



FELLOWSHIP, BAPTISM, & **THE CHURCH**

The Basics Series  Lesson 9

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Bonding together with other believers is one of the most important things you can do to keep growing in your faith and witness. To isolate yourself is like taking a burning log out of the roaring fire and tossing it out on its own. Before long the flame will disappear, it will start to smolder and smoke, and will finally become totally extinguished. Committing yourself to other Christians who are walking with God will help keep you walking with God for the long haul. Find a good church that preaches the Word of God and plug in to learn, serve, and grow. If you haven't been baptized, do it. Jesus was baptized and tells us to do so as well. It doesn't save you, but is a powerful outward sign to the whole world of an inward commitment you have made to Christ. Look up these passages and see how the Lord wants to work in your life.

Fellowship with other Christians

The church is the only fellowship in the world where the one requirement for membership is the unworthiness of the candidate.

Biblical Fellowship

A. Read 1 John 1:3

1. What was the author's purpose for proclaiming what he had seen and heard?
2. With whom did he have fellowship?

B. Fellowship is derived from the Greek word "koinonia," which means *common*. As you examine the verses below, determine what you can share with others.

1. 1 Peter 1:22
2. Galatians 6:2
3. Galatians 6:6

C. In the first century church in Acts 2:44–47 you can see fellowship at its best.

1. To what were they devoting themselves?

2. All those who had believed were together and had all things in common (v. 44). What specifically did they have in common?
3. What was the result of that kind of fellowship?

The Purpose of Fellowship

A. Study Hebrews 10:24–25.

1. As Christians, to what are we to take time to “stimulate each other”?
2. How can you do this to Christians around you?
3. What is your responsibility to the body of believers at your church?

B. Examine Hebrews 3:13

1. How often should Christians encourage one another?
2. Why is that so important?

Baptism

Definition: To identify with, or associate with the message of the gospel, the person of Jesus Christ, and a group of believers (the Church).

Purpose: Symbol of a new conversion (Romans 6:4)

1. Christ was baptized (Matthew 3:16)
2. Christ approved his disciples baptizing others (John 4:1–2)
3. Christ commanded it (Matthew 28:19)
4. Early Church practiced it (Acts 2:41; 8:35–36; 9:18; 10:47–48)
5. To publicly identify with Christ (Acts 16:14–15, 33; Acts 2:41)

How: Talk to your pastor or spiritual leader about being baptized

Church

Definition: “An assembly of professing believers in Christ who have been baptized and who are organized to carry out God’s will.” — Charles Ryrie

Purpose: What do these verses say about the purpose of the church?

- Acts 2:42–47

- Matthew 28:19–20

- Ephesians 4:11–12

1. God purchased the Church with the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28)
2. Christ instituted the Church and will make sure it succeeds (Matthew 16:18)
3. Christ loves, nourishes, and cherishes the Church (Ephesians 5:25, 29)
4. We are a part of the Church (1 Corinthians 12:12–13)

How:

A. Select and join a good church where:

1. The Bible is taught clearly and accurately (Acts 2:42)
2. Jesus Christ is exalted as Savior and Lord (Colossians 1:28, 29)
3. There is evidence of loving relationships by its membership (John 13:35)

B. Give

1. Time (Ephesians 5:15)
2. Talent (Ephesians 4:12–16, 1 Corinthians 12:7, 11; Matthew 25:14–30)
3. Treasure (Matthew 6:19–21; 1 Corinthians 16:2)

Suggested memory verses:

1. Fellowship – Hebrews 10:24–25
2. Baptism – Matthew 28:19
3. Church – Acts 2:42