

NL NEW LIGHT CHURCH

EMPOWERING BELIEVERS, EQUIPPING LEADERS, EVANGELIZING THE WORLD

101

DISCOVERING CHURCH MEMBERSHIP



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WELCOME TO KINGDOM LIFE ACADEMY 101 DISCOVERING CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

We're glad you've chosen to find out more about New Light! This class is the basic introduction to our church family. Because we have members from many different church backgrounds, this class was designed to clearly explain who and what our church is all about.

Kingdom Life Academy 101 is divided in four sections

THE BASIS FOR THIS CLASS

"...You are a member of God's very own family...and you belong in God's household with every other Christian." Ephesians 2:19 (LB)

Key Truths:

1. The church is _____.
2. God expects you to be _____ of a church family.
3. A Christian without a church family is an _____.

THE GOAL OF THIS CLASS

...That I will commit myself to _____ and to the _____.

WHAT MAKES NEW LIGHT A FAMILY?

Four things unite us:

- **Our Salvation** (What God has done for us)
- **Our Statement** (Why we exist as a church)
- **Our Strategy** (How we fulfill our purpose)
- **Our Structure** (When and where we fulfill our purpose)

Session One

Our Salvation

“For now we are all children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, and we who have been baptized into union with Christ are enveloped by Him. We are no longer Jews or Gentiles, or slaves or free men, or even merely men or women, but we are all the same — we are Christians; we are one in Jesus Christ.”

Galatians 3:26-28 (LB)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

Most people live their entire lives without ever knowing “*WHY?*” They exist year after year with no idea of why they live or God’s purpose for their lives. The most basic question a person can ask is, “*What is the meaning of life?*”

Everyone wants to be happy. People try many ways:

- ...Some look for happiness by **acquiring possessions.**
- ...Some look for happiness by **experiencing pleasure.**
- ...Some look for happiness by **gaining prestige & power.**

But real happiness comes from understanding my _____.

I. WHY AM I HERE?

1. GOD MADE ME TO _____ ME!

God says, “*I have loved you with an everlasting love!*” Jeremiah 31:3

“*Even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be His through our union with Christ...**because of His love.** God had already decided that through Jesus Christ He would make us His children — this was God’s pleasure and purpose.*” Ephesians 1:4-5 (GN)

2. WE WERE CREATED TO _____ A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND TO _____ ALL OF THE REST OF GOD’S CREATION! THIS MAKES US SPECIAL!

“*So God created human beings, making them in His image. He blessed them, and said,...live all over the earth and bring it under control. I am putting you in charge.*” Genesis 1:27-28 (LB)

“*God richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.*” 1 Timothy 6:17

Jesus said, “*I have come in order that you might have life — life in all its fullness!*” John 10:10

3. WHEN WE KNOW AND LOVE GOD, AND LIVE IN HARMONY WITH HIS PURPOSE FOR OUR LIVES, IT PRODUCES TREMENDOUS BENEFITS IN OUR LIVES:

Clear Conscience
Romans 8:1

Life & Peace
Romans 8:6

Help with Weakness
Romans 8:26

Purpose
Romans 8:28

Confidence
Romans 8:31

Security
Romans 8:39

Power & Strength
Philippians 4:13

Fulfillment
Philippians 4:19

Freedom
John 8:32,36

II. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Man has a natural desire to _____ and to ignore God's principles for living.

"Look out for #1. Do your own thing."

"If it feels good, do it - regardless of what God says about it."

"It's my life and I'll do what I please!"

THE BIBLE CALLS THIS ATTITUDE: _____.

"All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, and each of us has turned to his own way." Isaiah 53:6

"If we say that we never sin, we are only fooling ourselves, and refuse to accept the truth." 1 John 1:8

Sin breaks our close relationship with God. It causes us to fear God and try to live our lives outside of His will.

"The trouble is that your sins have cut you off from God." Isaiah 59:2 (LB)

"All have sinned and fall short of God's glorious ideal." Romans 3:23

When our relationship to God is not right, it causes PROBLEMS in every area of our lives — marriage, career, relationships, finances, etc.

