

Lesson 3

Do you always put “first things first?” In lesson three we want to share with you the first things that you ought to do now that you are a Christian.

THE CHURCH

One of the first things a Christian should decide is where they will go to church. Jesus told the apostle Peter in **Matthew 16:18** “... upon this rock will I build my church.” The Lord Jesus gave His life on the cross to save us from sin and to establish His church. If you are saved, you are a part of the body of Christ which is His church. In **Colossians 1:24b** we read “...for His bodies sake which is the church.” That means that every Christian in this world is a member of the same body of Christ and is your brother or sister in Christ no matter which local church they attend.

However, even though you are already a part of what some call “the church universal” you need8 now to become a part of a “local” church. **Hebrews 10:25** says “Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is...” Jesus’ disciples began to establish “local” churches right after Jesus returned to Heaven. They put pastors in charge of those churches and told the church how to ordain future pastors. They also established deacons to aid the pastors in meeting the needs of those in their congregations. They also encouraged their new converts to become a part of these “local” churches. But the question today is, “With so many different churches available, how does one decide which one to attend?” Below please find some important things that should be found in any “good” church:

1. They must believe that the Bible is the Word of God, have no other books they consider equal to the Bible and that what they believe is found in the Bible. (We recommend the King James Bible.)
2. They must believe that salvation is “by grace through faith” without works.
3. They should require that all members be saved and know that they are saved.
4. The leaders of the church (pastor, deacons, Sunday School teachers, etc.) should live lives consistent with the fact that they know Christ.
5. No one should be allowed to maintain membership in the church if they are living in immorality or in any other way they deliberately are breaking the ten commandments.

BAPTISM

Soon after you find a good church to attend, you should be baptized if you have not already done so. Our Savior led the way in this matter by being baptized by John the Baptist. He said in **Matthew 3:15** “...thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness...” He also told His disciples in **Matthew 28:19** “Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.” What does baptism do in the life of a Christian?

1. It brings us into obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ who commanded baptism.
2. It testifies to everyone that we belong to Christ.

THE WORD OF GOD

The Bible should become the most important book in your life.

1. **I Timothy 4:13** “Till I come give attendance to reading...” Read some of the Bible every day. Begin in John. After finishing John, read the entire New Testament, and then begin reading some of the Old Testament and some of the New Testament each day.
2. **Psalm 119:11** “Thy Word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee.” Regularly memorize Bible Verses. Here are a few to start with: **John 3:16**, **Romans 3:23**, and **Ephesians 2:8,9**.
3. **II Timothy 2:15** “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the Word of truth.” A good study Bible (like the Scofield reference Bible) would be a great help to begin your study.

PRAYER

Talking to God in prayer will bring you closer to God and to His power.

1. Talk to God each day telling Him that you love Him and praising Him for His goodness. **I Thessalonians 5:18** “In everything give thanks . . .”
2. Bring your requests to God and learn to wait on His answers. **Jeremiah 33:3** “Call unto me and I will answer thee and shew thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not.”

If you have any questions for us, you may contact us at bmason6@bellsouth.net or you may call one of our counselors at 864-498-1943

