

# **VISITATION:**

## **An Open Door**

**Revelation 3:8**

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Revised 2008  
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## INTRODUCTION

### **WHERE DID THIS MATERIAL COME FROM?**

The following material is presented as a work of a gentleman by the name of Bob D. Smith. He created the bulk of this booklet prior to the mid-1960's when it was reprinted as a local church work. In revision and update, I have added new material from Kevin Cauley of the Southwest School of Preaching in Austin, Texas; Melvin Sapp of the Central Carolina School of Preaching in Sumter, South Carolina; and myself, Travis Main of the Prairie Hills Church of Christ in Saint Joseph, Missouri. The material is free for your use in evangelism. Further copies can be downloaded at: <http://www.thatchristianwebsite.com> .

### **SYSTEMATIC VISITATION**

The ideal congregation is one in which all the members are working and contributing to the planned program of scriptural activities. This is true because: (1) such work is essential to the individual's fulfilling his mission as a Christian. (2) Such work contributes to the individual's spiritual vitality; (3) Such a situation means that the Church is instrumental in saving souls, whether they be in God's family or yet outside. *Whatever contributions the Church makes in the community of a social, cultural, or ever benevolent nature are wholly incidental to its concern for souls.*

**WE NEED TO MEET THE CHALLENGE MORE EFFICIENTLY.** The potential of most Church visitation programs is great. A good *working* force of Christians who want to work for the Lord can accomplish much. Yet, they often need to be meeting this great challenge with more efficiency and devotedness. There are weak and delinquent members of the congregation who need admonition, exhortation, or rebuke. There are a number of families of the Lord's people represented who are wholly out of duty, not attending anywhere, which we know about. And there are scores of non-members who have shown an interest in some way who need attention, to say nothing of the thousands who have never heard of real, New Testament Christianity.

**ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM.** A program structure designed to meet this challenge can be effectively matched to most all congregations. Imagine the area in which you live will be divided into zones. These zones are arranged so that there is a fairly equal distribution of members in each one. All the members in the congregation, who will, are asked to participate. A file will be kept by the elders on all prospects or members who need assistance. Visitation for the most part will be within the respective zones of the callers, with a few exceptions. *They are to be made IN ADDITION to those you make on your own.* In fact, you are urged to make other contacts whenever you can and to make them in any zone where you see an opportunity. Feel free to consult the elders regarding the member files for additional information to make your work more effective.

**VISUALIZE WHAT WILL HAPPEN.** If at least an average of three families from each zone participates (example 7 zones) and makes one call each month, that will mean twenty-one calls each month in addition to those that some are making each week on their own. Over a period of time it ought to produce inspiring results if you do your part. Not only will souls be won and God's children restored, but you will grow as well.

## **PURPOSE AND USE OF THIS BOOKLET**

**WHY THIS BOOKLET?** There are three common problems encountered in a systematic visitation program. (1) A lack of information on the part of many as to the nature and specific purposes of the program (2) Trouble in arranging a suitable schedule so the majority of the members may participate (3) A sense of insecurity on the part of those who are inexperienced.

In approaching this work, there has been an attempt to largely eliminate all three of these problems. (1) Each zone is given a detailed description of the work in, small, informal meetings. (2) The program allows for a flexible time period in which the calls are to be made. (3) This booklet has been prepared to assist those inexperienced in this work by proposing some answers to the questions which commonly plague them.

**HOW TO USE IT.** When you receive a contact notice, note the type of contact which has been checked. Turn to the section in this booklet which deals with that particular type of visit. You will find, answers to twelve questions which are pertinent to such calls. The answers given to these are not intended to be final answers in any case, and they are only intended to be suggestive at best. Use them only as suggestions adapting them to the particular call which you have been asked to make. Apply those which are most suitable to you. Make your call as personal as you can and not professional. Don't mention that you were asked to make the call. They should feel that you came to see them because you wanted to, not because you were asked and that should be your attitude.

### **DON'T GIVE UP EASILY**

You will meet problems, most of which will have no connection with the amount of experience you have had. Some people will offer all kinds of excuses for their negligence when you call on them. Others will expect you to visit them often or to do what they refuse to do, but will not make calls themselves. A small minority will resent your visit.

But those lovable characters who manifest real appreciation; the joy of seeing those you have visited become more interested and obedient to the gospel will more than compensate for the disappointments. You will know a satisfaction that can only come to those who have developed a genuine interest in the souls of their fellows.

### **COMMON WORRIES**

#### **I DON'T KNOW ENOUGH SCRIPTURE TO DO THIS PROPERLY:**

When will you know enough scripture to visit a brother or sister who just needs your presence? Does it require scripture to give a senior Christian a ride to the store? If it required scripture to greet a new member to the community, we would never become acquainted with new neighbors. Yes, knowing scripture is valuable, but you have brothers and sisters in Christ to aid you in this opportunity. **READ Luke 11:9**

#### **I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO OR SAY:**

This booklet is designed to guide you in what to say and do. Having a plan and a purpose for your words and actions provides comfort. Still, there is no perfect method. Study this booklet, talk to those with experience, pray about your concerns, and ask God for help. Remember, you will not be alone unless you want to be.

**READ James 1:5, Rom. 8:31**

#### **I AM TOO BUSY TO SPEND THE TIME:**

There is no question that we can fill our life to the brim with activities. Television, shopping, internet, sports, recreation, making money... these activities are part of most of our lives. But what is your priority? Have you not an hour or two out of 168 hours a week to be about your "*Father's business*"?

**READ Matt. 6:33, Rom. 15:1-2, Eph. 2:10, Mark 16:15-16**

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**1. WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY THIS VISIT?**

This is a case where a person or persons have attended our services, probably on the previous Sunday. They may or may not be members of the Church of Christ. (Your visitor card will typically tell). Your main concern in your first visit is to get acquainted with this person or family and to show an interest in them by your visit and attitude. Be as friendly and cordial as you can so that they will recognize you as a friend, and through you, desire to attend services again. Think about; pray about, your attitude so that it will be a sincere, warm one.

**2. SHOULD I TELEPHONE BEFORE GOING?**

In many contacts of this kind, you will not know or have access to the telephone number. It will not be necessary to call, though, for they have indicated on the visitor's card (in most instances) that you may call on them. Just use good judgment in selecting a time to visit.

**3. WHEN SHOULD I GO?**

It is better if you can make the visit before the next Sunday. (1) It's easier to show that you are interested in them if you call as soon after their having attended as you can and (2) it may encourage them to be there the very next Sunday when otherwise they might go somewhere else, especially if they are "shopping around." As to time of day various things will effect your choice. If it is a couple or family, you probably would want to wait till evening to visit when they are more likely to be at home. If it's a woman, an afternoon call might be better. Try to select a time when you think it would be most convenient for them.

**4. SHOULD I GO ALONE?**

Your decision here will vary depending upon the contact. If it is a couple you are calling on, it would be better for you to take your companion, where feasible, or another member with you. If it is a woman, a woman could call alone or take another female member with her. Similarly for men.

**5. WHAT SHALL I DO WHEN I GET THERE?**

When you first get to this home after you introduce yourself, you should mention that you are from the Church of Christ and wanted to come by and get acquainted. Tell them with meaning how glad the Church was to have them in the services last Sunday.

**6. WHAT SHALL I TALK ABOUT?**

Keep in mind the purpose of your visit. Show an interest in and get acquainted with the members of the family where possible, much the same as you would a new, next-door-neighbor. Talk about the neighborhood, the schools, your jobs, sports, your family etc. Try to establish some personal contact between you and the family and tell them you would like for them to meet your family where feasible. Avoid arguments and antagonistic attitudes on any subject, especially on the first visit. In the course of the conversation, try to secure the following information if you do not already know it.

(1) If one or more are members of the Church: Find out how many of them are members; where they last had their membership; how long they have been members of the Church; number of children and approximate ages; if children in Sunday school; if they seem to have been fairly active in the Church in the past; how long they have been living here.

(2) If none are members of the Church of Christ: Find out where they have been attending; how they came to attend your services; number of children and approximate ages; if children are in Sunday school, etc.

(Don't quiz them like a census taker, but attempt to pick up this information while conversing. Jot it down on your report sheet when you get home.)

**7. SHOULD I LEAVE ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL?**

Plan to have some cards available, which will list the schedule of services, and a few other pertinent items that will be appropriate to give on such a visit. If they make specific inquiries about the Church, you might answer briefly and promise to mail or bring by a tract which will deal with the inquiry. (You'll often find a good selection of tracts in the tract racks or in your preacher's/elders' own personal study – yes, they can't resist grabbing tracts everywhere they go! )

**8. HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY?**

The first visit should not be a prolonged one. It is much better to make a short, friendly visit rather than a long, boring one. You can usually determine when you have overstayed your welcome by the flow of conversation. Stay long enough to at least become acquainted (sometimes 15 minutes would suffice); don't prolong the conversation merely because you can. (An hour is usually long enough for any first visit).

**9. WHAT ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD I MAKE BEFORE LEAVING?**

Try to get a definite commitment. Ask if it will be possible for them to be in attendance again next Sunday. If you know, tell them what the sermon subject is to be. Invite them to come for Bible study. If the parents are hesitant, volunteer to come by for the children next Sunday and set a definite time when you will be by. They are more likely to come when they have made some such commitments.

**10. WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?**

Your report is to be written on the back of your contact notice. Give the date and time of day you made your visit. Indicate whether it was a good time of day for the family schedule. List the information mentioned under question 6 which you were able to secure. Indicate how you were received whether friendly or indifferent. What response did they manifest toward the service they attended? Did they indicate whether they plan to return? If members, did they indicate if they plan to have their fellowship with you? File the report with the elders / at the building.

