

Children's Membership Manual

for North Park Church



And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk on the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. Deuteronomy 6:6-7



CHILDREN'S MANUAL

Lesson One

The Truth About Man

I. The Original State of Man

Read Genesis 1:27-2:17

Questions for Discussion

- What does it mean that we were created in the image of God?
- What job did God give man to do?
- What did God require of Adam?

- A. God created man and woman in His own _____ (Gen. 1:27). Think about what this means. It does not mean that man is a _____, but he was created in some ways like _____ able to think and choose and be creative. Originally man had some god-like moral qualities as well. He was able to have _____ with God and carry on _____ with Him just like two close _____.
- B. God also gave man some special _____ (Gen 1:28, 2:15). He let him _____ the earth and rule over His _____. All man's _____ were provided for and he was never _____ or _____.
- C. God put only one _____ on man in order to keep enjoying these privileges (Gen. 2:16,17). Man could eat from anything in the garden except the _____ of the knowledge of _____ and _____.

II. The Terrible Sin of Man

Read Genesis 3:1-24

Questions for Discussion

- What changed the perfect relationship between God and man?
- In what ways was this relationship changed?
- What effect did sin have on all that God created including man?

- A. Adam and Eve did not _____ God's simple law. They listened to the lies of _____ and ate the forbidden fruit. Immediately the perfect relationship they had with God was broken because of their _____. This is shown in part when they are _____ and _____ from God (Gen.3:10).

Over

B. Because they broke God's law, they immediately _____ spiritually and began to _____ physically (Genesis 2:17). Because all men and women came from Adam and Eve, we are all born spiritually _____ as well, with a heart that leads us to sin. The apostle Paul, in the Book of Romans, reminds us of this condition of all men. Write out the following two verses and memorize them:

Romans 3:23 _____

Romans 6:23 _____

Catechism Questions

(The student needs only to learn the answer to each question.)

#33 What befell our first parents when they had sinned?

Instead of being holy and happy, they became sinful and miserable.

#35 What effect had the sin of Adam on all mankind?

All mankind are born in a state of sin and misery.

#37 What does every sin deserve?

The wrath and curse of God.

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Lesson Two

The Truth About God

I. The Justice and Mercy of God

Read Psalm 89:14

Questions for Discussion

- Why did God have to punish men for his sin?
- What is mercy?

- A. As we learned in Lesson One, the sin of Adam and Eve brought _____ into the world for the first time. If God loved Adam and Eve, why did He not just forgive them and _____ about what they did? Remember Genesis 2:16,17? God cannot lie or go back on His word. If He did not punish them, He would not be _____. Remember Romans 6:23? The wages, or payment, for sin is _____.
- B. But God had a plan. What if the punishment for sin was not forgotten, but instead given to someone else?! Then man would not get what he deserved. This is called the _____ of God. By God keeping His word, and punishing someone else, both His _____ and _____ are shown.

II. The Death and Resurrection of Christ

Read John 3:16-18,36

Questions for Discussion

- Why was Jesus the only man who could die for our sins?
- What was our proof that God accepted the sacrifice of His Son for us?

- A. In order for God to be just, He would have to punish a _____ man. This man would be required to shed his _____ and die for us (see Isaiah 53:4-6). So God in His _____ for us had to send His only _____ to _____ so that we might _____. Memorize John 3:16. This is the only way all conditions could be met.

Catechism Question

#48 What is meant by the Atonement?

Christ's satisfying divine justice, by His sufferings and death, in the place of sinners.

- B. _____, God's Son, obeyed the laws of God, which no one else has done. God accepted Christ's payment for our sin and raised Him from the _____. Now those who believe in Christ can have _____ rather than eternal punishment in hell (John 3:36).

III. The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Read John 14:26

Questions for Discussion

- Why is the Holy Spirit called a Helper?

A. God sent us not only His Son, Jesus Christ, but also a Helper known as the _____.

Why did we need someone else? Since we were _____ in our sins, God knew that we would not

_____ in His Son on our own. He sent God the Holy Spirit to lead us to believe in

Christ as our _____ and _____. The salvation and eternal life that

comes to us through the Holy Spirit is a _____ that we

cannot earn. However, there are conditions of acceptance of this gift that we will examine in Lesson Three and Six.

