



# *new* **MEMBERS** *Mahay*



# WELCOME

to the

## EBENEZER CHURCH FAMILY



Pastor Larry & Lady Caroline Covington

As the Senior Pastor of this exciting fellowship, let me say welcome to the Ebenezer family and to the family of faith. I believe that you have made the best decision of your life by becoming a part of the family of God through salvation and secondly by becoming a part of a local church. You have embarked on a wonderful journey. A journey through life with Jesus. A journey worth the Joy!

Let me share some good news with you! Be assured that God has a wonderful plan for your life. You were born for greatness, for a purpose and with a destiny. I'm glad that Ebenezer will be a place where your growth as a Christian will be nurtured. My friend, you come to us with a wealth of experiences, skills, talents, and gifts. It is my hope that you will become involved and active in our fellowship. As one credit card commercial says, "membership has its privileges" as well as its responsibilities.

Inside these pages, you will "Discover the Joy" of who you are in Christ. You will also "Discover the Joy" of your place in the body of Christ. I encourage you to read through the materials and participate in the classes that make up your new member orientation. As you do so, I pray the Holy Spirit will connect your heart to the vision and show you your special and unique place in this local church family. May God bless you and once again, **Welcome to the Family!**

**Rev. Dr. Larry E. Covington**  
**Senior Pastor**

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# CHAPTER ONE - DISCOVER THE JOY OF SALVATION



Yes, my friend, you are now a part of the family of God and the Ebenezer Church family! Few things hold more excitement than the birth and infancy of a child. Think about the joy that a newborn child brings into the world or think about the excitement that an adopted child brings into a welcoming family. There are great challenges, that's why a family must be prepared to nurture, nourish, and patiently love at all times. Newborn babes are so fragile, tender, and dependent. and their lives are precious. That is why the parent must be cautious and careful and know the child will be nurtured. What is true of physical infants is also true for spiritual infants. That is why it is the task of this church to provide new member orientation to share and show you lovingly what God has in store for your life and how he wants to grow you up in Him. You may be saying, "Hey, wait a minute. I'm already saved and joining by transfer." Great! I'm so glad God directed you here and now you are a part of a new experience. One of the first things on the agenda is the explanation of expectations. One of the basic issues that must be settled is that one understands the necessity and has the assurance of their salvation.

The Church, as a family hospital, is constantly involved in obstetrics and pediatrics. Here at Ebenezer we are concerned about a healthy birth into God's family and a consistent, and balanced growth into Christian adulthood.

As a new member of God's forever family and/or a new member of Ebenezer, let's start by examining the basics of the new birth.

# CHAPTER ONE - DISCOVER THE JOY OF SALVATION

There are four (4) essentials of spiritual birth:



*What had to happen in order for me to become a Christian?*

- 1) Spiritual birth is from \_\_\_\_\_ . (**1 Peter 1:3**) God is the \_\_\_\_\_ of salvation. Faith in Jesus Christ is the means by which he actualizes salvation in a person's life. (**Romans 3:21-28; Ephesians 2:8-9**)

When an individual accepts Christ as their Savior, God redeems them – He purchases them from the slave market of sin and frees them to live in obedience to Him. (**Romans 6:16-23; 1 Peter 1:14-19**)

Let's examine Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus. (**John 3:3; 16:5**)

- 2) Spiritual birth must be \_\_\_\_\_. (**Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:16**) Educational degrees, church attendance, good works, moral goodness, good looks, etc., - none of these are mentioned in the scriptures as a means of obtaining everlasting life. According to God's word, we can do nothing to earn salvation. Even religious works cannot bring salvation.



*Can you think of some religious deeds that one might attempt to trust in to bring salvation?*

- 3) Spiritual birth must be **personal**. No one can place faith in Christ for us. Neither is salvation inherited through the genes. An individual must accept Christ for himself/herself.