**11. HOW WILL THIS REPORT BE USED?**

The congregation will keep a record of the number of contacts made in each zone and the visit results from the program. Reports will be given out regularly. Besides the statistics, the information on the reports will be used for follow-up contacts.

**12. AM I THROUGH WITH THIS CONTACT AFTER THE ONE VISIT?**

Continue to show an interest in this contact after your first visit. If they are present the following Sunday, be sure to greet them and introduce them to others. If you can, have them home with you if not then, at an early date where feasible, and you can, have other members in at the same time. If they aren't present the following Sunday, go by or call and find out why. If they are not members and continue to show interest, ask about arranging a weekly study period with them in their home. If they are members, encourage them to have their fellowship with the congregation and to let the brethren know. Try to promote some visible response on their part as you come to know them.

**1. WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY THIS VISIT?**

This person or persons has identified with the congregation, but they have not attended any of the Sunday services lately or have been irregular in attendance. Your purpose is to show an interest in them by your visit. If you personally have missed them, convey this to them. Try also to make them feel that they are missing something. Before going, ask God's help in manifesting a genuine concern in them, in the spirit of meekness, **Read Galatians 6:1-2.**

**2. SHOULD I TELEPHONE BEFORE GOING?**

- (1) If you know the people well enough, you might want to plan something to do with them such as a shopping date, an afternoon of sewing, etc. (in the case of women); or a sports event, etc. (in the case of men) or perhaps a dinner date at your house if it is a family involved. This is a situation where such arrangements might be more effective than a visit at their home. You would need to telephone in such cases.
- (2) If you are not intimately acquainted, a call beforehand wouldn't be necessary. Select a good time and stop by for a short visit.

**3. WHEN SHOULD I GO?**

This situation may not be as urgent as some. However, there is quite possibly a problem an early contact might help solve. The time of day you select will depend upon the type of call you decide on. (See answer to question. 2.) A time could be arranged if you telephone. If you decide just to drop by an afternoon call might be best for contacting a woman, an evening call for visiting a family or a male member. Of course, your schedule will help decide.

**4. SHOULD I GO ALONE?**

- (1) In the event it is one person you are to contact and you know them well enough to discuss things rather freely, it might be best to be alone with them. If it is a family you are to contact, it would probably be best for you and your companion, where feasible, to be involved.
- (2) If it is a woman you don't know well, a woman could go alone but she probably will want to take another lady with her. Similarly for men.

**5. WHAT SHALL I DO WHEN I GET THERE?**

- (1) If you know them well, don't make this particular visit with them conspicuously different from previous times you have been with them.
- (2) If you haven't had many occasions to be with them in the past, make sure that when you arrive that they know who you are and that you are from the Church. Indicate that you just stopped by for a few minutes chat.

**6. WHAT SHALL I TALK ABOUT?**

- (1) When it is a rather close friend or couple, discuss things of common interest as you ordinarily would. However, definitely include allusions to the Church and its work. Perhaps they will volunteer the reason for not having been present lately, giving you an opportunity to encourage them. Talk about the good points of the work of the congregation.

## **MEMBER HASN'T BEEN PRESENT RECENTLY (Continued)**

Try to overcome critical attitudes don't make it a session to gossip about fellow members and avoid arguments where possible.

- (2) Become better acquainted if you don't know the family well. Learn about the family members. Establish a personal contact between your family and theirs where feasible. They may not confide all their problems but try to convey that they are missing a lot by not being present. Tell them of the things the Church is doing (proposed gospel meetings, building program etc.). Tell them about the class work that would apply to their family and what is being studied if possible; tell what attendance has been averaging lately. Help them to see that they are needed and that they cannot continue as they have been and be pleasing to God. **Make them want to come.**

### **7. SHOULD I LEAVE ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL?**

In most instances, they will know what their duty in the matter is. Your purpose is largely to cause them to want to do it by your interest and exhortation. Therefore, it is probably best not to leave material except in a few instances.

### **8. HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY?**

- (1) You can judge that if you are well acquainted with them.
- (2) If not well acquainted you probably won't want to make it a prolonged visit, (15 min. to an hour would be long enough in most cases.)

### **9. WHAT ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD I MAKE BEFORE LEAVING?**

Ask if they will be able to come to services the next Sunday. Impress upon the parents the importance having their children (where present) in Bible study class – Their child's attendance is not only personally beneficial, but encourages the other children. Volunteer to go by, where possible, if transportation is the problem. Be specific. Set a time when you will be by for them in such an event, (if transportation is the problem be sure to note it on your report.)

### **10. WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?**

Note the date and time of your call on the back of your contact notice. Also indicate the nature of their reception, whether friendly or not. State what seems to be the problem and how you think it might be solved where possible by the date shown on your contact notice. File the report with the elders / at the building.

### **11. HOW WILL THE REPORT BE USED?**

Besides adding the contact report to the zone records, the elders will use the information and suggestions on it for follow-up work. Perhaps the elders will need to make further inquiry.

### **12. AM I THROUGH WITH THE CONTACT AFTER THE ONE VISIT?**

If they are present the next Sunday, be sure to greet them and tell them, how glad you are that they came. If they don't come, call them or drop by again later on. Have them into your home with other members where feasible. Watch for them for several Sundays until they seem to be over the stress period.

Afterward, follow-up this accomplishment by encouraging them to have part in the other services and activities of the Church besides those on Sunday morning such as the men's or ladies' "Thursday" morning class. Sell the whole family on the value of the mid-week service. **Remember James 5:20.**

**1. WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY THIS VISIT?**

Your main purpose in making this call will be to provide a little cheer and sunshine. Radiate cheerfulness and optimism. You may be able to lend assistance around the house also. This is especially true where unexpected sickness is involved. In most cases, they will be members of the Church. Otherwise, they will be closely associated with someone who is. Remember that we are all servants of one another. Count your blessings before you go. Ask the Lord to help you see the good in all situations. **Read Philippians 4:4-13.**

**2. SHOULD I TELEPHONE BEFORE GOING?**

A phone call before going will not be necessary in most instances. Most sick and shut-ins, except in extra serious or contagious cases, are glad to have someone drop by for a visit. If there is a question as to the advisability of a visit at the time you have planned, then a telephone call would be in order.

**3. WHEN SHOULD I GO?**

In the case of sickness, you more apparently show that you are interested if you call as soon after you learn of the illness as you can. This is especially true in emergencies where you may render some special service. Either morning, afternoon, or early evening calls are suitable. Avoid early or late hours and mealtime.

**4. SHOULD I GO ALONE?**

Yes, if you prefer. This is especially true where you know the person rather well. There, of course, is nothing wrong with taking a friend or your companion along. Be careful that you don't take too many for a large number at once might disturb the contact.

**5. WHAT SHALL I DO WHEN I GET THERE?**

Introduce yourself to the one who greets you at the door if you do not know them. Explain the purpose of your call and find out if it is all right for you to visit at that time. Make sure that the person you have come to see knows who you are and that you are from Church.

**6. WHAT SHALL I TALK ABOUT?**

Bring them up to date on what the Church has been doing its attendance, contributions, work program, responses, etc., especially if they are members. Talk about mutual friends and those about whom they particularly inquire. Avoid gossiping or finding fault with either the Church or individual members. If you discuss their condition, do so with optimism. Do not tell them about your friend who died with the same trouble. Only relate your own' troubles to show how you conquered them and not to emphasize how you suffered. Those who are confined, especially older people, like to hear the Bible read. Have in mind some appropriate passages and if there is a Bible handy, ask if they would like for you to read a little. Prayer is also appreciated.

**7. SHOULD I LEAVE ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL?**

Books or good gospel literature are appropriate to leave under such circumstances if the person's condition and sight allow him to read. Try to select something appropriate. Flowers, some small gift, or a special dish they like are always in order if you care to take them. These tend to lend cheer.

**8. HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY?**

It will depend upon the physical condition of the one you are visiting as well as how well you know them. If able, many who are confined like to visit. Don't rush off in such instances. In other cases a short visit might be preferable (say 15 minutes).

**9. WHAT ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD I HAVE BEFORE LEAVING?**

Be alert to any real needs. If they need groceries, if they could use help around the house, if they need some one to care for children, let others know and try to render assistance where merited. Inquire if there is anything you can do.

They might be interested in a particular religious problem if they aren't members. If they seem sufficiently interested, **inquire** if you might send a tract on the subject.

**10. WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?**

State the date and time of day of your visit on the back of your contact notice. Report their attitude toward your visit and toward the Church, which you were able to sense. Report any special needs, which you could not meet alone. If a non-member, note whether they showed any particular interest in the Church and the gospel. See that the contact notice is returned with your report on the back by the date shown on it. File the report with the elders / at the building.

**11. HOW WILL THIS REPORT BE USED?**

It will be numbered with the contacts made in your zone and included in the elders monthly report.

If there are any needs reported, they will be looked into and met where feasible. If the case warrants, others will make calls and be able to do a more effective job because of the information you have supplied than they otherwise could have.

**12. AM I THROUGH WITH THIS CONTACT AFTER THE ONE VISIT?**

Since you were interested in making the first call, you will want to check on them by phone or another visit at various times in the case of prolonged confinement. If they are up before long, be sure to greet them and let them know you are happy for them.

Such an interest at such a time may go a long way in strengthening a weak member spiritually or in encouraging a non-member to be more concerned about his soul. They will probably think warmly of you and remember you for some time for being so thoughtful.

