth is provided by God when a man by sincere faith accepts the payment that the Lord Jesus made for him on Cavalry's cross. We are not saved as a result of works or deeds (Ephesians 2:8-9). It is not water baptism that saves us. (The thief on the cross was saved at the last minute but died without water baptism). But he received salvation. We are saved as a result of a new birth. Note that John 3:5 states a man must be born of water. However, this scripture definitely speaks of water as the Holy Spirit. It means being born of living water not H₂O, and is referred to throughout the book of John as the Holy Spirit (John 4:11 & 14 - John 7:38-39). The first birth is of the flesh. The second birth is of the Spirit (John 3:6). These are two completely separate, and nothing of the birth of the flesh has anything to do with the second birth, which is of the Spirit. The first birth is from fleshly parents. The Spirit birth is from God Himself, who is a Spirit (John 1:12-13).

The new birth is simply a matter of confession and admittance of the fact that you are a sinner and a belief in your heart that you believe in Christ Jesus as the son of God and an invitation for him to come into your life to become Lord and Master. The Holy Spirit is then guaranteed by God to you and to all who will believe (John 7:38-39, I Corinthians 1:22). The Holy Spirit is always spoken of as a gift from God, not coming by mans efforts. (Romans 5:5) There is absolutely nothing you can do to earn, work for or buy salvation. If that were so then all rich folk could buy a ticket to heaven and the poor would not have enough for a down payment and make it even if it could be paid in installments.

The Understanding

When a person is saved, a man's carnal desires of the flesh do not change or improve one iota. They remain the same. Flesh is Flesh, and it remains that way. Much unscriptural teaching and confusion come from thinking the old nature should get better after receiving salvation, and when people still see sin in their lives, it brings great doubt as to whether or not their conversion was real, or whether or not they have lost their salvation.

Learning to Pray

As a Christian, especially a new Christian, one of the most essential elements or needs in your life is that of real sincere prayer. Before you undertake to go into the Christian warfare and battlefield, you must develop a constant, consistent, and continuing Prayer Life. The following outlines will give you some steps you can follow that will help you to understand what prayer is and what it will do.

Purpose of Prayer

1. Prayer satisfies the deepest needs of the human heart. (Psalms 42:1-2)
2. Prayer is a means of discovering God's guidance. (Matthew 7:7, James 1:5)
3. Prayer is the means of communicating our needs and concerns to God. (John 16:23-27, Hebrews 4:16, I John 5:14)
4. Prayer aids us in our fight against sin and temptation. (Matthew 6:13; 26:41, II Thessalonians. 3:1-3)

Things That Will Hinder Effective Prayer

1. Not Praying in Faith or Believing . (James 1:5-8)
2. Not Praying enough or really asking for anything. (Matthew 21:22, James 4:3)
3. Asking for the wrong reasons (selfishness) (James 4:3)
4. Because of un-confessed sin in ones life. (Psalms 66:18)
5. Because of unsolved marital problems. (I Peter 3:7)
6. Living outside of God's Will. (I John 5:14=15)

How To Be Effective In Prayer

1. Be Well Rounded- In order to be effective there must be a balance in one's prayer life. Philippians 4:6-7 relates to three essential elements of effective prayer.
 - A. Personal Requests – the personal needs and desires we express to God.

- B. Supplication –the requests we make for other people and projects.
- C. Thanksgiving – remember to thank God for his answers and provisions of our needs.

2. Be Constant

3. Be Persistent

Prayer my dear friend is very serious business. There is no greater privilege than God has given to man then the privilege of prayer. Just think, prayer gives us access into the very presence of God. To think that you and I can hold a conversation with the God of the universe, and he hears us because he loves us and he answers our prayers. The wonder is that we do not use this privilege more.

How To Deal With Temptations

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. (I Corinthians 10:13)

You are definitely going to be tempted of the devil. This however will help you to become a mature Christian if you learn to deal with it in God's way. Temptation is the initial urging a person feels to commit sin. In itself temptation is not sin. However, if not dealt with correctly and immediately it can become sin rapidly.