WHEN PEOPLE HAVE PROBLEMS, THEY OFTEN TRY MANY DIFFERENT WAYS OF COPING BEFORE TURNING TO GOD.

"There are ways that SEEM right to man, but they only end in death." Proverbs 16:25

Even when we know that our deepest need is God, we often try wrong ways of getting to know Him:

- "My mother was a Christian so..."
- "It doesn't matter what you believe, just be sincere."
- "I'll give up all my bad habits."
- "I'll work real hard and earn it."
- "I'll be religious and go to church."

III. WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Jesus Christ said, *"I AM THE WAY, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except THROUGH ME!"* John 14:6

God Himself came to earth as a human being to bring us back to Himself. If any other way would have worked, Jesus Christ would not have had to come. The Way is a Person!

JESUS HAS ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF YOUR SIN PROBLEM!

“The wages of sin is death, BUT the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:23

God did this for us because He loves us and wants us to know Him.

“God demonstrated His love for us in that while we were still separated from God by sin, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

“God is on one side and all people are on the other side, and Christ Jesus is between them to bring them together, by giving His life for all mankind.” 1 Timothy 2:5

God has already done His part to restore our relationship to Him. He took the initiative. Now He waits for each of us to individually accept what He has done for us.

IV. WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO DO?

1. _____ **THAT GOD HAS NOT BEEN FIRST PLACE IN YOUR LIFE AND ASK HIM TO FORGIVE YOUR SINS.**

*“If we **confess** our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from every wrong.”* 1 John 1:9

2. _____ **THAT JESUS DIED TO PAY FOR YOUR SINS AND THAT HE ROSE AGAIN ON EASTER, AND IS ALIVE TODAY.**

*“If you confess that Jesus is your Lord, and you **believe in your heart** that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”* Romans 10:9

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name (Jesus) by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

3. _____ **GOD’S FREE GIFT OF SALVATION. DON’T TRY TO EARN IT.**

*“For it is by **grace** you are saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the **gift of God** — not by works, so that no one can boast.”* Ephesians 2:8,9

Our relationship to God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did for us!

4. _____ **JESUS CHRIST TO COME INTO YOUR LIFE AND BE THE DIRECTOR (“LORD”) OF YOUR LIFE.**

*“To all who **receive** Him, He gives the right to become children of God. All we need to do is to trust Him to save us. All those who **believe** this are reborn! — not a physical rebirth...but from the will of God!”* John 1:12-13

“Jesus says, ‘Listen! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will

come in...” Revelation 3:30

YOU CAN TAKE THESE STEPS BY PRAYING A SIMPLE PRAYER OF COMMITMENT TO GOD:

“Dear Jesus, thank you for making me and loving me, even when I’ve ignored you and gone my own way. I realize I need you in my life and I’m sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank you for dying on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. As much as I know how, I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept your gift of salvation. Please help me to grow now as a Christian.”

“Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING BAPTIZED

WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

1. TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE SET BY _____.

“At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river.” Mark 1:9

2. BECAUSE CHRIST _____ IT.

“Jesus said, ‘Go then, to all people everywhere and **make them my disciples**, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and **then teach them** to obey everything I have commanded you.’”
Matthew 28:19-20

3. IT DEMONSTRATES THAT I REALLY AM A _____.

“...many of the people who heard Him **believed** and were **baptized**.” Acts 18:8

“We know that we have come to know Him, if we **obey** His commands.” 1 John 2:3

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

1. IT ILLUSTRATES CHRIST’S _____ AND RESURRECTION.

“Christ died for our sins... He was buried...and He rose again.” 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

“For when you are **baptized**, you were **buried** with Christ, and in baptism you were also **raised** with Christ.
Colossians 2:12

2. IT ILLUSTRATES MY _____ AS A CHRISTIAN.

“When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!” 2 Corinthians 5:17

“By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead...so also we may live a new life!” Romans 6:4

Baptism doesn't make you a believer — it shows that **you already believe**. Baptism does not “save” you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring — it's the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith...it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

WHY BE BAPTIZED BY IMMERSION?