# CHAPTER ONE - DISCOVER THE JOY OF SALVATION

- 4) Spiritual birth must be authentic. (**Mark 8:34-25; Hebrews 10:10-18**) Quoting a prayer, reciting a formula, saying a prayer or assenting to the truth cannot save us. We are not saved through intellectual assent. Freedom from the penalty of sin comes only when we surrender our lives to God by depending on the death of Christ as sufficient payment for all wrongdoing.



*As I reflect on the lesson, can I really say that I have been born again?*

yes       no

*Who or what am I trusting in for salvation?*

Assignment:

*Briefly write about the circumstances related to your conversion experience.*

## CHAPTER TWO - DISCOVER THE JOY OF ASSURANCE: GOING FROM “HOPE SO” TO “KNOW SO”



Now that you are a part of God's forever family, you know that there are times that are exciting. However, there are also times when you feel down, depressed, defeated and even deserted. You wonder, am I really saved or was it just an emotional exercise for the moment? Have you ever done anything wrong only to later ask yourself, "Am I having sinful thoughts?" Well, typically you have gone through the first two stages of your Christian growth pattern: ***The Honeymoon Stage*** – glad I'm saved – boy are we having fun! ***The Reality Stage*** – I'm still human stage – where you recognize not only the reality of salvation, but the reality of the fact that you still have to deal with you.

Yes, there may be days when you will doubt your salvation, days when you don't feel saved and times when you don't behave as if you are saved. Cheer Up! Doubts are not uncommon to Christians just because you are saved. You're not exempted from trials, temptations, troubles, and doubts. Don't allow yourself to be thrown or kept in the "I don't know" stage of doubt.

When you commit a sinful act or fertilize a sinful attitude, you have sinned and sin hurts the fellowship between you and your heavenly father, but it does not destroy the relationship. Doubt enters if the fellowship is not restored and makes you feel guilty, unloved by God or it forces you to rationalize that maybe you were never saved.

***Remember: Everything Christ has to give you for salvation was provided for you at the moment you received Him!***

## CHAPTER TWO - DISCOVER THE JOY OF ASSURANCE: GOING FROM “HOPE SO” TO “KNOW SO”



*How can I know I'm saved?*

*Can I be saved and sure? (1 John 5:13)*

- 1) The direct statements from the word – (**Philippians 1:6; John 5:24**)
- 2) The witness of the Holy Spirit – (**Romans 8:16**)
- 3) The outward evidence of a new life which indicates a change within – (**2 Corinthians 5:17**)
- 4) Our obedience to Christ’s commands – (**John 14:21, 15:10**)
- 5) A new attitude toward sin – (**Romans 7:19-20**)
- 6) A new desire and new friends – (**1 Corinthians 5:17**)
- 7) Christian growth – (**Philippians 3:14**)

# CHAPTER THREE - DISCOVER THE JOY OF IDENTIFICATION

Christian or church ordinances are defined to be institutions of Divine authority to the worship of God under the Christian dispensation. In this general sense, there are various ordinances, since the preaching and hearing of God's word, prayer, singing, fasting and thanksgiving may all be considered as institution of divine authority; but in a more distinctive sense, it has been more common to call the two ordinances Baptism and Communion. They are the only Christian ordinances committed to the church for perpetual observance.

The ordinances, Baptism and Communion, are acts of identification for the Christian. They are symbols with substance that announces to the world our oneness with Christ.

## Baptism

Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water by a proper administrator - one who has been baptized by immersion, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.  
**(Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15; Acts 8:36-39)**



The Greek words "*Baptizo* and *Baptisma*" are anglicized, not translated. The word *Baptizo* means to \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. "Bap" means \_\_\_\_\_; "tizo", means to tide over. The minister, in baptizing the candidate, strikes the water with the Candidate and the water tides over the candidate, and overwhelms him/her in baptism.