Sources Of Temptation

The Bible teaches that temptation to sin come from three sources.

1. Satan (Genesis 3:1-3, I Peter 5:8, Revelation 20:1-3)
2. The Flesh (romans 8:5-13, Galatians 5:12-26)
3. The World (John 16:33, Romans 12:2, I Timothy 6:10, I John 2:15)

How You Can Escape Temptation?

1. Be Alert – Be on guard against the tempter (I Cor. 16:13, I Peter 5:8)
2. Be Filled – You will never successfully defeat temptation in your own strength. It is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that victory becomes possible. (Acts 1:8, Ephesians 5:18, Philippians 4:13)
3. Be Quick – Temptation must be dealt with when it arises. Don't put it off. Scripture shows a definite progression of events leading from temptation to sin. (James 1:14-15)
4. Know Biblical Escapes. I Corinthians 10:13 states that with every temptation, God promises a means of escape. Study God's Word and rely on it to help you find a way out. (Psalms 119:11, II Timothy 2:22, Matthew 4:1-11, James 4:7)

Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive Jesus Christ as our Saviour; and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, angels and his assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge and holiness; to give it a place in our affections, prayers and services above every organization of human origin; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered us, towards its expenses, for the support of a faithful and evangelical ministry among us, the relief of the poor and spreading of the Gospel throughout the world. In case of differences of opinion in the church, we will strive to avoid contentious spirit, and if we cannot unanimously agree, we will cheerfully recognize the right of the majority to govern.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to study diligently the word of God; to educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintance; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be kind and just to those in our employ, and faithful in the service we promise to others; endeavoring in the purity of heart and good will towards all men to exemplify and commend our holy faith.

We further engage to watch over, to pray for, to exhort and stir up each other unto every good work; to guard each others reputation, not needlessly exposing the infirmities of others; to participate in each others joys, and with tender sympathy bear one another's burdens and sorrows; to cultivate Christian courtesy; to be slow to give offense, but always ready to reconciliation, being mindful of the rules of the Saviour in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, to secure it without delay; and through life, amid evil report, to seek to live to the glory of God, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

When we remove from this place, we engage as soon as possible to unite with some other church where we can carry out the Spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Basis Of Covenant

The obligations of the church membership outlined in the covenant are all scriptural, as may be seen from the following study.

A. Salvation and Baptism (John 1:11-12; Matthew 28:19-20)

B. Duties of the Church

1. To walk together in Christian Love (John 13:34-35).
2. To strive for the advancement of the church and promote its prosperity and spirituality (Philippians 1:27; II Timothy 2:15; II Corinthians 7:1; II Peter 3:11)
3. To sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrine (Hebrews 10:25; Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 11:23-26; Jude 1:3).
4. To give it pre-eminence in my life (Matthew 6:33; Colossians 1:18).
5. To contribute cheerfully and regularly (I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 8:6-7; Galatians 6:6-9).
6. To carry my membership when I move and be active in church work where ever I live (Acts 11:19-21; 18: 24-28).

C. Duties in Personal Christian Living

1. To maintain family and secret devotions (I Thessalonians 5:17-18; Acts 17:11).
2. To religiously educate the children (II Timothy 3:15; Deuteronomy 6:4-7).
3. To seek the salvation of the lost (Acts 1:8; Matthew 4:19; Psalms 126:5-6; Proverbs 11:30).
4. To walk circumspectly in the world, and to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment. (Ephesians 5:15; Philippians 2:14-15; I Peter 2:11-12)
5. To avoid gossip and excessive anger (Ephesians 4:31; I Peter 2:21; Colossians 3:8; James 3:1-2).
6. To abstain from liquor (Ephesians 5:18; Habakkuk 2:15).
7. To be zealous in our efforts for Christ (Titus 2:14).

D. Duties of Fellow Members

1. To watch over one another in love (I Peter 1:22)
2. To pray for one another (James 5:16).
3. To aid in sickness and distress (Galatians 6:2; James 2:14-17).
4. To cultivate sympathy and courtesy (I Peter 3:8).
5. To be slow to take offense, always ready for reconciliation (Ephesians 4:30-32).