**1. WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY THIS VISIT?**

These brothers and sisters are long within the church. They have been on the giving end of love, cheer, and service throughout their lives. The love of the Church is still there, but the load has perhaps become a bit heavier with time. Your purpose is to show them honor and fellowship and Christian service. Perhaps many of their good friends or even a spouse have gone to their heavenly home. They may not see their children or others with frequency anymore. Your presence could be the sunshine in their window. **READ Lev 19:32, Prov 16:31, Prov 23:22, Eph 6:1-2 1 Tim 5:1-2**

**2. SHOULD I TELEPHONE BEFORE GOING?**

A phone call before going will not be necessary in most instances. Most seniors are glad to have someone drop by for a visit. If there is a question as to the advisability of a visit at the time you have planned, then a telephone call would be in order.

**3. WHEN SHOULD I GO?**

An early morning to afternoon visit is advisable. Senior Christians, depending upon their age and health, may begin to tire as the day wears on. Catching them when they are feeling more energetic will be greatly welcomed.

**4. SHOULD I GO ALONE?**

Yes, if you prefer. If you have children, they too may be appreciated. However, use common sense in the case of a younger more active child. Fears of things being broken or the blur of a toddler can be overwhelming. There, of course, is nothing wrong with taking a friend or your companion along.

**5. WHAT SHALL I DO WHEN I GET THERE?**

Our Senior members have a lifetime of experiences and knowledge, frequently sitting for coffee or tea produces great conversation. Many also are willing to share talents they have picked up over the years (sewing, fly tying, scrapbooking, etc. There is a wealth of joy and guidance waiting to be shared with our senior members.

Many members who have reached these blessed years are often in need of small services. They may need to be driven to the store, have wood brought in for the stove, dishes washed, small fix-its waiting to be worked on, and a host of other scenarios. The simple pleasure of reading may now be gone as well, as eyes may have faded. Reading the Bible or their favorite magazine may be a welcome service.

**6. WHAT SHALL I TALK ABOUT?**

Bring them up to date on what the Church has been doing, its attendance, contributions, work program, responses, etc. Talk about mutual friends and those about whom they particularly inquire. Avoid gossiping or finding fault with either the Church or individual members. In your conversations always show your thankfulness for advice given. Knowing that they can be useful in another's life is encouraging.

As mentioned previously, senior brothers and sisters like to hear the Bible read. Have in mind some appropriate passages and if there is a Bible handy, ask if they would like for you to read a little. Prayer is also appreciated.

**7. SHOULD I LEAVE ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL?**

There will likely not be any need to leave written materials. However, small tokens such as flowers, pictures from children, etc. will be warmly received.

**8. HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY?**

It will depend upon the energy level of the one you are visiting as well as how well you know them. If able, many senior Christians like to visit. Don't rush off in such instances. If possible, plan to spend at least an hour, but be aware of any fatigue on the member's part and act appropriately.

**9. WHAT ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD I HAVE BEFORE LEAVING?**

Be alert to any real needs. If they need groceries, if they could use help around the house, let others know and try to render assistance where merited. Inquire if there is anything you can do.

**10. WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?**

State the date and time of day of your visit on the back of your contact notice. Report any special needs, which you could not meet alone. See that the contact notice is returned with your report on the back by the date shown on it. File the report with the elders / at the building.

**11. HOW WILL THIS REPORT BE USED?**

It will be numbered with the contacts made in your zone and included in the elders monthly report. If there are any needs reported, they will be looked into and met where feasible. If the case warrants, others will make calls and be able to do a more effective job because of the information you have supplied than they otherwise could have.

**12. AM I THROUGH WITH THIS CONTACT AFTER THE ONE VISIT?**

If you are able, you will want to check on them by phone or another visit at various times. Even a short call to let them know you had them in your thoughts will be appreciated. Such an interest may go a long way in helping them avoid the feeling of loneliness. They will probably think warmly of you and remember you for some time for being so thoughtful.

**1. WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY THIS VISIT?**

A person may have been recently baptized and is therefore a new member of the Lord's body. He may have recently indicated a desire to have fellowship with this congregation and be a new member of the local Church. In either event, each case can benefit by your visit. They need to feel at home and to be given any spiritual assistance necessary. They need to become acquainted with the members, with the schedule of work, and services. Your visit will help to meet these needs; your interest will mean a great deal.

**2. SHOULD I TELEPHONE BEFORE GOING?**

It might be well to call in advance, or perhaps better still, say something to them at services about your plans to stop by for a little while one evening, specifying the evening. There's nothing wrong though with just stopping by for a short visit without advance warning if you prefer.

**3. WHEN SHOULD I GO?**

**Your interest in them** should prompt you to go as soon after their response as you can. This will convey a message of welcome, which a later visit would miss. An evening call is best when you are calling on a family. Even where only one of the family is a member, a visit at night may give you an occasion to meet the companion who isn't a member and open another door. An afternoon call, especially when the party is a woman, is not ruled out.

**4. SHOULD I GO ALONE?**

It is better for a couple (man and wife) to call where feasible when calling on a family. If you choose to go in the daytime, ask another member to go along unless you prefer to go atone.

**5. WHAT SHALL I DO WHEN I GET THERE?**

Make sure they remember who you are and that you are from the Church. If they are new in the community, they may have difficulty recalling names. Don't embarrass them with guessing games about who you are.

**6. WHAT SHALL I TALK ABOUT?**

Spend some time getting better acquainted. The probability is that you do not know them very well, discuss their family, their work etc. Convey to them how you feel about the new convert who has recently come into our fellowship. Let them know that the congregation is happy to have them in their midst. Tell them about the congregation. Note briefly its history. Make sure they know whom the elders and deacons are. Emphasize the schedule of services and encourage them to participate fully. Make explanations about Bible classes and the material that is being studied, if you can. Talk enthusiastically about work programs, orient them to our procedures, and help them to see how they may be useful. In the case of a new convert, he may have some Biblical question he would like to have help with. Assist there if you can.

**7. SHOULD I LEAVE ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL?**

In the case of a new convert, he may desire advice regarding periodicals or books that are available in the brotherhood. You might let him see some you subscribe to. There may be some acts that would be helpful in dealing with some questions he may have. Be sure that in either case that this contact has one of the directories to help him become better acquainted with the members.

**8. HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY?**

Stay long enough to get acquainted, don't prolong your stay needlessly, however. An hour or hour and a half will usually be long enough. It doesn't need to be that long to be successful. The important thing is to be friendly, warm, and congenial. When you have gotten acquainted and informed them a little about our work leave.

**9. WHAT ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD I MAKE BEFORE LEAVING?**

Leave the impression that you will expect to see them at the next service of the congregation. Encourage them to start the practice of attending all the services from the first. You might make plans with them to have them over for a meal at a date in the near future. If weather permits, you might plan an outing or picnic and invite others from the Church along.

**10. WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?**

On the back of your contact notice, put the date and time of your visit. Report any facts about the family, which would be useful such as the number of children, if others in the family are prospects, etc. If they seem to have ability and experience along certain lines that might be utilized, note that. File the report with the elders / at the building.

**11. HOW WILL THIS REPORT BE USED?**

It will be recorded and used in the zone reports. The elders and others can utilize any information about their abilities. Others can also make use of it in getting acquainted with these new members within the next two or three weeks.

**12. AM I THROUGH WITH THIS CONTACT AFTER THE ONE VISIT?**

Continue to show an interest in them. The first few weeks for a new convert and even for a Christian, who has recently come into the local group, represent an adjustment period. Since you were among the first to visit after their response, it would be well for you to feel a special responsibility toward them for at least six months. Keep in touch with them, help them get oriented and adjusted. See that they meet others and find a working relationship with the congregation.

**1. WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY THIS VISIT?**

This person or persons are members of the Church, i.e.; they have been baptized at some time and place in the past. They have since moved into this community and attend services at the congregation most of the time when they go anywhere. They may have lived here only a short time. On the other hand, they may have lived here for a relatively long period of time (Your contact notice may tell). However, they have not indicated either publicly or to the elders or anyone privately that they desire to be a part of the congregation to share its work and be under its overseers.

You are to become better acquainted with them by your visit; show an interest in them; aid their relationship with the Church. Represent the work of the congregation in such a way that they will be led to desire and feel a need for fellowship in its activities. Even the example of your own work in calling may be the encouragement they need.

**2. SHOULD I TELEPHONE BEFORE GOING?**

It is not necessary, if you would feel more secure if they knew in advance that you were planning to visit them, then be sure to telephone or talk to them at services about it.

**3. WHEN SHOULD I GO?**

Attempt to follow through on a visit within the first two weeks of being aware of the situation. There is no particular urgency about this call, especially in the case of a member who has lived in the community for some time. You might be of more assistance to a member who has recently moved here if you call soon after you learn about him. The longer he puts off assuming a working relationship with the congregation, the more difficult it becomes.

With regard to the time of day if it is a couple or a male member, evenings or weekends would be the best time. If it were a woman, the afternoon might be better.

**4. SHOULD I GO ALONE?**

Yes, if you prefer. If, on the other hand, you desire some one to go with you and your companion isn't a member or can't go with you, call on a friend, from the Church to accompany you. It's usually best for two to make evening calls.

**5. WHAT SHALL I DO WHEN I GET THERE?**

Introduce yourself if they do not know you and mention that you're from the Church. If you have not informed them of your visit in advance, you might indicate that you have just come by for a short visit (**and mean it**). This will set them at ease in the event they have other plans. Be alert to situations where they seem to be getting ready to leave, etc, and don't stay.