Catechism Question

#40 Who can change a sinner's heart?

The Holy Spirit alone.

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Lesson Three

Repentance and Faith

I. The Repentance Necessary for Salvation

Questions for Discussion

- Is there some good in every man?
- Why do some people not take sin seriously?
- What is the difference in “being sorry” and repenting?

- A. Salvation is a _____ gift, but it is not cheap. It cost Jesus terrible suffering when He gave His _____ for us. Our Lord not only paid the price for our _____, but He gave us His righteousness! Isn't there a little good in each of us? Read Romans 3:9-12. According to the Bible, there is not a little bit of _____ in any of us. And yet God's Word requires that we must _____ perfectly in order to have eternal life. Therefore, we must receive the perfect _____ of Jesus Christ in order to meet God's requirement and live eternally.
- B. In Mark 2:17, Jesus told the scribes that only those who are sick need a doctor. And not only those who are sick, but those who know they are sick. Jesus was talking about sin. All men commit _____ in their minds, hearts, and actions. Yet some men either do not _____ in sin, do not _____ about sin, or do not see the terrible _____ of sin. The Holy Spirit draws men to Jesus Christ by first making them realize their _____ as sinners and seeing their need for a Savior.
- C. Read Matthew 27:3-5. In this account, we see Judas admitting that he had _____ by betraying Jesus. But what did Judas do when he recognized he was a _____? He did not turn to trust in _____ as Lord and Savior, but went away and _____ himself. Before we can come to true faith in Jesus, we must not only recognize that we are sinners, but must turn away from that sin to trust Jesus for forgiveness and the power to overcome it the next time. This is called _____. Just saying, “Oh, that doesn't matter, God will forgive me,” is not a sign of true repentance. Repentance means you feel _____ about your sin and sincerely want to do better.

II. The Faith that Leads to Eternal Life

Questions for Discussion

- What do some people put their faith in for salvation other than Jesus Christ?
- What does it mean to put “faith in faith”?
- Why is Jesus the only object of our faith?

Over

Read and discuss the following story with your parents. Then note what each of these characters were putting their faith in or what concern they had.

- A. Faith N. Self _____
- B. Faith N. Feelings _____
- C. Dad D. Saidso _____
- D. Iva Mazin Story _____
- E. Notty Nuff Faith _____
- F. Ben Worryin _____

In the youth Sunday School class of a small church, an important discussion took place. The teacher had presented some questions to the group. "Can we be sure that we are Christians? How do we know we are going to heaven?"

*One girl named **Faith N. Self** excitedly waved her hand and cried, "I know I'm going to heaven!" "How do you know?" asked the teacher. "Because," she replied, "I have been in this Sunday School all my life and I try to be good. Besides, my dad is an elder in this church!"*

The teacher responded gently, "Faith N. Self, you are named well because you seem to think you are a Christian because of your attendance at church and Sunday School, and because you try to be good. Remember that the Bible says, 'By grace you are saved through faith not of your SELF, it is a gift of God, not of WORKS, so that no man should boast.' This faith is not in self, but in a Person. Remember Paul said, 'I know WHOM I have believed', not WHAT. Of course, Paul was speaking about Jesus."

*At this point her cousin, **Faith N. Feelings**, spoke up and said, "Well, I know I am going to heaven because I just feel like I am a Christian. Every time we sing those beautiful songs, it makes me feel like I'm in heaven already!"*

*"Hmmm," said the teacher, "Do you always feel that way?" "No, not all of the time. When things get rough sometimes I don't feel that way. Then other times I am just 'blah' and don't think about God or heaven at all." "You can see, **Faith N. Feelings**, from your own life that emotions, moods, and feelings often change. The Bible says that 'He who believes on the Son has everlasting life...' no matter how you feel or what kind of good or bad situation you find yourself in. Your faith should be in Jesus and His Word which never changes." "Yeah, that's right," resounded one of the boys in the class named **Dad D. Saidso**. "My dad and mother have told me that stuff a hundred times and they tell me I am a Christian and going to heaven, so I don't worry about it."*

"It's great that your parents have taught you well," replied the teacher, "but remember that you must put your trust in Jesus Christ and His Word yourself. Trusting your parents is great, but what they say about your faith cannot substitute for you. You must personally trust Him."