Definite Decisions

By the grace of God through faith in Christ you have made a definite decision for Christ as Saviour and Lord. You have decided to live and walk with him. This is a decision – the greatest you have made, or will make, in your life. By faith in Christ you now have eternal life. Believing in Christ, you are now a Christian.

Following the leadership of Christ, you have offered yourself for membership in his Church. The Church has encouraged you and you have followed Christ in baptism. You have made a definite decision for a consecrated life of service in the membership of the Church. The Church is now receiving you into full fellowship of its membership. Surely you will desire to be a good member of the Church. You will desire to put much effort into this new relationship – much time, faith, prayer, and thought. And to gain much pleasure and profit in the service of God and man. You will make your own success or failure as a member of the Church. You can make a success of your membership in the Church. You will find the members of the Church ready to help you at all times. God, the Father is ready to help you, for we read his promise, *My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee assurance* (Ex.33:14). The Lord Jesus Christ is ready to help you, for we read, Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy (Jude 24). The Holy Spirit is ready to help, we read, *He dwelleth in you and shall be in you* (John 14:17).

Face Fundamental Facts

It will help you now if you will face four fundamental facts and make a positive decision about of them.

Church Membership Does Not Save: You are saved by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Good works cannot save. Culture cannot save. Baptism does not save. Your membership in the church does not save. Christ has done that and there is none else sufficient to it. You are to live a consistent life in the Church because Christ has saved you.

Christians Are Continuously Tempted: You must not think you will not be tempted since you have become a Christian. Temptations will be

increased and will be more severe. You have just enlisted in the Lord's army and will now need the Lord's Armor. (Ephesians 6:10-18)

Christians Have Greater Joy. No joy is taken away from the person who becomes a Christian. In fact, to become a Christian places one in position to have real joy, the happiest possible life. Jesus said to believers, *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full* (John 15:11). You can now be the happiest person in the world.

Christians Have Larger Liberty: It does not take away one's liberty to become a Christian. In fact, the Christian have larger liberty. The Christian is no longer a slave to needless restrictions and endless prohibitions. We read, *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty* (2 Cor.3:17). The Christian is delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Romans 8:21). The Christian has God's Freedom.

Definite Decision To Do

Keep yourselves in the love of God (Jude 21). You will desire to make definite decisions to follow lines of activities, which will aid greatly in the Christian life. We mention some of these basic activities. Not one of these can be neglected if you expect to make a success of the Christian life and its membership of the Church.

Love The Church: *Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it* (Ephesians 5:25). The fact that Christ love the church is sufficient reason for us to love it and support it and give ourselves for it. Christ gave himself for the church daily during his earthly life.

It was clearly the person of Christ to teach, preach, and heal; for we read, *And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in the synagogue, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of diseases among the people* (Matthew 4:23). When Christ went back to be at the right hand of the Father he committed this threefold program of the Church. The Church maintains a teaching program, a training service, and the worship services. It will be your duty, as well as privilege, to attend these various services and give yourself for the work of the church constantly.

Worship the Lord: *Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name* (Matt. 6:9). *Oh worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness* (Psalms

96:9). *Oh come, Let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker* (Psalms 95:6). We are admonished by the scriptures to search the scriptures (John 5:39) and to pray without ceasing (2Thess. 5:17). In the former, God talks with us in the latter we talk with God. Worship and fellowship with God should be private (Matt. 6:6) and public (Luke 4:16). Both are essential and fill different needs in life. to be faithful in worship will assure success in the Christian life.

Study the Word: *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed* (2 Timothy 2:15). God has said, *My people doth not consider* (Isaiah 1:3). *Where there is no vision, the people perish* (Proverbs 29:18). It is not enough to read the Word of God. We must study it. We must think as we read and be able by the help of the Holy Spirit to interpret and apply the truth of the Word. Many fail here. Not thinking, we go on the rocks. It is said of the children of Issachar that *They had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do* (I Chronicles 12:32). The children of the Lord can have such understanding today. They must think. Therefore, add to your worship, thinking.