**6. WHAT SHALL I TALK ABOUT?**

Become better acquainted if you don't know them very well. Ask about the family, what the husband does, number of children, etc. and attempt to establish a personal contact with your family where feasible.

If they have recently moved into this area, inquire about the congregation where they formerly had their fellowship. Find out how many of the family that are members of the Church. Determine if you are able, how active they have been in Church work and attendance in the past. Inform them of our work and services and urge them to have their fellowship with us and to let this desire be known. If they have lived here for some time and have attended some, talk about the work program and plans of the congregation, or evangelism efforts. Emphasize the need for all members in the area getting behind the cause and really accomplishing something. Be enthusiastic about the work and its prospects.

**7. SHOULD I LEAVE ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL?**

There is very little pertinent written material available on this problem of: "placing membership." However, there is a very good article written by Kevin Cauley regarding this topic following this section. This article should help you in your preparation. If they have questions about "placing membership", which you can't deal with satisfactorily, make arrangements for the preacher or elders to talk with them.

**8. HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY?**

If this is your first visit with them, don't prolong it merely because your time will so allow. A short, friendly visit to get acquainted is much better (15 minutes to an hour should suffice in most cases, depending on the reception and flow of conversation).

**9. WHAT ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD I MAKE BEFORE LEAVING?**

Work toward helping them to broaden their participation in the work and services of the congregation. Ask if the children (if any) are in Bible study classes. Ask if they won't come and bring them the next Sunday if they aren't attending. If you know them well enough, encourage them to let it be known right away that they are ready to go to work.

**10. WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?**

Note the date and time of your visit. Indicate how you were received whether friendly or indifferent, if they have recently moved here, give pertinent information you remember about the family such as number of children, where they last had fellowship, if they plan to work and worship with us, etc. File the report with the elders / at the building.

**11. HOW WILL THIS REPORT BE USED?**

It will be added to the contacts made in your zone. Follow-ups, if necessary, can utilize the information gained. Someone else may be able to take the problem you discovered where you left off.

**12. AM I THROUGH WITH THE CONTACT AFTER THE ONE VISIT?**

See if they do show an increase in interest after your visit. See if they do "place membership". Continue to cultivate your friendship with them and show a genuine interest. It may be that as you come to know them better, they will confide in you their problems and you may help remove obstacles. And as you become better acquainted, if you were unable to do so on the first visit, encourage them to let it be known that they want to go to work as a part of the congregation.

## Why Declare Membership At A Local Congregation? - By Kevin Cauley

This question recently came up in some of my Internet studies with online friends. The question centers on whether or not it is necessary to be identified as a member of a local congregation. The Bible doesn't have a process whereby one may "join" the church such as are followed in the denominational world. However, the Bible does authorize individual Christians to be members of local congregations (1 Corinthians 12:27). So there must be some way for Christians to be members of local congregations. And there is.

Let me state up front that for someone who is not a Christian, to become a member of the church of Christ, one must be added by the Lord to the church (Acts 2:47). Upon baptism, provided the individual lives within the local community, it is right and proper to assume the individual to be a member of the local congregation. This was the general practice within the New Testament ( Acts 2:41, 47; 1 Corinthians 12:13). Our question is more appropriately asked when a person moves from his home congregation to another. Must that individual place membership with a local congregation? Let's note some reasons why the answer to this question should be "yes."

First, the individual Christian ought to declare membership in a local congregation to assure the leaders that he is subject to their authority. Hebrews 13:17 states, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." The rulers of the local congregation have a responsibility to watch for the souls of individual Christians. Individual Christians have the responsibility to make their job easier by submitting to their judgment. There should be no doubt as to the status of the individual Christian in relationship to the rulers. However, if someone does not declare membership, this creates doubt and uncertainty in the minds of the rulers as to whether they have the appropriate authority. Why? Because rulers only have authority over members of the local congregation; they do not have authority over those who are not members of the local congregation. If the individual Christian seeks to please God in obeying Hebrews 13:17, he will declare membership in a local congregation.

Second, the individual Christian ought to declare membership in a local congregation to let his fellow Christians know that he is there to work with them. The church is to be involved in doing the work of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58). And each individual contributes to that work as he has ability (1 Peter 4:11). The local congregation is thus expected to do the Lord's work (2 Corinthians 9:8, Colossians 1:10) and the individual is expected to do his work heartily (Colossians 3:23). Without declaring such membership, other members wonder whether or not one has the intentions of involving oneself in the work of the local church, and thus, in the work of the Lord as well. Declaring one's membership with a local congregation, lets that congregation know that one is available and ready to do the work that needs to be done in the local church. Declaring membership exhibits the "heartiness" that the Lord desires us to have regarding his work.

Finally, the individual Christian ought to declare membership in a local congregation to indicate his full fellowship with the local congregation. Fellowship isn't merely having a meal together or playing games together. Fellowship is participation within the activities of the congregation, regardless what those activities may be (Acts 2:42). We have fellowship when we study God's word together in our Bible classes, when we worship God in our assembly, when we visit the nursing home together, or when we support a particular work with our finances. The individual Christian should want to have full fellowship with other Christians (1 John 1:7). Without declaring membership at a local congregation, an individual's intentions aren't fully known. However, when one declares membership one indicates full fellowship with the local congregation.

The individual Christian certainly has the God given right to faithfully congregate with a particular congregation of his choice (Acts 9:26). However, it is also God's desire for a Christian to be a member of the local church (1 Corinthians 12:18). Combining those two facts together with the above reasons we can conclude that it is biblical and necessary for the individual Christian to declare membership at a local, faithful, congregation of his choice.

**1. WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY THIS VISIT?**

In most cases, the contact will be a member of the Church. Otherwise, they will be acquainted with someone who is. In some instances, they may be members of the Church from other cities who are hospitalized here. You may lend cheer, encouragement, news, spiritual strength to the patient. You can also provide companionship to close friends and loved ones of the patient in the event of surgery or serious illness, and perhaps assist in other more tangible ways, especially if they are from out of town. Sometimes there are little tasks you may perform for the patient such as letter writing or errands. The mere fact that you were interested enough to go will be appreciated and accomplishes more than one might think.

**2. SHOULD I TELEPHONE BEFORE DOING?**

Check on the visiting hours at the hospital if they do not know them. It is wise to inquire also if the patient's condition will allow visitors at the time you plan to go.

**3. WHEN SHOULD I GO?**

Make the visit as soon as you can after you learn of the case, if visitors are permitted. Of course, the hospital hours will largely determine the time of day. Most have afternoon and evening hours.

**4. SHOULD I GO ALONE?**

It is perfectly in order for one to go alone and especially if he knows the patient well. If you prefer, you might take a friend or your companion along. It is usually best not to have more than two go at once, for there will likely be relatives and close friends there also during the visiting hours.

**5. WHAT SHALL I DO WHEN I GET THERE?**

If the patient is able to visit, go in and greet him. Make sure that they know who you are and that you are from the Church in the event that you are not well acquainted.

**6. WHAT SHALL I TALK ABOUT?**

If the patient seems to feel like visiting and his condition allows, bring him up to date on the activities at the Church attendance, contributions, work program, responses, etc. if he is a member. Talk about mutual friends and those about whom the patient particularly inquires. Avoid faultfinding with either the Church or the individual members. Only relate your troubles to show how you conquered them and not to emphasize how you suffered. If you discuss their condition, do so with optimism.

Get acquainted with friends or members of the family who might be there whom you don't know, visit with them and in the event of serious illness, encourage them and pray with them if they so desire.

**7. SHOULD I LEAVE ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL?**

Books or gospel literature are appropriate to leave under such circumstances if the person's condition will allow him to read. Flowers are always appropriate and also small gifts under some conditions. Volunteer to bring back any tracts or reading material the person shows particular interest in. During convalescence is a good occasion for meditation and study on spiritual things, especially if the person is not a Christian but that has shown some interest.

**8. HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY?**

It will depend upon their condition and how well you know them. If no one else is there at the time and the patient seems so disposed and physically able, visit a while. If several are there, it may be best just to say a few words of greeting and cheer and leave after a few minutes.

**9. WHAT ARRANGENTS SHOULD I MAKE BEFORE LEAVING?**

Inquire if there are tasks or errands, which you might handle. Some patients might need letters mailed or written. They might need toiletry or clothing articles to be purchased, etc. Make sure that everything is under control at their home. You might be able to help to care for children, take food in, check on pets, etc. Be alert to these needs, many of which can be observed and performed with out inquiry.

**10. WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?**

Note the date and time of your visit, report their condition and when they probably will be released, if they know. Note their reaction to your visit and their attitude toward the Church which you were able to detect. Are there any needs that others might help meet such as caring for children, etc? File the report with the elders / at the building.

**11. HOW WILL THIS REPORT BE USED?**

It will be used to compile accurate records of our visitation work. If it is a prolonged case, others will be sent to visit and they can do a better job than otherwise with the information you supply. If there are special needs, others may be called on to help supply these.

**12. AM I THROUGH WITH THIS CONTACT AFTER THE ONE VISIT?**

Be sure to report to others on their condition, especially to the one in charge of bulletin news, and encourage that cards be sent. Since you were interested in making the visit, you will want to check on them by telephone or another visit if the period of convalescence is a prolonged one. If they are up before long, be sure to greet them and let them know that you are happy for them.

Such an interest at such a time will service not only to lend cheer but also to help a weak member spiritually and encourage a nonmember to be more interested in investigating the New Testament Church.