1. BECAUSE _____ WAS BAPTIZED THAT WAY.

“As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water.” Matthew 3:16

2. EVERY BAPTISM IN THE _____ WAS BY IMMERSION.

“...then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water...” Acts 8:38-39

3. THE WORD “BAPTIZE” MEANS TO _____ WATER”.

The Greek word *baptizo* means, “to immerse or dip under water”.

4. IT BEST SYMBOLIZES A BURIAL AND RESURRECTION!

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

1. EVERY PERSON WHO HAS _____ IN CHRIST.

“Those who believed and accepted His message were baptized...” Acts 2:41

“Simon himself believed and was baptized...” Acts 8:13

“But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News...and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” Acts 8:12

At New Light, we wait until our children are old enough to **believe** and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them. There is only one qualification in the Bible to be baptized. You've got to believe in Christ. You've got to be old enough to understand what that's all about. The purpose is to publicly confess your personal commitment to Christ.

At New Light, it is a membership requirement. Every member must have been baptized the way Jesus demonstrated, even though many of us were confirmed or dedicated as children.

WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

AS SOON AS YOU HAVE BELIEVED!

“Those who believed...were baptized...that day!” Acts 2:41

“Then Philip began with the scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the man said, ‘Look, here is water! Why shouldn’t I be baptized right now?’ Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ The man answered, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ So they went down into the water and Philip baptized him.” Acts 8:35-38

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptized. If you wait until you are “perfect”, you’ll never feel “good enough”!

CAN MY FAMILY BE BAPTIZED TOGETHER?

Yes! If each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Christ for salvation, we encourage families to be baptized at the same time. It is a wonderful expression of commitment.

However, it is important to remember that baptism is a *personal* statement of faith, not a family tradition. It is usually not wise to delay your baptism while waiting on other family members to accept Christ, particularly children. This puts undue pressure on them and delays *your* obedience.

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR WHEN I AM BAPTIZED?

Men and women should wear dark clothes (shirt, shorts or pants). Bring a change of clothes, a towel, and a plastic bag for your wet clothes. We provide changing rooms.

WILL I HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING?

Yes, you will be asked to state your name and whether you have received Christ. At the beginning of the service there will be a brief explanation of the meaning of baptism. You will wait at the edge of the pool for your turn to be baptized. A leader will introduce you, briefly lower you just under the water, and then you can leave the pool, dry off, and watch the others. Later, your baptism certificate will be mailed, or hand delivered to you. We encourage you to invite all your relatives and friends to attend your baptism.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES?

We can perform a private baptism in special circumstances.

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth. But He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church visible symbols (called “ordinances”) as reminders of His death. These ordinances are Baptism, The Lord’s Supper, and Serving Others (John 13:4-17 Jesus serves the disciples by washing their feet).

I. WHAT IS THE LORD’S SUPPER? (1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-26)

1. IT IS A _____.

“The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, **took bread...**” (vs. 23)

2. IT IS A _____.

“...and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; eat it **in remembrance** of me.’” (vs. 24)

3. IT IS A _____.

“In the same way, He took the cup, saying, ‘**This cup** is the new covenant in my blood; drink it to remember me.’” (vs. 25)

4. IT IS A _____.

“For whenever you eat the bread and drink the cup, **you proclaim the Lord’s death** until He comes back.” (vs. 26)

II. WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LORD’S SUPPER?

Only those who are already _____ (Mark 14:22-26)

“For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself.” 2Corinthians 11:29

III. HOW DO I PREPARE MYSELF FOR THE LORD’S SUPPER?

“Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A person ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.” 1 Corinthians 11:27-28

By...

1. Self-Examination
1 Corinthians 11:27

2. Confessing My Sins
1 John 1:9

3. Recommitment

Romans 12:1

4. Restoring Relationships

Matthew 5:23-24

IV. WHEN AND HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

Jesus never said when or how often believers should observe The Lord's Supper. He instituted it on a Thursday night. Because it is a 'supper', it may seem more appropriate to observe it at an evening service.

Session Two

The New Light Statements

“Let there be real harmony among you so there won’t be any split in the church. I plead with you to be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.”

1 Corinthians 1:10 (LB)

OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT

Why We Exist As A Church

The purpose of our church is summarized in a single sentence based on two key scriptures:

“WE BELIEVE A GREAT COMMITMENT TO THE GREAT _____ AND
THE GREAT _____ will grow a great church!”