Serve the Lord: Jesus said, *I am among you as he that serveth* (Luke 22:21). You must now follow in his footsteps. *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.* (John 9:4) *Whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God* (I Cor. 10:31). *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might* (Eccl 9:10). You must labor for the Lord, or lose the influence of Christian life. Today is the day for you to go to work for God. He has work for you to do. Find your task. You can find it by talking to the Lord about it, or to your Pastor, or other leaders in the church. When you find your work prepare yourself to do it, and then do it for the good of mankind, and most of all for the Glory of the Lord.

Keep His Commandments: Obedience is taught in all the Bible and is absolutely necessary for success in the Christian life. Obedience is the test of love for God, for Jesus said, *He that hath my commandments, and keeppeth them, he it is that loveth me.* (John 14:21) It is the ground of abiding in his love, *If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love* (John 15:10). It is a condition of friendship with the Lord Jesus, *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you* (John 15:14). Obedience is the requirement for happiness in the Christian life, *if ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them* (John 13:17). From these passages, it is very certain that the Lord Jesus Christ expects

every believer to be obedient. Obedience is to go God's way and do God's will. Where there is a difference between your desire and God's will. No amount of planning, or proposing, or promising will take the place of obedience. Obedience means activity. It means doing. Worship will not suffice, Thinking will not be enough. There is no substitute for obedience. Willing and joyous obedience will bring success in the Christian life.

Giving: *God loveth the cheerful giver (II Corinthians 9:7). Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase (Proverbs 3:9). Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse – saith the Lord of hosts (Malachi 3:10). Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom (Luke 6:38). Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him (I Corinthians 16:2).* And on and on we may go giving vital and clear passages from the Word of God on this important subject. The right use of money is a test of character. No stingy person can succeed in the Christian life. you will desire to face fairly the Lord's teaching on the use of money and make a definite decision to honor him with your substance.

Live For Others: *Love one another (John 15:17). Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (John 15:12). Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. (I John 3:18). Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in purity (I Timothy 4:12).* The self centered life will never succeed as a Christian. The world is waiting for the person who is willing to spend himself for others. Give wisdom to the wayward, comfort to the sorrowing, encourage to the discouraged, strength to the weak, purpose to the listless, and help the needy. Make a definite decision too be a blessing to the people about you.

Be Of Good Cheer: Jesus said it and then added, *I have overcome the world (John 16:33).* There is no reason to lose hope if we abide in Christ. *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong (I Corinthians 16:13). Add to you faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience Godliness; and to Godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity .If these things be in you, and abound, the life can be cheerful and fruitful for the Glory of God.*

Face Forward: *Jesus stedfastly set his face to o to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51). I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ*

Jesus (Philippians 3:14) are the words of the great apostle Paul. Let us go on is the way this sentiment is expressed in the Hebrew letter. *Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith* (Hebrews 12:1-2).

IN THE FAITHFUL PRACTICE OF THESE THINGS, THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN IN THE CHURCH CAN BE A GLORIOUS VICTORY.

Baptism and The Lord's Supper

It is important to understand the symbolism of baptism in order to grasp its significance. The New Testament tells us that the washing with water symbolizes the washing away of our sins (Acts 22:16; 2:38). Being "under" the water (whether figuratively or literally) symbolizes being dead and buried with Christ (Romans 6:3-7; Colossians 2:11-12); only when we identify with Christ in his death and burial can we share in a spiritual resurrection to newness of life that will be followed one day with our physical resurrection.

The Old Testament correspondence to the sacrament of baptism is circumcision (Genesis 17:9-14; 23-27), and the correspondence to the Lord's Supper is the Passover Meal (Exodus 12:1-27). Circumcision was given as the sign of initiation into the Old Covenant community, while regular observance of the Passover Meal was to signify a continual renewal of the covenant. In the same way, baptism is the sign of initiation into the New Covenant community (Matthew 28:19; Galatians 3:26-29), while the Lord's Supper signifies the regular remembrance and renewal of our covenant with God and each other (I Corinthians 11:23-26). Thus, baptism and the Lord's Supper go hand in hand: the former as a once for all initiation into the covenant community and the latter as the continual renewal of the covenant. Based upon this understanding, the minister who administers the Lord's Supper to the congregation invites only those who are baptized believers to participate.