# CHAPTER THREE - DISCOVER THE JOY OF IDENTIFICATION

Assignment:

*Explain the meaning of the word "Baptism."*

## **What You Need to Know about Baptism**

- (a) Baptism was instituted by Christ. (**Mark 1:4; Matthew 3:13, 16, 17**)
- (b) Its administration must be by a proper administrator in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (**Matthew 3:6; Acts 8:33**)
- (c) Its subjects and Baptism are to be administered to those, and those only, who have truly repented of their sins and been born again and believe in Jesus Christ and who have received the Holy Spirit. (**Mark 16:16; Acts 2:41**)
- (d) It is commemorative. It points to Christ's humiliation, death, burial, and resurrection. It testifies that he suffered, died, was buried, and rose again from the dead to perfect the work of redemption. (**Romans 6:8; Colossians 1:12; Ephesians 4:5**)
- (e) It is predictive. It predicts the resurrection of the body from the grave when one rises from baptismal waters. (**Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 15:29**)

# CHAPTER THREE - DISCOVER THE JOY OF IDENTIFICATION



*When should one be baptized?*

*Does baptism save?*

*Baptism is the first public act of what?*

*If you were baptized prior to salvation, should you submit to being re-baptized?*

## Communion

By the institution of Christ Jesus and by example and practice of the apostles, the number of ordinances in the New Testament are only two. The marks of an ordinance are (1) it must be an outward symbol divinely appointed to represent a great fact and truth of the gospel and the personal relationship of the believer to the fact and truth, and (2) there must be a divine mandate making the observance of the ritual obligatory, universal and perpetual. Baptism has already been discussed, and now let's turn our attention to Communion.



The Lord's supper (Communion) represents the atonement of Christ as the only means of our justification (God receiving us as righteous) and the only support for the new life we have in Christ. There is no magic in it. The Supper is memorial in nature. (**1 Corinthians 11:23-26**) It "shows forth," it dramatizes, it pictures the suffering death of our Lord on the cross.

*What does the bread represent?*

*What is the fruit of the vine? What does it represent?*

*Does taking communion save one from sin?*

*Why were some of the Corinthians sick or dead (1 Corinthians 11)?*

Assignment:

***Fill in the blanks below:***

Communion is a meal of:

R \_\_\_\_\_

R \_\_\_\_\_

R \_\_\_\_\_

# CHAPTER FOUR - DISCOVER THE JOY OF MEMBERSHIP

Now that you have dealt with the most important issue in your life – salvation and assurance, and you have also reviewed the two ordinances of the church that publicly identifies you as a Christian, the next issue that must be discussed is the subject of membership. What are the expectations, the privileges, and the responsibilities of becoming a part of the exciting and wonderful fellowship called Ebenezer? Assimilation is the task of moving people from awareness of the church to attendance at your church to active membership in your church. The community talks about "that church," the crowd talks about "this church," but the members talk about "our church". As a member of Ebenezer, it is our desire and design that you develop a sense of \_\_\_\_\_\_. You are no more a \_\_\_\_\_\_. but a \_\_\_\_\_.

## Theology of Membership

Membership is a Christian origin, but it has been taken over by the world and emptied of its original meaning. Today, most people associate membership with paying dues, meaningless rituals, silly rules, handshakes and having your name on some dusty roll. Paul, however, had a very different image of membership. To him being a member of the church did not refer to some cold induction into an institution, but rather it meant becoming a vital organ of a living body.



# CHAPTER FOUR - DISCOVER THE JOY OF MEMBERSHIP

## **Benefits of Membership: Why become a member of Ebenezer?**

- 1) It identifies you as a genuine believer. (**Ephesians 2:19; Romans 12:5**)
- 2) It provides a spiritual family to support and encourage you in your walk with Christ. (**Galatians 6:1; Hebrews 10:24-25**)
- 3) It gives you a place to discover, use and grow your gifts in ministry. (**1 Corinthians 12:4-27**)
- 4) It places you under the spiritual protection of Godly leaders. (**Hebrews 13:17; Acts 20:28-29**)
- 5) It gives you the accountability you need to grow. (**Ephesians 5:21**)

The church provides you with benefits you cannot find anywhere else in the world.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ helps you focus on God. It prepares you spiritually and emotionally for the week ahead.
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ helps you face life's problems by providing the support and encouragement of other Christians.
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ helps you fortify your faith by learning the trust of God's word and applying biblical principles to your lifestyle.
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ helps you find and develop your talents and use them in serving others.
- 5) Evangelism helps you fulfill your mission of reaching your friends and family for Christ.