The Great Commandment: “Jesus said, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart...soul...and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and Prophets hang on these two commandments.” Matthew 22:36-40

The Great Commission: “Jesus said, ‘Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:19-20

- To “Love God with all your heart” is “_____”.
- To “Love your neighbor as yourself” is “_____”.
- To “Go...make disciples” is “_____”.
- To “Baptize...” is to “_____”.
- To “Teach them...all things” is “_____”.

NEW LIGHT CHURCH EXISTS:

1. To _____ God’s Presence (**Worship**)
2. To _____ God’s Love (**Ministry**)
3. To _____ God’s Word (**Evangelism**)
4. To _____ God’s Family (**Fellowship**)
5. To _____ God’s People (**Discipleship**)

I. WE EXIST TO CELEBRATE GOD’S PRESENCE

WORSHIP: _____

“Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.” Matthew 4:10

“...The Father seeks worshipers...and His worshippers must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” John 4:23-24

Expressions of Worship

- **Singing** (Ephesians 5:19)

- **Dancing** (Psalms 150:4)
- **Commitment** (Romans 12:1-2)
- **Praying** (Psalms 95:6)
- **Hearing the Word** (John 17:17)
- **Giving** (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)
- **Baptism** (Romans 6:3-4)
- **Meditating** (Habakkuk 2:20)
- **Lord's Supper** (1 Corinthians 11-23-26)

II. WE EXIST TO COMMUNICATE GOD'S WORD

EVANGELISM: _____

"His intent was that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known..." Ephesians 3:10

"Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But who can ask Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells him?" Romans 10:13-14 (LB)

WHY OUR CHURCH MUST NEVER STOP GROWING

1. Because _____

*"The Lord...is patient, **not wanting anyone to perish**, but wants everyone to come to repentance."* 2 Peter 3:9

2 Corinthians 5:14, Luke 15:3-10, Matthew 9:12-13

2. Because _____

*"Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, **so that My House will be full**."* Luke 14:23 (LB)

"...you will be my witnesses..." Acts 1:8

3. Because _____

*"Under Christ's control, the whole Body is nourished...and grows as **God wants it to grow**."* Colossians 2:19 (GN)

"(Jesus) I will build my church." Matthews 16:18

Unbiblical Reasons For Not Growing:

- *"God isn't interested in numbers."*

- “Our church wants quality not quantity.”
- “Large churches are impersonal”

We believe our church must grow _____ and _____ at the same time.

“And the Good News of the Kingdom will be preached to the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and **THEN** the end will come.” Matthew 24:14

III. WE EXIST TO EDUCATE GOD’S PEOPLE

DISCIPLESHIP: _____

“Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ **and go on to maturity...**” Hebrews 6:1

“Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:18

“(God has given)...some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of ministry, so that the Body of Christ may be built up until we all...become mature...like Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-13

IV. WE EXIST TO DEMONSTRATE GOD’S LOVE

MINISTRY: _____

“By this shall all men know that you are my disciples — **that you have love for one another.**” John 13:35

1 John 3:16-17, Matthew 25:34-40, Hebrews 13:16, Romans 12:13

The heartbeat of New Light is our _____ **ministries** _____
Every member needs to be a part of one.

“Now God gives us many kinds of special abilities.. and there are different kinds of service to God (ministry)... **All of you** together form the one Body of Christ and **each of you is a separate and necessary part of it.**” 1 Corinthians 12:4-5, 27 (LB)

OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

What We Believe

- **In essential beliefs — we have unity.**

“There is one Body and one Spirit...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us all...” Ephesians 4:4-6

- **In non-essential beliefs — we have liberty.**

“Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters... Who are you to judge someone

else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls... So then each of us will give an account of himself to God... So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.” Romans 14:1,4,12,22

- **In all our beliefs — we show charity.**

*“...If I hold in my mind not only all human knowledge but also the very secrets of God, and if I have the faith that can move mountains — but have **no love**, I amount to nothing at all.” 1 Corinthians 13:2 (Ph)*

THE ESSENTIALS WE BELIEVE:

1. ABOUT GOD

There is only one true, living sovereign, holy, and eternally existent God. God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe, sustainer of all things, the source of all truth, and is worthy of worship, confidence, and obedience. God is infinitely perfect and eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

Genesis 1:1,26,27,31 3:22; Deuteronomy 6:45; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19;
1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14

2. ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the Son of God by the miracle of the virgin birth. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus became man without ceasing to be God, to reveal God and to redeem mankind from sin. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. Jesus is now exalted at the right hand of God as Head of the Church. Christ is Lord of the individual believer, fulfilling His ministry as our Great High Priest and Advocate. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

Matthew 1:22, 23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5; 14:10-30;
Hebrews 4:14,15; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4; Romans 1:3,4;
Acts 1:9-11; Philippians 2:5-9; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 6:14,15; Titus 2:13

3. ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. Every believer has at least one spiritual gift so we can use this gift for the strength and outreach of the church. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily.

2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13, 14:16,17;
1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25;
Ephesians 5:18

4. ABOUT THE BIBLE

The Bible is God's Word to us. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. The Bible is the Christian's final authority in faith and conduct. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture of error.

2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20, 21; 2 Timothy 1:13;
Psalm 119:105,160, 12:6; Proverbs 30:5

5. ABOUT HUMAN BEINGS

People are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "sin". This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life. Man is subject to Satan's power; and man, within himself, has no means of recovery or salvation.

Genesis 1:17,27, 31; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1, 2

6. ABOUT SALVATION

Salvation is God's free gift to us but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Jesus became the sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.

Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8,9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5;

7. ABOUT ETERNAL SECURITY

Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot "lose" it. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security.

John 10:29; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10,14; 1 Peter 1:3-5
Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:17

8. ABOUT ETERNITY

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

John 3:16; John 14:17; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:17-18;
Revelation 20:15; 1 Cor. 2:7-9

OUR LIFESTYLE STATEMENT

What We Practice

Beliefs are not worth much unless they are translated into actions. Based on what the Bible teaches, we are committed to these practices.

BIBLE AS OUR SOLE AUTHORITY

“The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us to do what is right.” 2 Timothy 3:15

Because God’s Word is the only completely reliable and truthful authority, we accept the Bible as our manual for living. Our first question when faced with a decision is “What does the Bible say?” We practice daily Bible reading, Bible study, and Bible memorization. The Bible is the basis for all we believe.

AUTONOMY OF EACH LOCAL CHURCH

“Christ is the head of His Body, the church. He is the source of the Body’s life...” Colossians 1:18 (GN)

Christ is the recognized head of our church, not any person, group, or religious organization. While recognizing the value of associating and cooperating with other groups of Christians, we believe every local church should be self-governing and independent from any denominational control.

PRIESTHOOD OF EVERY BELIEVER

“Christ loves us, and by His death He has freed us from our sins and made us a kingdom of priests to serve God...” Revelation 1:6 (GN) *“You are...the King’s priests...God’s own people, chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God.”* 1 Peter. 2:9 (GN)

The Bible teaches that every Christian is called to “full time” Christian service, regardless of his or her vocation. We practice the truth that every believer is a minister by encouraging every member to find a place of service and ministry. Every believer has direct access to God through prayer and Bible reading.

TITHING

“A tithe of everything you produce belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord.” Leviticus 26:30

At New Light we practice tithing for the support of Christ’s body, the church, as God commands. We recognize that giving 10% of our income is the Biblical standard of giving.

IMMERSION

“For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ...” Colossians 2:12 (GN)

We practice baptism by immersion under water — the way Jesus was baptized, and the way the Bible commands.

SPIRIT-LED LIVING

(Jesus said), “I am the Vine, you are the branches. If you abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; but apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:5

We believe the only way possible to live the Christian life is by God’s power within us. So we seek to practice a daily dependence on God’s Spirit to enable us to do what is right. (Philippians 2:13, Ephesians 5:18)

TELLING OTHERS ABOUT CHRIST

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” 1 Peter 3:15

It is the responsibility of every Christian to share the Good News with those with whom God brings us into contact. We practice personal sharing about Christ and inviting friends to church.