**1. WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY THIS VISIT?**

This contact is not a Christian, but has manifested an interest in the Church and gospel of our Lord. They may or may not have visited our services. Their interest may have been manifested in one of various ways. Perhaps some one called on them previously and they showed a real interest. They may have relatives who are members through whom they let their interest be known. They may have a close neighbor who is a member who has noticed genuine concern on their part. They may have been attending and indicated an interest to the preacher or another member at some service. Perhaps, they heard about the congregation from the Internet. In most cases, however, it will be someone you know.

Your first visit's purpose will be to become better acquainted with them on a congenial basis, if you don't know them too well, and to attempt to pin-point some special problem or questions they may have which may be dealt with later. If you already are well enough acquainted, enter early into a discussion of questions they may have if you feel qualified to do so. Your task is to help retain and intensify their interest in the cause of Christ. **Read Acts 8:27-35, Romans 10:13-17.**

**2. SHOULD I TELEPHONE BEFORE GOING?**

- (1) If you purpose to go for a study session with them, make arrangements in advance either by telephone or in person so they will be expecting you and know the nature of your visit.
- (2) If you do not know them well enough as yet and desire to become better acquainted, a phone call in advance may not be as important, perhaps.

**3. WHEN SHOULD I GO?**

Don't put off your contact too long. Their recently indicated interest will best be retained by an early contact of some kind. An early answer to questions they might have will probably lead them to further study.

**4. SHOULD I GO ALONE?**

In the event it is one person you are to contact and you know them well enough to discuss things rather freely, it might be best to be alone with them. If it's a couple or a female you are to visit, it would probably be best for you and your companion, where feasible, to be involved.

**5. WHAT SHALL I DO WHEN I GET THERE?**

- (1) If you have made advance arrangements, they will be expecting you. Be cordial and visit with them for a while upon arrival.
- (2) If you have stopped by without advance notice and you don't know them too well, make sure they know who you are and that you are from the Church. Make sure that you are not breaking into their plans.

**6. WHAT SHALL I TALK ABOUT?**

- (1) If they have been expecting you, they also will be expecting to discuss the Bible or some particular questions if you mentioned it when you called. After a short visit with them, tactfully turn the conversation toward that subject. Structure the situation so they feel free to ask questions. After some religious topic pertinent to their case has been introduced you might say, "And I hope to be able to help you along that line." This would make it easy for a problem to be presented by them. Don't monopolize the conversation, but give them ample time for their comments.
- (2) When you drop by mainly to get better acquainted, you can spend most of the time talking about various topics: families, work, school, etc. Do not avoid religion if they bring it up. Attempt before you leave to determine what has aroused their interest concerning the Church and along what lines they are presently interested in finding out more. Inquire about their religious background if you don't already know.

**7. SHOULD I LEAVE ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL?**

It's usually best to find out first what they are mainly interested in at the present. You probably wouldn't know that in advance of the first visit. After talking with them you might tell them about the tracts we have available on the subject and that you will be glad to mail one or better still, bring it by. Sometimes they may ask for some written material on a subject. It's best not to give them too much material and do not get ahead of their interest. If they want to know about baptism, don't give them some tracts on instrumental music, etc, in addition.

**8. HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY?**

- (1) Don't overstay you welcome even though they knew in advance that you were coming. In most instances it will take more than one session to satisfy their needs. Deal with the problems presented as effectively as you can. Then make arrangements for another study period. Even though they may still seem willing to continue, it's a mistake to try to cover too many problems at the first session.
- (2) When you have just dropped by make your visit short and cordial (15 minutes to an hour is a rather good measure).

**9. WHAT ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD I MAKE BEFORE LEAVING?**

- (1) If you spend most of the time discussing religion and feel you were accomplishing something, set a specific time for a similar session next week. Have them invite other interested parties they might know about if they (and you) so desire. If you prefer to have someone else (maybe the preacher) have a part in the next session, make sure that such would be acceptable before you leave.
- (2) In the event you didn't discuss religion at length but feel there is sufficient interest to warrant, arrange a study period for the next, week.

**10. WHAT SHOULD REPORT?**

Give the date and time of your visit. Indicate the nature of your visit whether or not you studied with them. Note the extent of their interest and the kind of inquiries that were made. Indicate if you made arrangements for follow-up on the contact. File the report with the elders / at the building.

**11. HOW WILL THIS REPORT BE USED?**

The report will be used to determine what follow-up, if any is to be made after recording the contact and the information for reference.

**12. AM I THROUGH WITH THIS CONTACT AFTER THE ONE VISIT?**

Actually, one visit just begins to lay the basis for accomplishing results in most cases. You are in a position to know how to proceed. Should they be ready, arrange for further study sessions. Continue to visit and show an interest in the contact even though you prefer that someone else continue teaching them.

**1. WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY THIS VISIT?**

You are to call on a person or persons who are members of this congregation. They are not particularly unfaithful in their attendance, but they seemingly lack a sense of “belongingness”. They are not well acquainted with many members and, consequently, are not as much a part of the group as they need to be.

Your visit's purpose will be to become more intimately acquainted with them and to help them enlarge their interest in other members of the Church. Christians need this mutual care and interest one for the other. They need to receive it and they need to manifest it. **(Read Acts 2:46, 4:32)**

**2. SHOULD I TELEPHONE BEFORE GOING?**

There is nothing wrong with just dropping by without advance notice in some instances. However, it might be better to work out something with them in advance, either by telephone or at services. This is a situation where you might plan to do something with them such as attend a special service or gospel meeting at another congregation, or go out together for dinner; attend a concert or sports event together where there are common interests. You might invite them, to your home for dinner. An informal atmosphere is preferred even if you decide to visit them in their home.

**3. WHEN SHOULD I GO?**

The nature of your visit with them will help determine this. In the event it is one person rather than a couple you are to contact, you might prefer to go by or arrange to be with them in the afternoon. Especially is this true in the case of women who do not work outside the home. You might even invite them to go with you to call on another member. This would meet effectively the purpose of your call.

**4. SHOULD I GO ALONE?**

If it is one person you are contacting, you may prefer to go alone. Though it would be all right to take another member with you. If it is a couple you are contacting then it would be desirable for a couple to call.

**5. WHAT SHALL I DO WHEN I GET THERE?**

If you have made previous arrangements, they will be expecting you. Otherwise, if you stop by without advance notice, greet them and make sure they know you are from the Church.

**6. WHAT SHALL I TALK ABOUT?**

Try to discover things in which you have a common interest. i.e. hobbies, jobs, families, etc. Visit informally and become better acquainted. Show an interest in the members of the family and try to establish a congenial relationship with them if possible. Allude to various members of the congregation in the course of your conversation and help the contact to know them better and to have more interest in them.

**7. SHOULD I LEAVE ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL?**

There isn't any written material, which would be particularly appropriate here.

**8. HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY?**

The type of arrangement you made in advance if you did so will largely determine the time involved. (See answer to question 2.) Try to make the time as friendly and pleasant as possible.

If you did not make advance arrangements but decided to drop by, allow their response to your visit and the flow of conversation to serve as guides. (An hour is probably long enough under most such circumstances.)

**9. WHAT ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD I MAKE BEFORE LEAVING?**

Encourage them to attend any week day services they may be missing. Perhaps you might make tentative plans to be with them again the near future if you seem to have established a congenial relationship.

**10. WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?**

Give the date and time of your visit on the back of your contact notice. Indicate the nature of your reception whether they seemed to appreciate your interest. If you have any suggestions that might be helpful in assisting them further along these lines, note that also. File the report with the elders / at the building.

**11. HOW WILL THIS REPORT BE USED?**

If others can assist in helping to integrate this contact more closely into the fellowship of the congregation, your report will be helpful in determining who might help and how.

The contact will also be added to the record of contacts for your zone.

**12. AM I THROUGH WITH THIS CONTACT AFTER THE ONE VISIT?**

Take special note of them at the services for the next several weeks. Visit with them and be instrumental in bringing them into informal conversations after the services. Introduce them to those they do not know. You might plan a small, informal gathering in your home of some the members and include the contact. Encourage other members to show more interest in them. It may assist in keeping the contact from growing indifferent toward his relationship with the Lord's work, for we all need the vital strengthening we can lend each other.

**1. WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY THIS VISIT?**

Sadness in some form has invaded this home. It is possibly due to the loss of a loved one. It may take the form of financial reversal or a great loss by fire or a storm. Your purpose will be to provide consolation and to assist the contact to become reconciled to the loss. Help them bear their burdens “and so fulfill the law of Christ”. You may also render aid in a more tangible way. In the event of death, help to see that meals are supplied during the early days of the crises. Help to supply needed clothing, foodstuff, or money in the event of an unexpected reversal or disaster.

How good it is to have someone to lean on in the time of trouble. Your visit and interest will mean more than can ever be expressed.

**2. SHOULD I TELEPHONE BEFORE GOING?**

A phone call before going will not be necessary in most instances. There is nothing wrong with phoning if you so desire or in the event of some uncertainties concerning the visit.

**3. WHEN SHOULD I GO?**

Go as soon as you learn of the need. In most situations of this kind, you can be of more assistance shortly after the misfortune. Tangible needs are greatest then, as a rule, and may need to be met. Consolation is more meaningful and helpful when the anguish is so great.

Almost any time of day will be all right especially if the situation is an emergency.

**4. SHOULD I GO ALONE?**

If you prefer. In most instances you will probably want another member of the congregation or your companion to go with you.

**5. WHAT SHALL I DO WHEN I GET THERE?**

Speak to the one you have come to see and express your sympathy. There probably will be others of the family present, whom you could introduce yourself to and perhaps mention that, you are from the Church.