*What is Ebenezer?  
(1 Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 2:19)*

# CHAPTER FOUR - DISCOVER THE JOY OF MEMBERSHIP

## **Four Pillars of Membership at Ebenezer**



**Every believer is a minister. In God's army there are no volunteers - God has drafted all of us into Christian service.**

- You are created for ministry - (**Ephesians 2:10**)
- You have been saved for ministry - (**2 Timothy 1:9**)
- You have been gifted for ministry - (**1 Peter 4:10**)
- You have been authorized for ministry - (**Matthew 28:18-20**)
- You have been commanded to ministry - (**Ephesians 4:11-12**)
- You are needed for ministry - (**1 Corinthians 12:27**)
- You are accountable for ministry and will be rewarded accordingly - (**Colossians 3:23-24**)



**Every ministry is important - (1 Corinthians 12:18-22)**

There are no "little people" in the body of Christ and there are no "insignificant" ministries. Every person and ministry is important.

# CHAPTER FOUR - DISCOVER THE JOY OF MEMBERSHIP

3

## We are dependent on each other.

No single ministry or member can accomplish the task of the church alone. We must all depend on each other.

4

## Ministry and my activity is the expression of my SHAPE.

I understand that when God created me as an individual, He gave me a distinctive shape, a unique agenda or role to play. I believe, therefore, I am at my best when I am in my place doing what I have been called to do in the best SHAPE.

**S - Spiritual Gift**

**H - Heart**

**A - Abilities**

**P - Personality**

**E - Experiences**

God uses you for ministry based on how He has shaped you for the body. Wise stewardship of your life begins by understanding your SHAPE.

# CHAPTER FIVE - DISCOVER THE JOY OF MINISTRY

The key to understanding membership is to discover that each person is saved to serve! The key to your performance in the body is your productivity, not necessarily your activity. A truly contented Christian is one that has realized that they have been shaped by God for a specific purpose. When it comes to ministry, your functions flow out of the way God formed you.

It is amazing to realize that God has been molding and shaping you for ministry since you were born. In fact, God began shaping you before you were born!

***Remember: You are shaped for ministry!***



**S – Spiritual Gifts.** The Bible clearly teaches that God gives each believer spiritual gifts to be used for ministry. (**1 Corinthians 12; Romans 8; Ephesians 4**) Each person has also been given certain natural abilities, personality traits and experiences. Spiritual gifts reveal a part of God's will for your life.

Assignment:

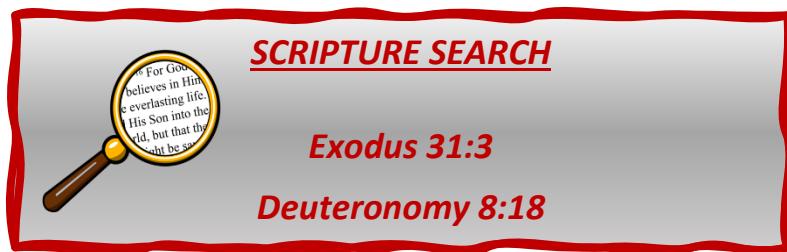
***Begin experimenting with various ministries  
in our church and watch your gift(s) surface.***

Pray!  
Get involved!  
Find your spot!

# CHAPTER FIVE - DISCOVER THE JOY OF MINISTRY

**H – Heart.** The Bible clearly uses the term “heart” to represent the center of your motivation, desires, interests, and inclinations. Your heart determines why you say the things you say (Matthew 12:34), why you feel the way you do (Psalm 37:4), and why you act the way you do (Proverbs 4:23). Your God-given motivational bend serves as an internal GPS for your life. It determines what interests you what will bring you the most satisfaction and fulfillment. It also motivates you to pursue certain activities, subjects, and environments. Don’t ignore your natural interests.

