**BE THANKFUL YOU’RE A MEMBER**

**I Corinthians 12:18, 27**

**18**[**But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.**](https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/1-Corinthians-12-18/)

**27**[**Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.**](https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/1-Corinthians-12-27/)

**INTRO:**

**\*\*We should really be thankful we are members of the Lord’s Church and the Local Church!**

**1. Only Members can Experience . . .**

 **a. His Presence (You cannot feel His presence in your heart unless you are a member of the Lord’s church!)**

 **b. His Peace (You cannot feel His peace in your heart unless you are a member of the Lord’s church!)**

 **c. His Perks (You cannot experience His blessings and benefits unless you are a member of the Lord’s church!)**

**2. Only Members can Execute . . .**

 **a. The Worship (Only members can praise the Lord, shout, testify, and spiritually worship Him!!)**

 **b. The Works (Only members can do the Lord’s work!)**

 **c. The Will (Only members can carry out the will of God!)**

**3. Only Members can Enter . . .**

 **a. Into His Holy Presence (Only members can get in the presence of the Lord and worship Him!)**

 **b. Into His Heavenly Places (Only members can enter another world, the Spirit world, while here on earth!)**

**4. Only Members can Exit . . .**

 **a. With Resurrection (Only members will be resurrected!)**

 **b. With Rising (Only members will be rising!)**

 **c. With Rejoicing (Only members will be rejoicing!)**

**\*\*You cannot join God’s church by simply getting baptized or by shaking everybody’s hands. You only join God’s church through salvation and the blood of the Lamb!!**

**\*\*Since I’m a member of God’s church, I can be a member of the local church . . . this church!!**

**\*\*Oh how we should be thankful that we are members of the local church!**

**\*\*I’m convinced that in these last days that there are those who do not want to be members of the local church. They only want to be visitors of the local church! However, God wants us to be members!**

**\*\*If we are truly thankful for being a member of the local church, we will show it . . .**

**A. By Our Prayers**

**B. By Our Praise**

**C. By Our Presence**

**D. By Our Preparation**

**E. By Our Profession**

**F. By Our Purity**

**\*\*Every local church will experience some folks coming and some folks going for no apparent reason, but let me instill in you to hold your church membership at this local church in the highest regard!**

**\*\*Let me encourage you to be thankful for being a member here at this local church and hold that dear to your hearts!**

**I. Be Thankful for the Privilege of Membership**

**I Peter 2:10 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.**

**\*\*I did not earn this privilege nor did I have the right to be a member. Rather, it is only by the grace and mercy of God that I’m a part of God’s people and a part of the Lord’s church, and a part of this Local church!!**

**\*\*The Privileges of Membership is maintained through . . .**

 **A. The Birth**

**John 3:3,7 3** [**Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/John-3-3/) **7** [**Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/John-3-7/)

**\*\*To be a member in the Lord’s church and this Local church, you must be born again!!**

**\*\*Some have conned their way into local church membership, but no one has ever conned their way into the Lord’s church!!**

 **B. The Baptism**

**Matthew 28:19 19** [**Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Matthew-28-19/)

**\*\*To be a member of God’s church, you must be baptized with the Holy Ghost!**

**\*\*To be a member of this Local church, you must have been baptized with water as a testimony of your salvation!**

**Mark 1:8 [I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Mark-1-8/%22%20%5Co%20%22View%20more%20translations%20of%20Mark%201%3A8)**

**\*\*The Privileges of Membership are maintained through . .**

 **C. The Behavior**

**I John 2:6 6** [**He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/1-John-2-6/)

**\*\*Does our behavior say that you belong to Christ?**

**\*\*Does our behavior say that you belong to the Church?**

 **D. The Business**

**Luke 2:49 49** [**And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Luke-2-49/)

**\*\*If we’re to be like Christ as the scripture teaches, then we must be doing the Father’s business as He did!**

**\*\*If you are a member of the Lord’s church, you will be doing the Father’s business.**

**\*\*If you are a member of this Local church, you will be doing the Father’s business.**

**\*\*By the way, the Father’s business has never been about sowing discord, dividing the church, or making it all about us! Rather, the Father’s business is all about how to add to the service, add to the church, and follow the Holy Ghost!**