Session Three

The New Light Strategy

(Paul) “I have been all things to all sorts of people that by every possible means I might win some to God. I do all of this for the sake of the Good News.”

1 Corinthians 9:22-23 (Ph)

THE MINISTRY PURPOSES OF NEW LIGHT:

TO **EMPOWER** – Spiritual power is the divine energy God is willing to express in and through us and the divine authority needed to carry out the work God has called us to do.

TO **EQUIP** – Instruction prepares the saints for the works of ministry so the body may grow in the knowledge of the Son of God, to become mature disciples, and to fulfill the measure of the stature, which belongs, to the fullness of Christ.

TO **EVANGELIZE** – God requires that we proclaim the Word of God and call people everywhere to respond to Jesus Christ through faith.

THE FOUR NEW LIGHT COVENANTS:

1. THE MEMBERSHIP COVENANT...

is a commitment to _____ and _____

“You are members of God’s very own family...and you belong in God’s household with every other Christian.” Ephesians 2:19 (LB)

“We are all parts of Christ’s Body, and it takes every one of us to make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So we belong to each other and need all the others.” Romans 12:4-5 (LB)

2. THE MATURITY COVENANT...

is a commitment to the _____ necessary for spiritual growth.

“Continue to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:18

“Take the time and trouble to keep yourself spiritually fit.” 1 Timothy 4:7 (Ph)

3. THE MINISTRY COVENANT...

is a commitment to discovering and using my God-given gifts and abilities in _____ God and others.

“God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other...” 1 Peter 4:10 (LB)

“There are different kinds of service to God...together you form the Body of Christ and each one of you is a necessary part of it.” 1 Corinthians 12:5,27 (LB)

4. THE MISSIONS COVENANT...

is a commitment to _____ the Good News with others.

“...you will be my witnesses for me...to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8 (GN)

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do it with gentleness and respect...” 1 Peter 3:15

WHY DO WE HAVE THESE COVENANTS?

WE BECOME WHAT WE ARE_____

Session Four

The New Light Structure

*“For God is not a God of disorder, but of peace...
Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”*

1 Corinthians 14:33,40

HOW OUR CHURCH IS STRUCTURED

The structure of the church should *not* be determined by culture, business practices, or even denominational traditions.

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH DETERMINES ITS STRUCTURE.

I. THE CHURCH IS A _____

“They continued steadily learning the teaching of the apostles, and joined in the fellowship...” Acts 2:42 (Ph)

A top priority in a fellowship is _____ and _____

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” Ephesians 4:3

“So let us concentrate on the things that make for harmony and the growth of our fellowship together.” Romans 14:19 (Ph)

ANY attitude that causes disunity is sin.

Colossians 3:15, 1 Corinthians 1:10, 2 Timothy 2:14, Proverbs 17:14, 2 Corinthians 13:11,
Philippians 1:27, 2:1-3, Colossians 2:2, Philippians 4:2, 1 Peter 3:8, 1 Corinthians 14:33,
John 13:34-35, 2 Timothy 2:23, Romans 15:5-6, Romans 12:16-18,
Colossians 3:13-14, Psalms 133:1

IMPLICATION: A GOOD STRUCTURE PROMOTES UNITY AND DOWNPLAYS _____

“(Often)...your meetings do more harm than good because I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you...” 1 Corinthians 11:17-18

“Voting” tends to _____

At New Light, we only vote on:

- *Confirming the senior pastor*

II. THE CHURCH IS A _____

“You should be like one big happy family, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds.” 1 Peter 3:8 (LB)

Galatians 6:10, Hebrews 2:10-12, 1 Peter 4:17

SO WE OPERATE ON THE BASIS OF _____ NOT _____

*“Don’t reprimand a senior member of the church, appeal to him as a **father**. Treat the young men as **brothers**, and the older women as **mothers**. Treat the younger women as **sisters**...”* 1 Timothy 5:1-2 (Ph)

*“(A Pastor) must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. If anyone does not know how to **manage his family**, how can he **take care of God’s church**?”* 1 Timothy 3:4-

III. THE CHURCH IS A _____

1 Corinthians 12:27, Ephesians 5:23, Ephesians 1:22-23, Colossians 1:18, 2:19

We are a body — not a business!