**A – Abilities** are the natural talents that you were born with. Some people are natural talkers, others are natural athletes. Some people are naturally good with numbers, while others are gifted at baby-sitting.



***Remember: All of us have something that we are good at and it comes naturally.***

Assignment:

***Identify three (3) of your natural abilities.***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

# CHAPTER FIVE - DISCOVER THE JOY OF MINISTRY

**P – Personality.** Aren't you glad that God is not in the business of making all people alike? He is a God of variety and diversity. He made some people introverts and others extroverts. He made some people thinkers, some feelers, and some actors. Some of us work best with things (task-oriented), while others are more people-oriented. The key is to minister within the context of your personality. It feels good when you do exactly what God created you to do.

**E – Experiences.** God never waste an experience. God is behind the scene in

Assignment:	<i>Circle the appropriate answers.</i>
<b>Most of the time, I am...</b>	
<p>(A) an Introvert <b>or</b> an Extrovert (B) a Feeler, a Thinker, <b>or</b> an Actor (C) a Task-oriented person <b>or</b> a People-oriented person (D) enjoying being Alone <b>or</b> enjoying being with a Group</p>	

each experience of your life and he can and will use each experience to make you a better minister.

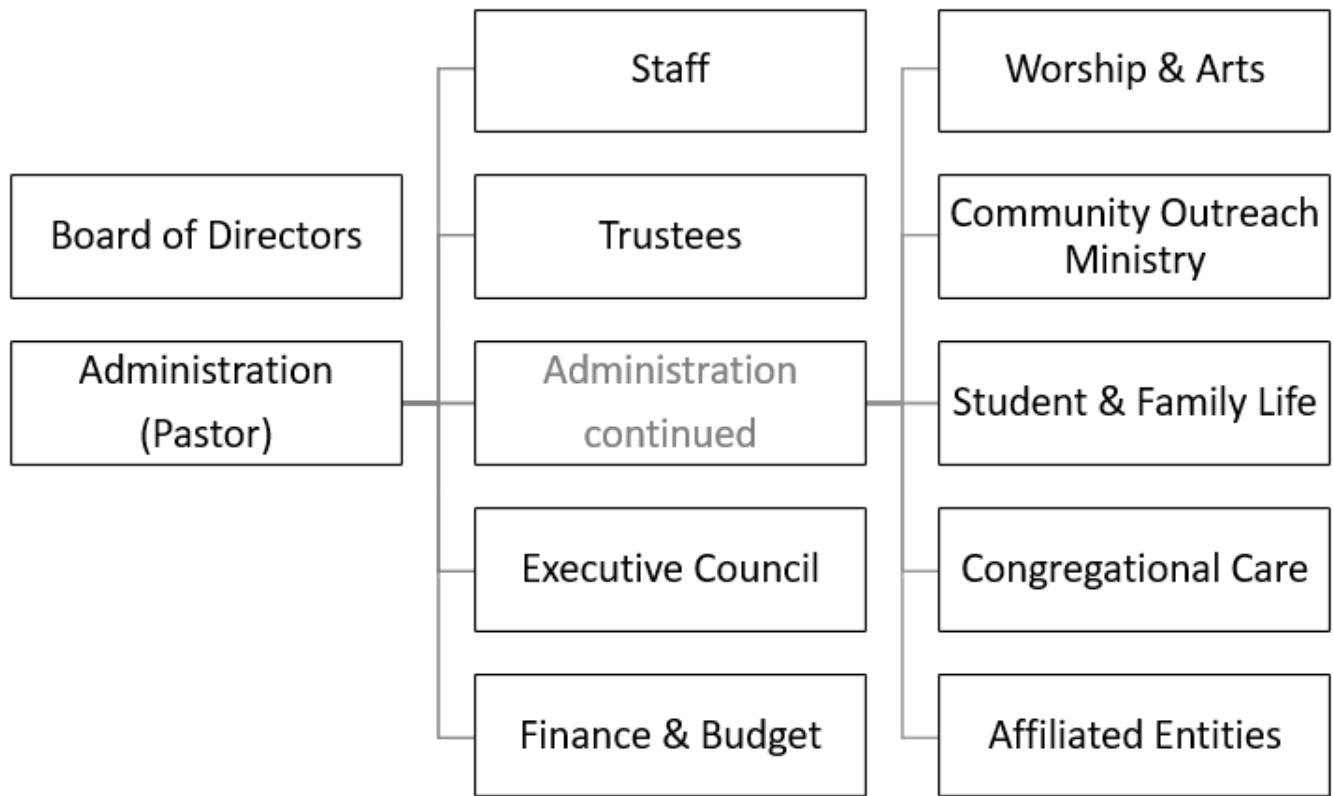
***Remember: You have been SHAPED for SIGNIFICANCE!***