*At this point, a little girl in the back, frantically waving her hand, was called on. "Teacher, when you hear what I have to tell, you will know I am saved." This girl's name was **Iva Mazin Story**. She proceeded to tell the group how she was lying in her bed one night and an image of Jesus appeared on the wall above her stereo, telling her He loved her and not to worry about anything. Based on that vision, she said she knew she was going to heaven.*

The teacher replied, "Iva, that is an amazing story, but just remember that God says His Word was 'written unto us...that we may know we have eternal life.' Lots of people have strange dreams and visions, but this experience should not be the center of your faith. Jesus Christ must be."

Over

The teacher then noticed a member of the class staring at the floor, looking very sad. “What’s wrong, **Notty Nuff Faith?**” said the teacher. “I am worried,” replied Notty, “that even though I have faith in Jesus, that I do not have enough faith. Sometimes I am afraid to die and wonder if I need to ask Christ into my heart again. Will I ever get enough faith not to worry about my salvation?”

“No, you won’t, Notty Nuff, because it is not your great faith that saves you—it is the Great Savior. You see you are trusting in the amount of faith you have to save you, but it is Jesus Who saves! Faith is trusting Him to do it. Do you believe He is able to save you?” the teacher asked. “Oh, yes,” said Notty Nuff. “Then stop worrying and making yourself miserable! Rejoice in His love and His ability to save you. Then He will build your faith.”

Notty Nuff’s friend **Ben Worryin** spoke up frantically. “But what if we stop trusting Jesus? Can we be unsaved?” “The Bible says,” said the teacher, “that Jesus gives us eternal life if we truly deny ourselves, repent, and follow Him. And no one will be able to pluck us out of His hand. Again it is not our great faith that holds on to Him, He holds on to us and will never let us go. So stop worrying, Ben, and start trusting!” The Sunday School hour was almost over and there was one hand still in the air. “Yes, **Sal**,” recognized the teacher.

“I have assurance of my salvation and I know I’m going to heaven,” said the boy, whose full name was **Sal Vation Assured**. “You think you’re so perfect?” retorted Faith N. Self, who obviously had not been listening to the discussion. “No, in fact I had to see what a sinner I am before I could put my trust in the Lord Jesus as my Savior. I trusted His promise to save me and give me eternal life. It’s just like the bank account my dad started to help me go to college. I won’t receive the money until I am 18 years old. But I know the money is there and drawing interest.

“How do you know for sure?” asked Ben Worrin. “Because my father told me so,” he replied confidently. Sal went on to explain that he could trust his Heavenly Father even more because God is perfectly trustworthy and cannot lie, plus he could see evidence of God’s truth in this life. “What do you mean by that?” asked Faith N. Feelings.

Sal Vation said, “There are proofs that the Bible gives, sort of like the bank statement I get that tells that my college money is really there. One proof is obeying God’s commandments in His Word. Sure I don’t always keep them, but I really want to and have seen God change my heart to be more obedient to Him. An example would be the change of my hatred for some mean kids on my street to a love for them. The Lord even gave me the strength to witness for Him to one of them. If Jesus were not in my life, I would never have done that! I have a long way to go, but the Lord has promised to make me more like Himself. He keeps all His promises. So I know one day I will be in heaven with Jesus.”

Scripture References

I John 5:13
 I John 2:3,4
 II Timothy 1:12
 John 10:27,28
 I John 3:14
 John 3:36
 John 3:16

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Lesson Four

Spiritual Growth and the Church

I. The Necessity of Spiritual Growth

Questions for Discussion

- What is our role and God's role in growing spiritually?
- Why is a quiet time daily with God important?
- What can we do in our time alone with God?