**6. WHAT SHALL I TALK ABOUT?**

If the misfortune has recently occurred those more closely involved will probably not feel like conversing. Just make a few statements designed to console and give comfort and courage, you might visit briefly with members of the family who are present. One or two will probably be taking charge of the house and make arrangements. Consult with them if there is anything you can do. Inquire about specific needs.

If it has been a few days since the misfortune occurred, you could help them to become reconciled to their loss. Let them cry on your shoulder. It sometimes helps to have someone who will listen sympathetically. Appropriate scripture quotations are good and the Christian will appreciate prayer on such occasions.

**7. SHOULD I LEAVE ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL?**

It would be appropriate to take some suitable reading matter, especially if your visit is a few days after the misfortune.

Other than reading matter, it's in order for meals to be taken in, especially right after the misfortune to keep the family from being burdened with such details. In the event of disaster, help as you can. The Church will probably assist under such circumstances.

**8. HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY?**

A short visit will be more effective in the event you arrive shortly after the misfortune unless none of the family is there or there is some need you may help meet by staying.

If you visit a few days after the misfortune, you will likely have opportunity to visit longer since most of the family will probably have gone.

**9. WHAT ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD I MAKE BEFORE LEAVING?**

Be alert to any real needs and make definite arrangements with them to assist. Inquire about any needs you don't observe. Be tactful about any aid you offer, especially financial.

**10. WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?**

Note the date and time of your visit report any needs which you were unable to fill or think the Church should look into. Indicate if you think that it advisable to have others visit right away. Indicate how the person reacted to your visit and if they are adjusting to the situation satisfactorily. File the report with the elders / at the building.

**11. HOW WILL THIS REPORT BE USED?**

It will be included in the report of the contacts made in your zone for the month. If there are any needs reported, they will be looked into and met where feasible.

If there is need, other calls of the same nature will be made based upon what you observed on your visit.

**12. AM I THROUGH WITH THIS CONTACT AFTER THE ONE VISIT?**

You will want to continue to visit with them either by telephone or by other occasional visits within the next few weeks. Some adjust more readily to such situations than others, but your interest will help immeasurably. It will help them not only to overcome their sorrow, but also to appreciate one of the true blessings of Christian fellowship. Frequently, such genuine interest will be a means of influencing non-Christians in the family who observed your good works.

**1. WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY THIS VISIT?**

This contact has been secured from a “*newcomers list*” of families who have recently moved into our area. They have not attended our services and we do not know their religious status. Your visit will be designed to meet them, to give them a personal, neighborly welcome into the community, and to extend a cordial invitation for them to visit the services of the Church.

Your purpose is not to convert them in this visit nor necessarily to discuss religion directly unless they seem so disposed. Some who are not strongly affiliated with a denomination or who have no particular religious ties may respond to your early and sincere interest. In a few instances you may find one who is a member of the Church or who has relatives that are. In any event, you or others can make follow-up contacts if and when they do attend.

**2. SHOULD I TELEPHONE BEFORE GOING?**

It will not be necessary. In most instances we will not have access to the telephone number. Newcomers are accustomed to having strangers come by to get acquainted or for other purposes during the first few weeks without advance notice.

**3. WHEN SHOULD I GO?**

Since other religious groups will probably be calling, it is to your advantage to make the contact as early as you can after leaning about it. This increases your chances for influencing them to come before they make commitment to or become acquainted with those from denominational groups.

An afternoon call for ladies to visit the lady of the house is effective where possible. Otherwise, if an evening call is made, it is best for a couple (man and wife) to be involved.

**4. SHOULD I GO ALONE?**

It might be more effective for a lady to call alone in the afternoon. The lady of the house probably would be more responsive to one just dropping by, especially since she’s unacquainted. Take your companion in the event of an evening call and make it a family visit.

**5. WHAT SHALL I DO WHEN I GET THERE?**

Introduce yourself. Mention that you live in the area and desired to come by to get acquainted and to give them a personal invitation to the services of the Church of Christ where you attend.

**6. WHAT SHALL I TALK ABOUT?**

Chat informally about the neighborhood, the schools, and your families. Avoid being critical or antagonistic, especially on this brief visit. Inquire if they attend Church and if their children attend Bible study classes. If so, find out where they go and if they are members. Tell them something about your Bible class work and the teachers who would teach the classes of their children. Mention any special services scheduled for the near future such as gospel meetings. Convey to them how glad the Church would be to have them visit services and to have the children become part of the Sunday school.

**7. SHOULD I LEAVE ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL?**

It helps for the congregation to have a small folder prepared to give them, which will contain a written invitation to the listed services. It will also give other pertinent information such as the radio programs of Churches of Christ that may be heard locally.

**8. HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY?**

This should not be a prolonged visit. Fifteen minutes should be sufficient time in almost every case. A warm and cordial visit though short will probably be the most effective.

**9. WHAT ARRANGENTS SHOULD I MAKE BEFORE LEAVING?**

If they seem at all interested, encourage them to visit the services the next Sunday. Emphasize what a good time it is to get started attending regularly when one first moves into a new community. Where feasible, volunteer to come by for their children to take them to Bible study class and set a definite time if they seem agreeable. Don't be insistent if they seem antagonistic to the idea.

**10. WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?**

Your report is to be written on the back of your contact notice. Give the date and time of your call. Indicate the number in the family listing the children and their approximate ages where possible. Note their religious affiliation or preference. Do they attend? Are the children in Sunday school? Does the family seem interested in attending our services? Would they let their children attend Bible study classes? Or were they satisfied, with their religious status and somewhat antagonistic? Do you think follow-up contacts would be profitable at this time? File the report with the elders / at the building.

**11. HOW WILL THIS REPORT BE USED?**

It will be used to help determine which of these "newcomers" indicate possibilities for worthwhile follow-up contacts. Those who seem to be prospects will be filed; others will be dropped. Your visit will be numbered on the reports with those in your zone for the month.

**12. AM I THROUGH WITH THIS CONTACT AFTER THE ONE VISIT?**

Don't give up too easily. If you made an afternoon call the first time, go by a few days later with your companion, especially where there was a point of contact established. If they do attend the services, be sure to greet them and introduce them to others. Have them home with you perhaps at a later date. In other words, continue to show an interest in them if they seem at all responsive.

## **XII. COLD CALLING / DOOR TO DOOR**

-25-

### **1. WHAT DO I HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY THIS VISIT?**

Your purpose in visiting is to identify those who may be interested in learning about the gospel. If possible, introduce yourself, set up a future study, leave contact information, and/or leave study material.

### **2. SHOULD I TELEPHONE BEFORE GOING?**

You will not have access to the telephone number

### **3. WHEN SHOULD I GO?**

Mid-morning to evening may be acceptable. Not being aware of the status of the contacts makes it impossible to know the ideal time to visit.

### **4. SHOULD I GO ALONE?**

In this situation, a male should be present with all contacts. A second party is advisable, with female or younger/teenage members welcome. This will create a less intimidating impression upon the contact.

**Remember:** SMILE.

### **5. WHAT SHALL I DO WHEN I GET THERE?**

Following this section are a number of forms for potential use in this situation. Melvin Sapp created this material (included with some changes). The first form is entitled "Evangelism Guide". Following the format presented, you introduce yourself. You ask 9 questions of the contact which includes inquiring if they would like to set up a 15 minute Bible study in the future. If so, write down their contact information and the time in which they would desire to have a future study. Before leaving, offer to pray for the individual/family if they desire you to do so.

### **6. WHAT SHALL I TALK ABOUT?**

This contact should be brief and to the point – Introduction, questions including offer of study and prayer, departure. However, if the contact seems genuinely interested in talking, warmly talk to them regarding the church, the neighborhood, their family, etc. Do not overstay your welcome. If the contact appears to want to engage in a deep Biblical discussion or asks questions you do not know how to answer, express that you would very much like to discuss these things at a return date. If necessary, ask if you might bring along someone else who might better be able to answer their questions. Finally, if they do desire a study, encourage them to invite any others to study if they wish.

**7. SHOULD I LEAVE ANY WRITTEN MATERIAL?**

Your main objective is to cease an opportunity to expose the contact to the gospel. If it appears a personal study is not going to occur, perhaps they will accept the correspondence study (Jule Miller, Apologetics Press, John Hurt, and others have solid studies your congregation may utilize), a CD with sermons, or DVD such as "Searching for Truth". A contact card from the congregation would be important to leave in case of any questions that arise after you are gone.

**8. HOW LONG SHOULD I STAY?**

The actual contact time suggested is less than 3 minutes. This contact was not expecting you, does not know you, and may have been engaged in another activity you may have interrupted. However, we should not minimize the impact these 3 minutes can make. You can demonstrate warmth, friendliness, and a desire to introduce them to Christ. This 3 minute span may be the spark that changes their entire life.

**9. WHAT ARRANGENTS SHOULD I MAKE BEFORE LEAVING?**

Make certain you have brought contact cards, a pen, and church "business" cards to leave with phone/address information. Additionally, be prepared with any correspondence material, CD's, or DVD's to leave if necessary.

**10. WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?**

Provide the Elders with the contact card information for those who desire to set up a study. Record any other vital information on the back of the contact card. Was the contact friendly? Younger / older? Will others be attending the study? How big was the family? A single list of "visited, but not home", "not interested", etc. should also be provided.

**11. HOW WILL THIS REPORT BE USED?**

It will be used to establish further visits including the arranged study. Additionally, your visit will be numbered on the reports with those in your zone for the month. Those visits who were not home would be followed up with and those not interested will be noted so as to avoid future aggravation on their part.