**\*\* Thank God for the Privileges of Membership!!**

**II. Be Thankful for the Pledge of Membership**

**\*\*Make a pledge to carry out your responsibilities as a church member, and be thankful you can!**

**\*\*Make a pledge to take responsibility for . . .**

 **A. The Church’s Success**

 **1. Carnal Success - says you are successful when you have large crowds, large calendars, and large construction!**

 **2. Christ’s Success – says you are successful when He is in the singing, the sermon, the studies, and in the service.**

**\*\*As a member I am responsible to do whatever it takes to help the service and make sure the Lord has His way!!**

**Sometimes that means to speak, sometimes that means to sing, sometimes that means to remain silent.**

**\*\*If the church fails, it’s our fault – not God’s fault. So let’s make a pledge to God to be a faithful member and be thankful we have made that pledge!**

 **B. The Church’s Standing**

**\*\*This refers to the testimony of the church.**

 **1. What is our testimony before the Community?**

 **2. What is our testimony before the Churches?**

 **3. What is our testimony before Christ?**

**\*\*It is our responsibility to make sure our church has a good testimony, and it is our own fault if it has a bad testimony!!**

**\*\*Be careful little eyes, ears, and mouths what you see, hear and say! I’m thankful for the good testimony our church has! Let’s pledge to keep it that way!**

 **C. The Church’s Spirituality**

**\*\*If the church is going to be spiritual, then . . .**

 **1. The Minister has to pledge to be Spirit-led!**

 **2. The Majority has to pledge to be Spirit-filled!**

 **3. The Members have to pledge to be Spiritual!**

**\*\*It’s our responsibility to make sure the church is spiritual, and it is our fault if the church is carnal!**

**\*\*Let’s pledge with thankful hearts to be dedicated spiritual members of this church.**

 **D. The Church’s Sustaining**

**\*\*Sustain – Our obligations to support, bear the burdens, and to hold up the church.**

 **1. Money Obligations**

**\*\*Every member should give tithes and offerings. How else will the church be supported financially if the members do not support it financially?**

 **2. Membership Obligations**

**\*\*Every member should witness, welcome, and win souls!)**

 **3. Missionary Obligations**

**\*\*Every member should give by paying missionaries and praying for missionaries!**

**\*\*Thank God for the Pledges of Membership!**

**III. Be Thankful for the Pleasure of Membership**

**\*\*It’s a pleasure to be a member here! It is the place where I experience my greatest joys in life. You cannot buy it at Wal-Mart or anywhere else in the world!!**

**\*\*The pleasure of my membership here is . . .**

 **A. It is my Spiritual Joy**

**\*\*My Father is Here! This is where the Father blesses me!**

 **B. It is my Social Joy**

**\*\*My Friends are Here! This is where my closes Christian friends are in the whole world!**

 **C. It is my Select Joy**

**\*\*My Feelings are Here! I don’t “have to go to church.” I get to go to this church and preach and pastor!! I have feelings for this church!**

 **D. It is my Supreme Joy**

**\*\*My Fire is Here! There is a fire in my bones for THE church – the Lord’s Church – and for THIS church!! It is my supreme joy!**

**\*\*Thank God for the Pleasure of Membership!**

**CLOSE**

**1. Are you a member in the Lord’s church?**

**2. Are you a member in the Local church?**

**3. Have you experienced the Privileges of Church Membership?**

**4. Have you expressed the Pledges of Church Membership concerning the Success, the Standing, the Spirituality, and the Sustaining of this church? Are you fulfilling those pledges?**

**5. Have you enjoyed the Pleasures of Church Membership?**

**\*\*What if every church member of this church were just like you? Would all members be saved? Would the church be successful? Spiritual? Would the church be in good Standing? Would the church be Sustained and Supported?**

**\*\*Don’t be discouraged when the church house isn’t full! There were those who quit on Jesus also! Just be thankful that you’re a member of a wonderful body of local church members!**

**\*\*If you are a member of the Lord’s Church and a memer of the Local Church, then be thankful and praise God for it! If you are not, then make sure you become a member of the Lord’s Church first and the Local Church second!**

**I’m glad I’m a member!!**