Stewardship

Stewardship is giving back of our time, talent, and treasure... according as the Lord has blessed you. (Deuteronomy 16:17) God who owns everything, including our health, and our paychecks, allows us to manage his treasures here on earth. He expects us to be good stewards of his affairs. It is because of his generosity and graciousness toward us that we cannot afford to be selfish or indifferent toward others. Since we were made in his image, we are to behave likewise. God gave us his only Son for our salvation (John 3:16); and Jesus announced and exemplified what stewardship is all about (Luke 4:18-19). To maximize our Christian call and walk, we must take the time to attend bible studies and learn God's Word; use our talents through the many ministries, and become faithful tithers, as we make money's and other resources available to assist those who are in need. (I Corinthians 8:1-15). Scripture illustrates that simply being on the membership roll is insufficient for the commitment that you are now making to the Body of Christ.

God's Plan For Church Finance

God works by plans. He has a plan for everything. He had a plan when he made the Universe. He had a plan when he made man and he had a plan for the human family on the earth. He had a plan for salvation and a plan for the work of his church. He has a plan for the finances of the great program of work that he gave his Church to do.

One way you may give of your resources is through financial gifts. As is the case with all churches, Greater Mt. Carmel Church depends upon the faithful giving of the people of God to sustain the work to which we believe Christ has called us. Tithing was established by God to help his people acknowledge his ownership and provision of everything they had (I Chronicles 29:14; Malachi 3:6-12). A tithe is 10% of a persons yearly increase and was set aside as an offering holy unto the Lord (Leviticus 27:30-34; Deuteronomy 14:22-23, 28). In the New Testament tithing is affirmed by Jesus (Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42). Paul speaks about giving in II Corinthians 8:1-15 as he describes the example of the Macedonian church. These Christians gave sacrificially even though they were poor because of their trust in God's continued provisions for them.

Paul encouraged the Corinthian church to follow their example and “excel in the grace of giving” (v. 7). Giving is not to be done under compulsion, but out of the overflow of a thankful heart for all God has done for us, and according to our means (vv. 8–15). Our giving is to be the instrument through which God provides for each member in the body of Christ: “at the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need”(v. 14).

Church Membership Responsibilities

I. The Meaning of 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.

II. The Nature of Church Membership

Church membership is a divinely established, legally binding relationship between God and His people whereby they agree to function in harmony with other believers under His designated structure of authority in accordance with the revealed guidelines of Scripture resulting in long-term consequences over time. This relationship is called a covenant.

III. The Goal of Church Membership

It is God’s expressed desire that each member of His Church becomes a disciple of Jesus Christ. Discipleship is that process whereby a Christian progressively learns to bring every area of their life under the lordship of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20; I Corinthians 10:3; Matthew 10:24-29).

IV. The Philosophy of Church Membership

The Church has been established to be a spiritual community, which models the kingdom of God on earth. As such, it is the role of the Church

and its members to provide a divine alternative of God's activity in the world without at the same time becoming a part of the world (John 17:14-19).

V. The Vision of Church Membership

Since it is the role of the Church to be God's alternative in society, then it is the vision of this church to develop a comprehensive program of outreach, not only in the church, but also in the community. This outreach should extend into every social sphere whether it be education, economics, politics etc., so that the sovereignty and supremacy of Christ is demonstrated through the impact of each member of His body, the Church (Ephesians 2:19-23; Colossians 1:14-19).

VI. The Accountability of Church Membership

When a person becomes a member of the local Church he/she is responsible for pursuing Godliness through the application of the Scripture in their daily lives. It is the responsibility of the Church to assist the believer in achieving this goal as well as holding the member accountable through the process of church discipline when they refuse to submit themselves to biblical authority (Matthew 18:15-20; I Corinthians 5:1-13; 6:1-8; II Thessalonians 3:14-15). The willingness to be accountable is reflected in the two symbols Christ left for the members of His Church to observe.