**12. AM I THROUGH WITH THIS CONTACT AFTER THE ONE VISIT?**

Oh no! The joy of the study visit is waiting. Again, if you will be bringing someone along to assist, let the contact know ahead of time. This could be the beginning of a life in Christ for the contact. Make certain to call ahead to remind the contact of the study and inquire if they will be having any additional people present.

# EVANGELISM GUIDE

**Knock on door:** Hello! We are Christians from the community.

**Door Opens:** I am \_\_\_\_\_ and this is \_\_\_\_\_ .

We would like to take 2:15 of your time to ask you 8 questions and in return you get this handy dandy bookmark!

## Questions

- 1) Do you currently attend Church? Yes No
- 2) Where do you attend? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) How long have you attended there? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Are there churches to which you have been a member in the past? Yes No
- 5) We deliver Bible Studies on CD to the public each week, would you be interested in us delivering them to you as well? Yes No
- 6) Would you have any interest in doing a "15" minute Bible study in the next few weeks? Yes No
- 7) Would you be interested in a correspondence study? Yes No
- 8) Which day of the week would be best? \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_?
- 9) Would the morning, afternoon or evening be better for you? \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPOINTMENT:**

Day: \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_, 2007 Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Worker: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

# “15” MINUTE BIBLE STUDY

By Melvin Sapp

1. **What is the biggest problem the world faces today?** \_\_\_\_\_

[Crime, Violence, Drugs, Terrorism, or Politics!]

2. **Sin is the biggest problem in the world!**

A. Read Romans 3:23 How many have sinned? \_\_\_\_\_

B. Read Romans 6:23 What is the wage for sin? \_\_\_\_\_

What is God's gift to man? \_\_\_\_\_

C. Read I John 3:4 What is sin? \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world.**

A. I Timothy 1:12-16 Why did Jesus come into the world? \_\_\_\_\_

If He saved Paul, can He save you? \_\_\_\_\_

B. Hebrews 5:8-9 Who will Jesus save? \_\_\_\_\_

C. What does Jesus want you to do in order to be saved? \_\_\_\_\_

D. I Corinthians 15:1-4 What '3' facts are fundamental to the Gospel?

E. Mark 16:15-16 What two things must I do before I can be saved?

F. Acts 2:36-38 What two things come before remission of sins?

What is the purpose of baptism? \_\_\_\_\_

4. **The Church Is Important To Our Salvation!**

A. Acts 2:47 Where does the Lord place the saved? \_\_\_\_\_

B. Matthew 16:18 Who established the church of the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_

C. Ephesians 5:23-27 What is the church compared unto? \_\_\_\_\_

D. I Cor. 12:12-13 How does one enter the One Body? \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Would you like to learn how to identify the Lord's Church?** \_\_\_\_\_

## RESPECT FOR THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

by *Melvin Sapp*

### I. The Need For Authority In Society.

- A. Authority means: *the power both to command and to enforce obedience.*
- B. Do Civil Authorities possess the authority to demand and to enforce obedience to the law? \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Describe a society where no one possesses the authority to enforce the law nor punish violators?
- D. Are Law Enforcement, Judges and Magistrates authorized to enforce civil law? \_\_\_\_\_

### II. Recognizing Divine Authority Over The World.

- A. Who created the world and has authority over it as Lord ? \_\_\_\_\_ (**Acts 17:24-26**)
  1. Did man come into existence by Creation or by Evolution? \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Who has been given 'All Authority' in religious matters today? \_\_\_\_\_ (**Mat. 28:18-20**)
  1. Through whom does God, the Father speak to men today? \_\_\_\_\_ (**Heb. 1:1-2**)
  2. The world will be judged by the Words of Jesus at the last day! [**True or False**] (**Jno. 12:48**)
- C. How much of what Jesus' commanded is to be taught to all nations? \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Whose job was it to guide the Apostles in teaching and writing about Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_ (**John 14:26; 16:13; II Pet. 1:20-21**)
  1. The Holy Spirit is God, and was sent to the Apostle by the Father. [**True or False**]
  2. The Scriptures are the result of 'men of God' guided by the Holy Spirit. [**True or False**]

### III. Some False Authorities Used By Many In Religion To Disregard The Word of God.

- A. '*Man's own thoughts and ways*' (**Isaiah. 55:8-9; Proverbs 14:12**).
  1. Are our thoughts and ways superior to God's? [**Yes or No**]
  2. Are you willing to forsake your thoughts if they conflict with God's Word? [**Yes or No**]
- B. '*Determining Teachings based on the Majority*' (**Mat. 7:13-14**).
- C. '*Following the Opinions of our family members or ancestors*' (**Mat. 10:37-39**).
- D. '*Worshipping God based on the Traditions of Men*' (**Mat. 15:8-9**).
  1. Are you willing to respect Bible authority over Human authorities? [**Yes or No**]
  2. Are you willing to study the Bible about Sin, Salvation and the Church? [**Yes or No**]

### IV. Respect For The Authority Of The New Testament.

- A. How much of the Bible is Inspired by God? \_\_\_\_\_ (**II Tim. 3:16-17**)
- B. Into how many Testaments is the Bible divided? [**One; two; seven; other \_\_\_\_\_**]
- C. Who is the Mediator of the New Testament? [**Moses; Elijah; Jesus**] (**Heb. 9:14-15**)
- D. What did Christ nail to the cross when He died? \_\_\_\_\_ (**Col. 2:14-17; Eph. 2:15-16**)
- E. The New Testament elevates Jesus as the only Savior (**Acts 4:11-12**).
  1. Do you believe that Jesus is the only Savior? [**Yes or No**]
  2. What do you believe a person must do in order to be saved?
- F. Who is the founder of the church in the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_ (**Mat. 16:13-18**)
  1. Who is responsible for the existence of 1,000's of other churches and religions in the world?
  2. Let us schedule the next study to let the Bible answer these questions! \_\_\_\_\_

## WHY IS THE CHURCH IMPORTANT?

by Melvin Sapp

### I. Because The Church Was Founded by Jesus! (Mat. 16:13-18)

- A. Who did Peter confess Jesus to be? \_\_\_\_\_
- B. What did Jesus Promised to Build? \_\_\_\_\_
- C. With what did Jesus Purchase the Church? (Acts 20:28). \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Death, Hell and the Grave Could Not Prevent its Establishment. True or False?

### II. Because the Church Is the Lord's Body! (Eph. 1:19-23)

- A. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a United Organism with Many Members.
- B. What is Christ the Head of? \_\_\_\_\_ (22; Col. 1:18).
- C. The \_\_\_\_\_ is the Body (23; 5:23).
- D. The One Body Has Many \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom. 12:4-5).
- E. There is Only \_\_\_\_\_ (Eph. 4:3-4; I Cor. 12:12-14, 20, 25).
- F. The \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ (I Cor. 12:27; Rom. 16:16).

### III. Because the Church Is the Lord's Bride! (Eph. 5:22-33)

- A. The \_\_\_\_\_ submits as a wife (22, 24).
- B. Christ is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the church like a husband (23).
- C. Christ's love is exclusive for the Church like a \_\_\_\_\_ (25-29).
- D. Christ and the \_\_\_\_\_ are One like a marriage (30-32).
- E. The Church Reverence Christ by Wearing His Name (33; Rom. 16:16).

### IV. Because the Church Consists of the Saved!

- A. Jesus is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world (Lk. 19:10; Heb. 5:8-9).
- B. Jesus Saves through the \_\_\_\_\_ (Mk. 16:15-16).
- C. Jesus Adds All the Saved to His \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 2:47).
- D. The Saved enter the Church through \_\_\_\_\_ (I Cor. 12:13).
- E. If One can be Saved Outside the Church, then All can! True or False?
- F. If All can, then Jesus' Death and the Church were unnecessary (Eph. 5:25-27).

### V. Because The Church Is Heaven-Bound!

- A. Jesus is in \_\_\_\_\_ right now! (Acts 1:9-11).
- B. Since Jesus is in heaven and He is the Head of the church, Where is the Headquarters for His Church? (Acts 2:33-35) \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Jesus is Returning for the \_\_\_\_\_ (Eph. 5:26-27; Jno. 14:1-3).
- D. Does Jesus want to add you to His Church? (Acts 2:47) \_\_\_\_\_
- E. Will You Strive To Remain Faithful unto Death? (Rev. 2:10) \_\_\_\_\_

