



I AM A CHURCH MEMBER

MOUNT CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

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Church Theme: “Let’s “BE” The Church” (2nd Corinthians 6:16; Matthew 5:14 – 16)

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Discovering the Attitude that Makes the Difference

Chapter 5 Review – “I Will Lead My Family To Be Healthy Church Members”

In this session, we will see that Scripture emphasizes the need for families to instill healthy church membership into the fabric of their family’s DNA. We have already seen, as we have worked through this study, our responsibility to serve within the church, check our preferences and desires at the door, and pray for our leaders. This week we are going to examine what it means to lead our families to worship, love, pray for, and serve in the church together.

Church and Family

Paul, in Ephesians 5 and 6, compares the family with the church. Rainer wrote, “It’s no surprise that we are taught in Scripture that families are analogous to the church.”

Isn’t it interesting that Paul compares the family and the church in this way? Husbands and wives should relate to one another in the same way that Christ and the church relate to one another. Parents and children should relate to one another in the same way that we, as God’s children, relate to our heavenly Father.

Rainer offered this insight into the text:

“These passages remind us that, just as we are supposed to sacrifice and love our families unconditionally, so are we to love those churches where God has placed us. Our family members are not perfect, and neither are the members of the church. We are to find our joy in serving both our families and the church. We are further reminded of the importance of the family to the church. We are to encourage our family members to be faithful to the church. We should pray together as family members for our churches. Indeed, as we are to strive to love our families more deeply, so should we exhort our family members to love the church more deeply.”

As we consider the responsibility to lead our families to be biblical church members, we will examine three specific ways that we can accomplish this task:

1. Pray Together As A Family For The Church

In chapter four of the book, “I am a Church Member” we considered the urgent need to pray for church leaders. They are under physical, spiritual, and mental strain all the time and church members have a responsibility to pray for them regularly. But, have you ever considered praying for your church and its leaders together as a family?

Rainer offered several specific areas where you, as a family, can pray for church leaders:

- For spiritual protection
- For protection from moral failure
- For the preaching of the Word
- For their families
- For encouragement
- For physical strength
- For courage
- For discernment
- For wisdom in their leadership

Here are some specific ways that you can pray for the church:

- For the gospel to change lives
- For unity in the body
- For impact in the community
- For a heart for the lost
- For sound doctrine
- For specific ministries
- For scheduled times of worship

There are fewer things that will cultivate a love for the church and its leaders within your family than praying for them on a regular basis. While this may seem awkward at first, it can often prove to be one of the most beneficial ways to keep your family involved in the church. Rainer wrote:

“Part of the opportunity and honor of being a church member is the teaching of our family to love the church. And that teaching often begins by praying together as a family for the church where God placed us.”

2. Worship Together As A Family

Another way to lead our families to be healthy church members is to worship together as a family. Rainer wrote:

“As a church member, I am responsible for encouraging and leading my entire family to worship together in the church. If I am married, I seek to include my spouse. If I am a parent, I seek to include my children. My family must see my love for the church. Many church members are single. They have no immediate family

with whom they can worship in the church. Regardless, there are still people watching them and how they love the church. They are to be an example to others.”

As we consider the importance of families worshipping together, it is necessary to consider that church members may have family members who are not Christians or not part of the church. This is not a new scenario! In fact, Paul addressed this issue in 1 Corinthians 7. Take some time to read through verses 10-14 and consider Paul’s admonition to spouses of unbelievers – they are to be an example to their unbelieving spouse. Rainer emphasized this when he wrote:

“It can be lonely to be the believer in an unbelieving family. It can likewise be lonely going to worship at your church alone, while your spouse remains behind. But God has given such people a mission field: their families. Like the missionary who travels thousands of miles to tell the good news to un-evangelized people, this church member is to tell the good news in his or her own home.”

As church members, we need to encourage fellow church members who are attending without their spouses and families and we need to consistently pray for them and their families.

3. Love The Church And Encourage Your Family To Do The Same

Have you ever heard someone say, “I love Jesus but I don’t like the church.” That would be the same thing as someone coming to you and telling you they love you but hate your spouse! The Bible does not give us the option of loving Jesus and not loving the church. If we love Jesus we will love His church! Rainer wrote:

“As a church member, I am not merely to like my church or serve my church well. I am to fall deeply in love with my church. Christ is the bridegroom, and the church is the bride. My commitment is to love that bride with an unwavering and unconditional love. Unconditional love is not always easy. If someone is perfect and meets our every perceived need, it’s easy to think we love that person. But such love is one-way. It’s all about me and my needs. Unconditional love means I will continue to fall more deeply in love regardless of the response. It means my love for the church will grow even as I may disagree with something or encounter disagreeable people. ”

We are only able to love our church unconditionally when we understand that Jesus loved us unconditionally. Paul described Christ’s love for us in Romans 5:8: “But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” We were God’s enemies and yet Christ died for us. Jesus loved His church so much that He willingly laid down His life to redeem her out of her sin.

- Many Christians go to CHURCH, but don't have a true LOVE for their church. Many have the WRONG expectation of what CHURCH is supposed to be about.
- Paul, in Ephesians 5 and 6, compares the family with the church. These passages remind us that, just as we are supposed to sacrifice and love our families _____, so are we to love those churches where God has placed us.
- Three specific ways to lead our families to be healthy, biblical church members is _____ as a family for the church, _____ as a family, and _____ the church deeply and encourage your family to do the same.
- Christ is the _____ and the church is the _____.
- We are only able to love our church unconditionally when we understand that Jesus loved us unconditionally. Paul described Christ's love for us in Romans 5:8: "But _____ proves His own love for us in that while we were still _____, Christ died for us."

Homework

Answer the following questions after reading Ephesians 5:21 – 6:4

1. Who is commanded to be submissive in a marriage?
2. Who is to be the head in a marriage? Husband or Wife?
3. Who is the head of the church?
4. How did Christ give himself for the church?
5. Should the husband be submissive to the wife?
6. What kind of church is Christ expecting to have?
7. Should a man love himself more than his wife?
8. How should children treat their parents?
9. What biblical “reward” will children receive by following God’s plan?
10. List five areas that a church member can do to better witness to their own family.
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
 - E. _____