- a. Baptism – This symbol is where a believer publicly identifies with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and in so doing pledges to live under his authority in the context of the local Church (Romans 6:1-11).
- b. Communion – This symbol is the ongoing renewal of the Christian's commitment to Jesus Christ. It reflects one's continuous pledge of faithfulness through confession of sin and renewed dependency on God's grace (I Corinthians 11:20-34).

VII. The Experiences of Church Membership

- a. Worship – (Acts 2:42): In worship, our goal will be to get those who enter into our fellowship to make the exaltation of God in their lives and the submitting to His authority the supreme purpose of their lives. This is to be demonstrated by their faithful participation in the corporate Sunday gathering of the Church and regular participation in communion.
- b. Education – (Acts 2:42,): Each member is to attend at least one Bible Class. This promotes learning among God’s people and an obedient response to His word.
- c. Outreach – (Acts 2:41, 47): Each member is to be serving in some ministry area of the church so as to further the ministry of Greater Mt. Carmel both internally to our membership for the building of this local body, and externally to the world for the salvation of souls and the bettering of society.
- d. Fellowship – (Acts 2:42-47): To provide a system of accountability and intimate fellowship at our ever-growing Church. We recommend each member to find prayer partner to provide a context for mutual support and encouragement.

VIII. The Expectations of Church Membership

A member of Greater Mt. Carmel can expect to receive the following:

- a. The faithful teaching and preaching of God’s word so that they can grow.
- b. A program designed to minister to the unique needs of all members of the family (children, youth, adults).
- c. A leader who will maintain regular contact with you so that the Church is kept abreast of your needs, prayer requests and praises.

- d. A dynamic context of fellowship and the building of quality Christian relationships.

IX. The Responsibilities of Church Membership

All members of Greater Mt. Carmel are to fulfill three areas of responsibilities:

- a. **GROW** - This is the responsibility to regularly and obediently expose oneself to the Word of God so that the Spirit of God can produce the process of spiritual maturity in one's life (I Peter 2:2).
- b. **SERVE** - This is the responsibility to use your abilities and time to serve the broader body of Christians in the Church. This is accomplished through the selection and faithful participation in one area of church ministry (I Corinthians 12:12-27).
- c. **GIVE** - This is the responsibility to share your resources with the Lord and His Church for the furthering of the ministry of the Church. This is accomplished through the giving of a minimum of 10% from the total of one's earnings to the Church (I Corinthians 16:1-2).

Living Your Calling

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, Who Have Been Called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28 (NIV)

My Prayer is that light will flood your hearts and that you will understand the hope that was given to you when God Called You. Then you will discover the glorious blessings that will be yours together with all God's people! Eph. 1:18-19 (CEV)

WHAT I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MY LIFE'S CALLING

1. _____
God, by his grace through Christ, has called you to become his people. Gal. 1:6 (NCV)

He gas saved us and called us to a holy life - not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. II Tim. 1:9 (NIV)

2. _____
Before the two boys were born, God told Rebekah, The older will serve the younger. This was before the boys had done anything good or bad. God said this so that the one chosen would be chosen because of God's own plan. He was chosen because he was the one God wanted to call, not because of anything he did. Rom. 9:11 (NCV)

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Eph. 2:10 (NIV)

3. _____
It pleased God in his kindness to choose me and call me, even before I was born! What undeserved mercy!! Gal 1:15(NLV)

Before I shaped you in the womb, I knew all about you. Before you saw the light of day, had holy plans for you. JER. 1:5 (MES)

I am your Creator. You were in my care even before you were born! Isaiah 44:2

4. _____
By calling me into his service, Jesus has judged me trustworthy, even though I used to be a blasphemer and persecutor and contemptuous. Mercy, however, was shown me, because while I lacked faith, I acted in ignorance. I Tim. 1:12-13 (NJB)

5. _____
God's gifts and his calling are irrevocable. Rom. 11:29 (NIV)
God's gifts and his call can never be withdrawn. Rom. 11:29 (NLT)