We are an organism — not an organization!

THEREFORE, WE FUNCTION ON THE BASIS OF _____

NOT _____

“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We each have different gifts according to the grace given us.” Romans 12:4-6

In an organization, “maintenance” becomes the focus. But in an organism, “ministry” is the focus.

AT NEW LIGHT WE HAVE A SIMPLE STRUCTURE SO WE CAN MAXIMIZE _____

AND MINIMIZE _____

“God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God’s people for works of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up...” Ephesians 4:11-12

OUR STRUCTURE

- THE PEOPLE ARE THE “ _____ ”.
- THE PASTORS ARE THE “ _____ ”.

IV. THE CHURCH IS A _____

(Jesus’ favorite description of the church)

John 10:1-30, Matthew 26:31, Matthew 25:33

THEREFORE, IT IS CARED FOR AND LED BY _____

*“Jesus asked Simon Peter, ‘Do you really love me?’ ‘Yes Lord,’ said Peter. ‘Then **take care** of my sheep.’”* John 21:16-17

Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the *same* church leaders:

- “POIMEN”
- PRESBUTEROS”
- EPISCOPOS”

*“To the **elders** I say...**Be shepherds** of God’s flock, serving as **overseers**...”* 1 Peter 5:1-2

*“Paul sent to Ephesus for the **elders** of the church. When they arrived he said to them... Guard yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers**. **Be pastors** of the church of God...”* Acts 20:17-18, 28

OUR AFFILIATION

Baptist Denomination

New Light is an Independent church not governed by any other organization or church

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MEMBER

The difference between “attenders” and “members” can be summed up in one word:

At New Light, we recognize the need for a formal membership. We ask you to commit to membership for four reasons:

I. A BIBLICAL REASON:
CHRIST IS COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH

*“...Christ loved the church, and He gave His life for it.” **Ephesians 5:25***

II. A CULTURAL REASON:
IT IS AN ANTIDOTE TO OUR SOCIETY

We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything... a job...a marriage... our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of “church shoppers and hoppers”. Membership swims against the current of America’s “consumer religion.” It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

III. A PRACTICAL REASON:
IT DEFINES WHO CAN BE COUNTED ON

Every team must have a roster. Every school must have enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every army has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership identifies our family.

IV. A PERSONAL REASON:
IT PRODUCES SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you’re not committed to any specific church family.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME AS A MEMBER?

At New Light, we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We only expect our members to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These responsibilities are spelled out in the Membership Covenant.

The New Light Membership Covenant

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

I. 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 15:19 (PH)

“Live in complete harmony with each other – each with the attitude of Christ toward each other.” Romans 15:5 (LB)

“Have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts.” 1 Peter 1:22 (GN)

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of our 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

II. I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By praying for its growth
- ...By inviting the un-churched to attend
- ...By warmly welcoming those who visit

“To the church...we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly.” 1 Thessalonians 1:2

“Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that My House will be full.” Luke 14:23 (LB)

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

III. I WILL SERVE THE MINISTRY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By discovering my gifts and talents
- ...By developing a servant’s heart
- ...By being equipped to serve my pastors

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

“God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God’s people for works of ministry, 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 Jesus Christ...who took on the very nature of a servant...” Philippians 2:3-4,7

IV. I WILL SUPPORT THE TESTIMONY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By attending faithfully
- ...By living a godly life
- ...By giving regularly

“Let us not give up the habit of meeting together...but let us encourage one another.” Hebrews 10:25

“But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ.” Philippians 1:27 (Ph)

“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 16:2

“A tenth of all you produce is the Lord’s and it is holy.” Leviticus 27:30

**NEW LIGHT'S PROGRAM TO HELP YOU GROW
KINGDOM LIFE ACADEMY SERIES**



GO ON TO SECOND BASE!

AN OVERVIEW OF KINGDOM LIFE ACADEMY SERIES

100 Level Seminars:

To lead people to Christ and **membership** at New Light

200 Level Seminars:

To grow people to spiritual **maturity**

300 Level Seminars:

To equip people with the skills they need for **ministry**

400 Level Seminars:

To enlist people to the worldwide **mission** of Sharing Christ

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