***Now that you have examined where you are in terms of your SHAPE, the challenge is to look at the ministries in our church and ask yourself "WHERE DO I FIT IN?"***

# CHAPTER FIVE - DISCOVER THE JOY OF MINISTRY

## GENERAL CHURCH STRUCTURE



# CHAPTER FIVE - DISCOVER THE JOY OF MINISTRY

## CHURCH MINISTRIES

### **Worship & Arts**

Music: Voices of Heritage, Voices of Glory, Voices of Inspiration, Voices of Hope, Voices of Joy, Praise Team

Ushers: Adults & Youth

Hospitality

Dance

Media

Communications & Graphics

### **Congregational Care**

Deacon Family Ministry: Alphabetical Groups, Guilford County, Caswell County, Orange County/Mebane

Assimilation Ministries: Encouragers, First Friends, Showers of Blessings

iLearn University: Sunday School & Vacation Bible School

Visitation: New Member Orientation, Visitation, Nursing Home Visitation, Missionary Circle #1 & Missionary Circle # 2

### **Student & Family Life**

Children's Ministries: Nursery & Elementary School

Middle & High School: Youth Council, Girls as Precious Pearls, Boys to Men

Young Adults

Couples

Women: Women's Growth Institute

Bold Men

Senior Adult Ministry

### **Community Outreach Ministries**

Recreation and Leisure

Grief Share

Manasseh & Ephraim Recovery Program

Hope House

Inez Guye Dream Center for Women

The Well

The EBZY Center

Christian Motorcycles

### **Affiliated Entities**

Excel Christian Academy

Excel Community Association of Alamance, Inc.

Foreign Missions: Haiti, Puerto Rico & Africa

Ebenezer Center for the Performing Arts

Girl Scout Troop #41353

# CHAPTER SIX - DISCOVER THE JOY OF EBENEZER

## DOCTRINAL STANCE - WHAT WE BELIEVE

Doctrine	Primary Perspective
God	God is bigger and better than I can imagine.
Jesus	Jesus is God showing Himself to us.
Holy Spirit	God living in and through me now.
Revelation	The Bible is God's inerrant guidebook for life.
Creation	Nothing "just happened."
Salvation	Grace is the only way to have a relationship with God.
Sanctification	God's will is for us to grow in Christ-likeness.
Good and Evil	God has allowed evil to provide a choice. God can bring good even out of evil events.
The Afterlife	Death is not the end but the beginning. Heaven and Hell are real places.
The Church	The only true world "superpower" is the church. It will last forever.
Prayer	Prayer can do anything God can do.
Second Coming	Jesus is coming again to judge the world and gather His children.

# CHAPTER SIX - DISCOVER THE JOY OF STEWARDSHIP

It has been said that a man's money, in a mystical sense, is the man himself. In a unique sense money represents life. Therefore, the way you give is the way you live!

Society applauds the self-made, self-sufficient person. Many are obsessed with getting ahead, the good life and security. Most people regard what they have as theirs by right. They earned it by their own initiative. They deserve it.