- A. Read 1 Peter 2:2. After the Holy Spirit brings us to repentance and faith in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, He also helps us to _____. Just like a little baby needs _____ to be healthy and grow, new Christians need to feed on the _____ of God to become _____ in Christ. Even though we feed a baby properly, it is _____ who produces the growth. In the same way, Christians read and study God's Work, but depend on _____ to make them grow in grace and knowledge.
- B. Another way that we grow stronger in Christ is to spend time _____ with Him. Read Mark 1:35. Here you see Jesus going to a special _____ where He could be alone with _____. Why is this important? Suppose I called you my best friend in the whole world, but I never talked to you, called you, or spent any time with you! We wouldn't even know each other, much less be best friends! It's the same with our relationship to God. We should take _____ to talk with Him every _____. As we get to _____ Jesus better, He will help us to _____ even more.
- C. As we spend time alone with God, we will _____ to Him and He will _____ to us. Talking to God is known as _____. Read I John 5:13-15. Just as we can _____ we have eternal life, we _____ that God hears our prayers and will answer them according to His will _____. When we pray we should ask God for things, but we also should _____ Him for being Almighty God. Read Psalms 33:1-3. Here we see that it is our duty and joy to _____ God in prayer. We also can praise Him by _____ and playing _____. God loves for us to praise Him and will help us to _____ even stronger as we spend time praising Him.

Over

II. The Role of the Church in Spiritual Growth

Questions for Discussion

- Why does a Christian need the local church?
- What is a denomination?
- What is the distinctive belief of the EPC?
- What are deacons and elders?

- A. In addition to Bible study, devotions, and prayer, God produces growth in our lives through _____ with other Christians. Read Hebrews 10:24,25. These verses point out that God did not intend for us to always worship _____, but to meet with others for prayer, study, and mutual _____. The place that is normally used for this meeting together is called the local church. Although the universal (catholic) church contains all true believers in Christ worldwide, the local church consists of a smaller group of believers with common beliefs, interests, and commitments in ministry. North Park Church is one of these local churches.
- B. When large numbers of local churches band together due to commonly held doctrinal beliefs and practices, a _____ is formed. North Park is part of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church denomination. One of the very important beliefs of our denomination is that the Bible is the _____ Word of God and that it is _____. Memorize II Timothy 3:16,17. The word “inspired” (God-breathed) means that the Bible was written by the _____ through the instrument of _____. Therefore, it is “inerrant”, meaning that it is totally true and eternal, just as God is. Read Isaiah 40:8. Since God is true and correct, His word is also “inerrant,” meaning it is perfect in the original manuscripts and contains no _____. The EPC denomination is founded on this belief along with many others that centered in the Bible as God’s _____.
- C. Within the denomination there are smaller groups of local churches called presbyteries. These presbyteries meet to encourage, discipline, and support the local churches, just as members of the local church meet to encourage one another. The officers of the local church are known as _____. In the EPC these are _____ who are elected by the people in the local church. Their job is to rule, teach, and shepherd the people in the congregation. One of these elders is called the _____. This man is called by God through the people to provide _____ for the church through teaching, preaching, and counseling as well as equipping others to do so. Another church officer besides the elder is the _____. The deacons are responsible for the physical needs of the local church including ministry to the poor, finances, maintaining buildings, etc. Read I Timothy 3:8-12 and Titus 1:5-9. Here we can see that both the office of

_____ and _____ are mentioned in the Bible and that God puts
 _____ standards on their behavior.

- D. To provide for your growth in Christ, North Park Church offers the following programs as a part of its ministry to young people:

<u>PROGRAMS</u>	<u>MEETING TIMES</u>	<u>AGES</u>
Sunday School Classes	Sunday mornings, 9 a.m.	All ages
Children and Worship	Sunday's, children leave at the offertory	Age 4 through 2 nd grade
Youth Groups: <i>Trekkers</i>	Third Sunday, 5 p.m.	3 rd -5 th grade
<i>Middle & High School, Café in-between</i>	Every Sunday, beginning at 5 p.m.	middle—high school
Summer Camp program	Summer	Age 4—going into grade 6
Retreats	Fall	middle & high school
Small Groups	Throughout school year	middle & high school

Young people as well as adults need some involvement with other _____ to grow.

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Lesson Five

Sacraments of the Church

I. The Sacrament of Baptism

Questions for Discussion

- What is a sacrament?
- What does baptism symbolize?
- Who should be baptized?