6. _____
We are all one body, we have the same Spirit, and we have all been called to the same glorious future hope. Eph. 4:4 (NLT)

Brothers and Sisters, you are holy partners in a heavenly calling. Heb. 3:1 (GW)

7. _____
I now urge you to live the life to which God called you. Eph. 4:1 (NCV)

That is why we always pray for you, asking our God to help you live the kind of life he called you to live. We pray that with his power God will help you do the good things you want and perform the works that come from your faith. II Thes. 1:11 (NCV)

The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it. I Thes. 5:24 (NIV)

8. _____
I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. Phil. 3:14 (NIV)

Live the kind of life that pleases God, who calls you to share in his own Kingdom and glory. I Thes. 2:12 (TEV)

Living Your Calling (Answer Sheet)

- 1. My Calling is a Gift From God.**
- 2. I'm Called For God's Purpose.**
- 3. God Chose My Calling Before I Was Born.**
- 4. My Sins and My Mistakes Don't Change My Call.**
- 5. My Calling is Permanent.**
- 6. My Calling is Connected to Others.**
- 7. God Empowers What He Calles Me To Do.**
- 8. There's a Prize For Living Out My Call.**

Called To Be Loved

Long ago, even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave him great pleasure. Ephesians 1:4-5 (NLT)

- **The first purpose of my life is** _____
This letter is from Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James. I am writing to all who are Called To Live In The Love Of God the Father and in the Care of Jesus Christ. Jude 1:1 (NLT)
- **My first calling is** _____
Dear friends in Rome, God loves you dearly, and he has Called you to be his very own people. Romans 1:7 (NLT)
- **That relationship is to be** _____
What an incredible quality of love the Father has shown to us, that we should be named and called and counted the children of God! And so we are!
1 John 3:1 (AMP)
- I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your hearts as you trust him. May your roots go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous love. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how Wide, how Long, how High, and how Deep his love really is. May you Experience the love of Christ though it is so great you will never fully understand it.
Ephesians 3:17-19 (NLT)

God's Love Is:

Wide Enough _____

Long Enough _____

Deep Enough _____

High Enough _____

WHAT CHANGES HAPPEN WHEN I STAY AWRE OF GOD'S CONSTANT LOVE FOR ME?

1. _____
By faith we have been made acceptable to God. And now, because of our Lord Jesus Christ, we live at peace with God. Romans 5:1 (CEV)

If God says his chosen ones are accepted to him, can anyone bring charges against them? Or can anyone condemn them? No indeed. Romans 8:33-34 (CEV)

2. _____
All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. So, you should not be cowering, fearful slaves. Yu should behave instead like God's very own children, adopted into his family--- calling him Father, dear Father. ...And since we are his children, we will share his treasures----for everything God gives to his Son, Christ, is ours, too. Romans 4:14-15, 17 (NLT)

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:16 (NIV)

3. _____
And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28 (NIV)

4. _____
There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. I John 4:18 (NIV)

5. _____
So don't worry about having enough food or drink or clothing. He will give you all you need from day to day if you live for him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern. So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today. Mark 6:33-34 (NLT)

Give yourselves completely to God since you have been given new life. Romans 6:13b (NLT)

To all who believed him and accepted him, Jesus gave the right to become children of God. John 1:12 (NLT)

Called To Be Loved **(Answer Sheet)**

- **To Be Loved By God**
- **To Enjoy A Relationship With God**
- **His Son or Daughter**

God's Love is:

Wide Enough To Be Everywhere
Long Enough To Last Forever
Deep Enough To Handle Anything
High Enough To Overlook My Mistakes

**WHAT CHANGES HAPPEN WHEN I STAY AWRE OF GOD'S CONSTANT
LOVE FOR ME?**

- 1. I Feel Accepted Rather Than Ashamed**
- 2. I'm Bold In Bringing My Needs To God**
- 3. I Have Peace In Pain I Don't Understand**
- 4. I Gain The Courage To Take Risks**
- 5. I Worship Instead Of Worry**

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