On the other hand, scripture is full of evidence that all we have come from God. Man is a created, dependent being and as such, is a \_\_\_\_\_ of all he has. God has created all things; therefore, He owns all things. Man does not possess his own life, time, gifts, and wealth. He \_\_\_\_\_.

One of the most prominent teachings of scripture is that men are accountable to God. It runs from Genesis through Revelation. Man's inescapable responsibility is that he must someday give account to God. (**2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:7-12**) Based on the preceding information, we learn the following truths:

- A. God is the owner and man is the \_\_\_\_\_.
- B. Man is accountable to God for his stewardship.
- C. The first requisite of stewardship is to give ourselves.

Although Christian stewardship is far broader than the use of finances, giving money is a prominent part of it. Giving is an act of worship. It is more important for its spiritual expression than its financial significance. The stewardship of money is an indication of the reality and depth of commitment to Jesus Christ.

# CHAPTER SIX - DISCOVER THE JOY OF STEWARDSHIP

God's word teaches the following on giving:



- A. Giving the \_\_\_\_\_ part of income. (**Deuteronomy 14:23; Proverbs 3:9-10**)
- B. Giving the tithe (10%) plus other offerings. (**Malachi 3:8-10**)
- C. Systematic and proportionate giving. (**1 Corinthians 16:2**)
- D. Giving regularly and in proportion to income.
- E. Generous and joyful giving. (**2 Corinthians 9:5-13; 18:1-2**)

So, giving is to be planned, proportionate and prayerful.

Financial accountability is a two-way street. The believer is accountable to God for the use of his or her money and the recipient church or organization is responsible not only to God as to how it is used, but also to the Christian public. This is why we provide periodic financial statements.

One area of stewardship that is often overlooked is in the distribution of property after death. Seven (7) out of eight (8) people die intestate - having no will. It is a tragedy that some who appear to be faithful Christians, stewards during their lifetime, permit government officials to decide how their final resources will be distributed. Much of it will be absorbed by the state.

***REMEMBER: You can't beat God giving!!!***

# **CONFIRMATION THE EBENEZER MEMBERSHIP COVENANT**

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior, having been baptized, and being in agreement with the Ebenezer Church statements, strategy and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Ebenezer church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

- 1) I will protect the unity of my church
    - . . . by acting in love toward other members
    - . . . by refusing to gossip
    - . . . by following the leaders

"So, let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together." (**Romans 14:19**)

"Have a sincere heart for other believers, love one another earnestly with all your heart."  
**(1 Peter 1:22)**

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs." (**Ephesians 4:29**)

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you." (**Hebrews 13:17**)

- 2) I will share the responsibility of my church  
... by praying for its growth  
... by inviting the unchurched to attend  
... by warmly welcoming those who visit

"To the church— . . . We always thank God for you and pray for you constantly." (1 Thessalonians 1:1-2)

The master said to the servant, "Go out to the roads and country lanes, and urge the people there to come so my house will be full." (**Luke 14:23**)

"So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified." (**Romans 15:7**)

- 3) I will serve the ministry of my church
  - . . .by discovering my gifts and talents
  - . . .by being equipped to serve by my pastors
  - . . .by developing a servant's heart

"Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you." (**1 Peter 4:10**)

"God gave. . .some to pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up." (**Ephesians 4:11-12**)

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: who. . .{took on} the very nature of a servant." (**Philippians 2:3-4, 7**)

- 4) I will support the testimony of my church
  - . . .by attending faithfully
  - . . .by living a godly life
  - . . .by giving regularly

"Let us not give up meeting together. . .but let us encourage one another."  
**(Hebrews 10:25)**

"Whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ."  
**(Philippians 1:27)**

"Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering."  
**(1 Corinthians 15:2)**

"A tenth of {all your} produce. . .is the Lord's, and is holy." (**Leviticus 27:30**)

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Name

Pastor

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**Date**