- A. A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ wherein by visible and physical _____ certain spiritual realities are displayed, represented, and remembered. Jesus only gave to His church _____ sacraments; they are _____ and the _____. Sacraments are important for the life of the church and are ordained by Jesus, but are not essential for someone to be saved.
- B. Baptism by water symbolizes the forgiveness which we have as Christians and the _____ away of sins. Just as water cleanses your _____, so the Holy Spirit cleanses your _____. Read Titus 3:5,6. Baptism also sets a person apart as one who belongs to Jesus. In that way, it is much like a _____ ring. The ring doesn't make you married, but it symbolizes that you are.
- C. Read Matthew 28:18-20. Jesus said that anyone who becomes one of His _____ should be baptized. Baptism often is given to a person who has just received Jesus as Savior and Lord. But in addition to that, the Bible teaches that the sign of being clean and belonging to Christ should be given to the _____ of disciples. Read Genesis 17:12-14. In the Old Testament, this sign was called _____, and involved the cutting away of unneeded skin. It symbolized being spiritually clean, just like _____ does now. God said that this sign should be given to children of believers to show that they are in a special relationship with God. When you were little your parents may have had you baptized to show that you belong to Christ. Even so, you can _____ your blessings by rejecting Christ, or _____ your blessings by trusting in Him. If your parents did not have you baptized as a little child, you will need to be baptized when you join the church.

II. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (Communion)

Questions for Discussion

- What does it symbolize?
- Why do we have the Lord's Supper?
- Why is taking the Lord's Supper a serious matter?

- A. Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. Just before Jesus went to die on the cross, He met with His disciples to eat the Passover meal. The Passover meal was a special meal that was supposed to help the people of Israel remember when God saved them from slavery in Egypt. In the middle of this meal, Jesus took bread and said, "This is my _____." Later He took wine and said, "This is my _____." He told His disciples to eat the bread and drink the wine in _____ of Me." The Lord's Supper is to help us remember Jesus and think about who He is and what He has done for us.
- B. When Jesus said, "this is My body" and "this is My blood," He was telling us what these elements of the Lord's Supper symbolized. The bread is the body of Jesus which was broken on the cross. The wine or grape juice is the blood of Jesus which He shed for us so our sins can be forgiven.
- C. Read 1 Corinthians 11:27-32. Here we read a very serious _____. Some people in the church at Corinth were not taking the Lord's Supper rightly and Paul, the writer, says that they were being punished because of that. It says that before you take the Lord's Supper you must _____ yourself. You should ask yourself:
1. Am I really a Christian? Do I trust in Jesus as my Savior and love Him and try to obey Him?
 2. Have I confessed all my sins that I know of to God?
 3. Do I understand what the Lord's Supper is all about and am I serious about it?

If you fail to do these things, you are warned not to take the bread and cup when they are passed. But if you are a true Christian and you have examined yourself, the Lord's Supper should be a happy time of _____ about Jesus and _____ Him for what He has done for you.

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Lesson Six

Standards for Membership

Any group, club, sports team, or other organization usually has qualifications or standards that must be met for a person to join and remain a member. The more important the group is, the higher the standards are set. Of all organizations, the church is the most worthy of high standards. Unlike professional groups whose standards are out of reach of most people, the high standards of church membership can be met by anyone through the grace of God.

The standards of North Park Church will be presented here as a reasonable challenge to all who wish to become a church member.

I. Membership Standard #1: You must be a Christian

Three Important Questions (the vows of membership)

Vow #1:

Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope, except in His sovereign mercy?

Vow #2:

Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?

Vow #3:

Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes a follower of Christ?

Read Ephesians 2:1-10.

If you believe that Jesus really is Lord and that He can save those who have faith in Him, but you yourself have not received Jesus as your Lord and your Savior, do that right now. It would be good to express your repentance from sin and your faith in Jesus with this prayer:

“Dear Lord, I confess that I am a sinner and deserve punishment. But I know that You offer forgiveness and I want that. Please forgive me for my sins, come into my life and be my Lord, and I will be Your follower. Help me as I try to trust and obey. Thank You for taking away my sin through Jesus Christ, Amen.”

As a new and young Christian, you should be very careful to feed your faith and make it strong by reading the Bible, praying, and being with Christian friends on a regular basis. Your parents and church leaders will be happy to help you grow strong as a young Christian. Don't hesitate to ask for help when you need it.

II. Membership Standard #2: You must be committed to your church.

The Fourth Important Question

Vow #4:

Do you promise to support the church in its worship and work?

For the young person, we believe that there are _____ ways that you should participate in the life of the church. Of course, all of these are under the direction and supervision of your _____.

1. A commitment to _____ worship and fellowship. The various groups and worship opportunities that you can be involved in were mentioned in Lesson Four. These would include: worship services, Sunday School, Youth Groups, and various activities.

