



How to Become a Member of God's Church

Harold Barber

As we look about in the religious world today we see many different churches with different doctrines and beliefs. Among these churches we find various ways and means of becoming a member of them. Some require one thing and some another.

To become a member of some churches you must sign a card adhering to their particular doctrine; others, you shake hands with the preacher, or you make an intellectual confession of Jesus and are accepted as a member upon the approval of the remainder of the members, or by some method that particular church has devised itself, but all are foreign to the method God has used for centuries.

Dear reader, you may join any or all churches in the land and yet not be a member of God's church. In the midst of all the so-called churches and their various ways of becoming a member, God has a church and there is only one way to become a member of it. If you have an honest heart and want to go to Heaven when this life is over, you must be a member of God's church for it is the

only one that will be accepted on the day of judgment. The people who have joined by the hand-shaking method, or by signing a card, or merely making an intellectual confession of Jesus will be disappointed on the last day when they are turned into outer darkness.

To become a member of God's church, we must find the door and the requirements for entrance through that door. To climb up some other way is to be classed as a thief and a robber. Jesus said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9).

Jesus is the Door to God's church, and to become a member we must come to Him and be saved from sin. There is no other way into the Church of God, which is God's church on earth. No preacher has the authority, nor is it possible, to take members into God's church. You may often hear some preacher say he is going to open the doors of the church. Beloved, he may open the doors of some man-made organization called a church, but he cannot open the doors to God's church.

So remember, when you meet some man's requirements to become a member you are not becoming a member of God's church.

Now that we have found the Door, let us look further into the requirements of entrance into that door. Jesus said, "I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Man must enter in by Jesus (not the preacher), and as he enters in, he is saved, and when he is saved, he enters in. Both take place at the same time when he passes through the Door. It is evident from this Scripture that to enter into Christ is to enter into His church. Therefore, no other procedure such as putting your name on the church book, shaking hands with the preacher, or anything else is necessary. You become a member of God's church when you become a member of Christ. You are born into it, it is not a joinable institution.

To become a member of Christ means to forsake sin and repent and be born of, the Spirit of God. The people of God are a holy people, they have forsaken all sin and given themselves

unreservedly to the Lord Jesus Christ and are serving Him. They have come to Him and repented of their sins and have been born from above. Born, not of blood; nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. When they repented of sin, they were saved and entered into Christ and also into His church. "And of Zion [the church] it shall be said. This and that man was born in her; and the highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there" (Psalm 87:5-6). From this passage of Scripture we see the Lord is going to write up the people, and He will write only those who have been born (spiritually) in her. This is the only method God uses to bring members into His church. He does not recognize those so-called members who have signed a card, shook hands with the preacher, or those the preacher said he took into the church. God must be the One who takes them in before they are recognized by Him. They must be "born again."

Many have forsaken sin and been

born of God and still thought it necessary to join some church. They united with some church and took upon themselves a fictitious name which was displeasing to God. He is jealous of the family name and wants all of his children to use that name. Why should God's children use some other name when the Bible tells us Jesus purchased the Church of God with His own blood (Acts 20:28)? If you have been born of the Spirit of God and are living a holy life, God wants you to use His name only, not some fictitious name. You need not join some church either, for when you repented of sins and entered Christ, you became a member of His church.

The question may arise in your mind, "How can I worship at such and such a church and not join? They insist on every one joining the church before they are recognized as Christians." If you have forsaken sins and repented and are living a holy life, you are accepted of God and He wants you to use His name only. He also wants you to come out from among the people who insist on you joining

church and worship with His true children. In the midst of all the denominations, God has His true people who are separate and are standing upon the Word of God as their only governor.

In God's Word He also issues a call for you, Christian, to "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." God is calling His people out of the babel of confusion that exists in denominationalism, to walk with Him according to His Word. If that particular church insists on you joining, they are teaching something that is foreign to the Bible. Therefore, it is false doctrine, and God wants you to leave it and find His true people. He is now gathering the scattered saints from all divisions and bringing them together to compose one true church that will constitute His bride on the last day. His bride is a body of people who have been "born again" and are obeying the Word of God. They are members of God's church by virtue of the new birth and not some method of joining which they have adopted.

Even though you have repented and been born of God yet insist upon staying among people who teach false doctrine and live sinful lives, you will soon lose your spiritual experience. God says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Corinthians 6:14 and 17). God does not want His children to be yoked together with unbelievers or with anything that is unclean. He wants them to come out of all these things and be separate and He will receive them.

To be "born again" and be entangled with sinful church members (those who met the so-called church's requirements but not the Lord's) is to displease God. Therefore, to be a member of God's church is not only to be "born again" and live holy but it is to come out of all the denominations and be separate from them and from all that is unclean. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body [the church], whether we be Jews or

Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13). All the different denominations are displeasing to God and are man-made, therefore God is calling His people out of them to constitute the one body in which their experience of salvation made them a member. Reader have you repented of your sins and been born of God? Are you living a holy life? If you are, you should leave all the denominations and find God's true people, God's true church, and worship with them that you may be accepted of Him on that last great day.