# Origin of Churches

| CHURCH                  | PLACE OF ORIGIN           | YEAR      | FOUNDER             |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| <b>Church of Christ</b> | <b>Jerusalem</b>          | <b>33</b> | <b>Jesus Christ</b> |
| Roman Catholic          | Rome, Italy               | 606       | Boniface III        |
| Church of England       | England                   | 1535      | King Henry VIII     |
| Baptist Church          | London, England           | 1607      | John Smyth          |
| American Baptist        | Providence, R. I.         | 1639      | Roger Williams      |
| Congregational Church   | Massachusetts             | 1684      | Group               |
| Mennonite Church        | Zurich, Switzerland       | 1525      | Group               |
| Lutheran Church         | Augsburg, Germany         | 1530      | Martin Luther       |
| Presbyterian Church     | Switzerland               | 1535      | John Calvin         |
| Quakers                 | England                   | 1650      | George Fox          |
| Methodist Church        | London, England           | 1729      | John Wesley         |
| Primitive Baptist       | North Carolina            | 1765      | Group               |
| Freewill Baptist        | New Durham, N. C.         | 1780      | Benjamin Randall    |
| Evangelical Church      | Pennsylvania              | 1803      | Jacob Albright      |
| Cumberland Presbyterian | Dickson County, TN        | 1810      | Group               |
| Mormon Church           | Seneca, New York          | 1830      | Joseph Smith        |
| Adventism               | Massachusetts             | 1831      | William Miller      |
| Seventh Day Adventism   | Massachusetts             | 1846      | Ellen G. White      |
| Mormons (Reorganized)   | Wisconsin                 | 1852      | Joseph Smith II     |
| Christian Church        | Midway, Kentucky          | 1859      | Group               |
| Salvation Army          | London, England           | 1865      | William Booth       |
| Jehovah's Witnesses     | Pennsylvania              | 1874      | Charles T. Russell  |
| Methodist Episcopal     | Baltimore, Maryland       | 1874      | Group               |
| Christian Science       | Boston, Massachusetts     | 1879      | Mary Baker Eddy     |
| Church of God           | Monroe County, TN         | 1886      | Group               |
| Church of God           | United States             | 1880      | D. S. Warner        |
| Nazarene Church         | Los Angeles, California   | 1895      | P. F. Bresee        |
| Pentecostal Holiness    | Anderson, South Carolina  | 1898      | Group               |
| Church of God in Christ | Memphis, Tennessee        | 1907      | C. H. Mason         |
| Holiness Church         | Chicago, Illinois         | 1907      | Howard Hoople       |
| Assembly of God         | Hot Springs, Arkansas     | 1914      | Group               |
| Church of God Holiness  | Atlanta, Georgia          | 1914      | K. H. Burrus        |
| Foursquare Gospel       | Los Angeles, California   | 1917      | Amie S. McPherson   |
| Full Gospel Church      | Goldsboro, North Carolina | 1935      | R. H. Askew         |

# THE ELEMENTS OF ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP

by Melvin Sapp

(Mat. 4:10) Who is the only being or person that is worthy of our worship? \_\_\_\_\_  
Who seeks our worship by perverting worship to God? \_\_\_\_\_

(Jno. 4:23-24) What type of worshiper is God seeking? \_\_\_\_\_  
What two elements constitute acceptable worship? \_\_\_\_\_

(Heb. 12:28) What attitudes are required to 'worship in spirit?' \_\_\_\_\_  
(Jno. 17:17) To worship 'in truth,' the elements must be according to the \_\_\_\_\_.

(Mat. 15:8-9) What type of teaching will make our worship vain? \_\_\_\_\_  
Our worship must be with the right attitude and according to truth! [ **T or F** ]

## I. PREACHING

(Mk. 16:15-16) How is the gospel of Christ to be made known to every person? \_\_\_\_\_  
Preaching informs people of God's requirements to being saved! [ **T or F** ]

(I Cor. 15:1-4) What will happen to lost people if they reject gospel preaching? \_\_\_\_\_  
What '3' facts constitute gospel preaching? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

## II. PRAYER

(Acts 12:5) "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but \_\_\_\_\_ was made without ceasing of the  
\_\_\_\_\_ unto God for him."

(Acts 2:42) The church "...continued \_\_\_\_\_ in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship,  
and in breaking of bread, and in \_\_\_\_\_."

## III. LORD'S SUPPER

(Acts 2:42) The church "...continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in  
\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, and in prayers."

(Acts 20:7) When did the early church partake of the Lord's Supper? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many weeks are in a year? \_\_\_\_\_

(I Cor. 11:23-29) How many time should the Lord's Supper be taken per year? \_\_\_\_\_  
To partake 'worthily,' we must remember Jesus' death and examine \_\_\_\_\_.

## IV. GIVING

(I Cor. 16:1-2) When was the church 'ordered' to take up a collection? \_\_\_\_\_  
(II Cor. 9:6-7) Were Christians to give as they prospered or did the church sell cakes? \_\_\_\_\_

## V. SINGING

(Eph. 5:19) Is singing vocal music or instrumental music? \_\_\_\_\_  
Where is the melody to be made while singing to the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_

(Col. 3:16-17) Singing with grace in our hearts is authorized by the Lord Jesus! [ **Yes - No** ]  
(Heb. 2:12) Is God to be praised in the church by singing or by playing? \_\_\_\_\_

(Mat. 28:18-20) Will we yield to the authority of Christ of follow men? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Jno. 4:23-24) Are you willing to be a true worshiper by following the Bible? [ **Yes - No** ]

List the '5' acts of worship?: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

# THE GOSPEL PLAN OF SALVATION

by *Melvin Sapp*

## I. The Gospel Defined.

- A. What glad tidings are preachers sent out to proclaim? **(Rom. 10:13-15)** \_\_\_\_\_
- B. List the three '3' fundamental facts of the Gospel? **(I Cor. 15:1-4).**  
The \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus Christ.
- C. What is God's power to save man from sin? \_\_\_\_\_ **(Rom. 1:16)**  
1. How many accountable people have committed sin? \_\_\_\_\_ **(Rom. 3:23)**  
2. What does sin do to man's relationship with God? \_\_\_\_\_ **(Isaiah 59:1-2)**  
3. The wages of sin is \_\_\_\_\_, but the gift of God is \_\_\_\_\_ **(Rom. 6:23)**
- D. Why did Jesus come into the world? \_\_\_\_\_ **(Lk. 19:10)**

## II. The Gospel Must Be Preached!

- A. To whom should the Gospel be preached? \_\_\_\_\_ **(Mk. 16:15-16)**  
1. Name two things that precede or come before salvation? \_\_\_\_\_  
2. If one chooses not to believe, what will happen to him? \_\_\_\_\_  
3. Is baptism just as important as belief in obtaining salvation? \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Must the Gospel remain the same or can it be changed? \_\_\_\_\_ **(Gal. 1:6-9)**  
1. Do men or angels have the right to change the gospel? [ **Yes or No** ]
- C. When Jesus returns, what awaits those who fail to obey the gospel? **(II Thess. 1:7-9)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

## III. The Gospel Must Be Obeyed Before Salvation Can Be Enjoyed.

- A. Peter preached the gospel of Christ on Pentecost to those who had \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus **(Acts 2:36).**
- B. Those convicted by what they heard, asked what must they do to be \_\_\_\_\_ **(Acts 2:37).**
- C. What 'two' things were they told to do in order to obtain remission of sins **(Acts 2:38).**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
1. Could they have received remission of sin without repenting of their sins? [ **Yes or No** ]  
2. Could they have received remission of sin without being baptized? [ **Yes or No** ]
- D. When were those who gladly received the word baptized? **(Acts 2:41)** \_\_\_\_\_

## IV. The Role Of Baptism In Obeying The Gospel.

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ saves us today like water saved Noah from the sinful world. (I Pet. 3:20-21).
- B. Baptism is when we imitate Christ's \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom. 6:3-5).  
1. How much dirt is required to bury one in a grave? \_\_\_\_\_  
2. How much water is required to bury one in baptism? \_\_\_\_\_
- C. We become \_\_\_\_\_ of God and we put on Christ in \_\_\_\_\_ (Gal. 3:26-27).
- D. The Spirit of God places us into the body of Christ when we are \_\_\_\_\_ (I Cor. 12:12-13).
- E. Baptism \_\_\_\_\_ away our \_\_\_\_\_ and we should not tarry or wait (Acts 22:16).
- F. Are you concerned about being baptized correctly? [ **Yes or No** ]

## COUNTING THE COST

by Melvin Sapp

- A. The greatest decision in life is to choose to become a follower of Jesus Christ.
- B. Yet, this decision must not be taken lightly, as it requires that we allow Jesus to direct our lives.
- C. We must see the value and benefits of being a Christian and desire to make heaven our home.

### I. JESUS INVITES YOU TO COME UNTO HIM (Jno. 14:6).

(Mat. 11:28-30) Who is the only person that can provide rest for your soul? \_\_\_\_\_

(I Cor. 15:1-4) Have you learned about Jesus' death, burial and resurrection? [ Y or N ]

(Jno. 6:44-45) Are you being drawn to Jesus by the Word of God? [ Y or N ]

Have you learned the '5' Steps of Salvation? H \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom. 10:17),  
B \_\_\_\_\_ (Jno. 8:24), R \_\_\_\_\_ (Lk. 13:3), C \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom. 10:9-10),  
and be B \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 2:38).

### II. FOLLOWING JESUS REQUIRES A COMMITMENT (Lk. 9:23-26).

(Lk. 14:26-33) Must our commitment to Jesus be stronger than any other relationship? [Y or N]

Are you willing to make tough decisions to be a disciple of Jesus? [ Y or N ]

Before building a tower, what should be done first? \_\_\_\_\_

“So likewise, whosoever he be of you that \_\_\_\_\_ not all that he hath, he cannot be my \_\_\_\_\_.”

### III. WE MUST BE WILLING TO CHANGE (Lk. 13:1-5; Acts 3:19).

(Mat. 18:1-4) What must we experience before we can enter the kingdom of heaven? \_\_\_\_\_

“Whosoever therefore shall \_\_\_\_\_ himself as this little child, the same is the \_\_\_\_\_ in the kingdom of heaven.”

(Acts 2:36-42) The same Jesus Israel crucified, God made him both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

When our hearts are convicted, what will we ask? \_\_\_\_\_

What '2' things must be done to get remission of sins? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

What will one do if he 'gladly receives the word?' \_\_\_\_\_

“And they \_\_\_\_\_ in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers.”

### IV. OUR CHOICES DETERMINE OUR DESTINY (Josh. 24:14-15).

(Acts. 22:16) What happens to one when he is baptized? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything that is hindering you from being baptized, now? [Y or N]