2. A commitment to _____.
- a. The opportunities to serve _____ are as special for young people as they are for adults. With the direction of your _____, you might serve in one or more of the church's ministry. Especially important is your commitment to help with the programs designed especially for your age group, bringing friends and neighbors to participate with you.
 - b. Read Exodus 20:12. The greatest area of service you can have is to help your _____ in their service to Christ. In this way you will _____ them and obey the Lord.
3. A commitment to _____.
- a. Though you may not have a job or a great deal of money, most young people today have some money that they call their own. Actually our money belongs to _____ and He expects us to _____ it wisely.
 - b. Read 2 Corinthians 9:7
 1. What does it mean to sow sparingly or bountifully?
 2. What should our attitude be when we give?
 3. What does the church do with the money we give?

III. Membership Standard #3: You must be committed to the purity and peace of the church.

Vow #5:

Do you submit yourself to the government and discipline of the church and promise to promote its purity and peace?

Questions for Discussion

- How do you promote peace?
- What is a bad report?
- What does it mean to be a "tattletale" or "squealer"?
- What is purity and why is it important?

A. The Importance of PEACE in the Church

1. One way to have peace among Christians is to give only good _____ about people. Read Proverbs 15:10. Here we read that a good report makes us feel good down to our _____.
2. One way to cause problems among Christians is to give _____ reports about people.
 - a. Read Proverbs 17:9. Here we read that repeating something bad that we have heard can even separate close _____.
 - b. Read Proverbs 6:19. What is God's attitude toward those people who give bad reports and separate friends? _____

3. Several ways to have peace in the church

- a. If you have a problem with someone, go directly to _____. Read Matthew 18:15.

Have you ever been called a tattletale or a squealer? This is a boy or girl who goes to _____ with a problem without going directly to that person. Suppose that you saw a person in your Sunday School class steal something from a teacher's desk. You should go first to the _____ and tell him or her what you saw. Then if that person does not admit his sin and turn himself in, it would be best then to go to the _____.

- b. If someone has a problem with you, go directly to _____. Read Matthew 5:23-24.

Have you ever said or done something to someone and you knew they were mad or upset with you? Jesus says that you should not _____ if you know something is wrong. Perhaps you said something that hurt their feelings. Whether you meant to or not does not matter. You should go directly to _____ and make things right again.

- c. If someone gives a bad report about someone else to _____, you should try to stop them by:

1. telling them nicely that you would rather not _____ since you are not involved.
2. reminding them of our commitment to give only _____ reports.
3. showing a sad _____ that says "this is not a good thing to listen to."

B. The Importance of PURITY in your life and doctrine

1. Purity in the way you live.

A member of the church of Jesus Christ is expected to _____ to live a life of obedience to God's Word, free from evil and sinful practices in his daily life. This is called striving for purity.

The practices that we mentioned earlier in our lesson on spiritual growth will help us be more like

Jesus, whose life was totally pure and just. Remember these practices included:

- a. Reading the Bible _____.
- b. Spending _____ with God daily.
- c. Fellowship with other _____.
- d. Telling others about _____.

2. Purity in what you believe.

With help from your parents, it is important for you to know and believe these essentials of the Christian faith, some of which we mentioned in Lessons One and Two. They are that:

- a. The Bible is inspired, infallible, and inerrant.
- b. Jesus Christ, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit are all _____ God in Three Persons.
- c. Jesus resurrected _____ from the dead.
- d. Man is totally sinful and as such deserves only _____ and hell.
- e. Salvation is by _____ through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in Him only.

IV. Membership Standard #4: You must be submitted to the government of the church.

Vow #5:

Do you submit yourself to the government and discipline of the church and promise to promote its purity and peace?

Just like cities, states, and nations have governments, so does the church. We get our form of government from the Bible, which tells us that each church should have elders who are rulers who are rulers or governors and who also watch out for the spiritual health of the members of the church.

Read 1 Timothy 3:1-7. The board of elders, called the Session, determine policies, programs, and direction for the church. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 and Hebrews 13:17. What responsibilities do you have toward the elders of your church? In addition to elders, we have deacons who are responsible for overseeing the church's property and ministry to the needy.

(1 Timothy 3:8-13).