

MARANATHA BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

28 February 2016

"Present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28)

Address: 63 Cranwell Road, Singapore 509851 Tel: (65) 6545 8627 Fax: (65) 6546 7422

E-mail: maranatha.bpc@pacific.net.sg Website: www.maranatha-bpc.com

Sunday School: 9.45 am

Sunday English / Chinese Worship Service: 10.45 am Sunday Chinese Worship Service: 7 pm

Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8.00 pm

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jack Sin (HP: 9116 0948)

Duties of Church Members in the Local Church

Every ordinary church member has privileges and duties in a local church. Every single member has a spiritual job to do for the Lord. What then are the responsibilities that come with responsible church membership? Consider the following :

1. Attend All Church Services Regularly

Hebrews 10:24-25 says, *'And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.'* You, as a baptized Christian and ordinary member of a church, are responsible to attend Sabbath Services (and Holy Communion) and prayer meetings in your church to worship the Lord regularly. Scripture could not be clearer about this fundamental responsibility. Therefore give yourself to the reverently worship of God, to take the Lord's Supper, attend also the Sunday School and membership or catechism classes and be involved in the edifying work of love and service deeds to the mutual encouragement of the body. If you do not attend church, you forfeit yourself of the privilege of worshipping God and may not be able to fulfill the next few responsibilities. Attendance makes it possible.

2. Witness and Propagate the Gospel and Support Missions

As a baptized Christian and ordinary member of a church, we are responsible for the sharing of the gospel of Christ to the saving of souls and to the proper sharing of the gospel and the missions in your church. Be actively involved in missions and in evangelistic outreaches. Romans 1:16 says, *'For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.'* Think about Paul's "shock" in Galatians 1:6-9 that the people were turning to a different gospel (v. 6). He strongly warned the members, and told them to reject even so-called apostles or angels who teach a false gospel (2 Corinthians 11:13-14).

We are to know the gospel and know how to share it. Can you share the gospel in a few minutes? Can you explain the relationship between faith and salvation? Can a Christian live in unrepentant sin? Why is it important for a Christian to affirm the doctrine of Christ or God? What role do fervency love, service, faithfulness have in promoting a church's gospel ministry? How can a church not let its ministry be undermined by the world? Be ready to answer queries to

guard the gospel. 1 Peter 3:15 which says, *'But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.'* You should be equipped to answer questions on the faith and be a good testimony for Christ. Know the gospel well to witness for Christ effectively.

3. Encourage, exhort, Comfort and Reach Out to others Christians and visitors

As a baptized Christian and ordinary member of a church, we are to exhort others and be willing to share the gospel and support the missions and other ministries in the church by prayers and tangible service.

In a matter of church discipline, Paul addressed the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 5:1–13; 2 Corinthians 2:6–8). Likewise, it is your responsibility, Christian, to receive and welcome members. For you to neglect this work only cultivates complacency, and eventually ecclesiastical liberalism. At members' meetings, it is both voting for new leaders and members and working to know and be known by your fellow members. You cannot affirm a person you do not know. You are to know personally every member of your church if possible. We can do this work collectively. Ephesians 4:2-3, *'With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.'*

4. Attend Prayer Meeting, Fellowship, Bible Study and Members' Meetings

2 Corinthians 1:11 says, *'Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.'* So how do you preach or share the gospel and affirm other members? By showing up consistently for regular in Wednesday night prayer meetings. ACM and other members' meetings and be concerned for others.

Different churches make decisions in different ways, the Presbyterian system of church government is the closest to the Bible. But whatever polity your church uses for making the decisions concerning the work of God, it should be done biblically.

In every church, the prayer and members' meetings have their challenges. By God's grace, the church prayer and members' meetings can be edifying and encouraging to the building up of the flock. The attendance and leading of the pastors, elders and deacons in those meetings are important. Philippians 4:6-7 says, *'Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.'*

5. Serve God as a Faithful Steward of His Resources and Support the Church

Romans 15:1 says, *'We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.'* As a baptized Christian and ordinary member of a church, you are responsible for protecting the gospel and the gospel's ministry in your church by disciplining other church members.

Remember Ephesians 4:15–16. The church grows when we do our part with God's help. We need to use our time, treasure and talents in building up the church. This includes the ministry of service, ushering, praying, giving to God, in the Chinese Service, Maranatha Resource Ministry (MRM), fellowships, Neighbourhood Bible Classes (NBC), Sunday School, evangelism and

supporting the church ministry. Let us learn to speak in truth, and help others to grow in the Lord. Be available to serve and support your deacons, elders or pastor in their stewardship.

Basic Christianity involves building up other believers. It is a part of fulfilling the Great Commission and making disciples for Christ.

6. Be a Tangible Blessing to Others and a Good Example

Romans 12:11-12 says, *'Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;'* Your whole life should reflect the love of Christ in word and deed. You are an ambassador and servant of the Lord. Every Christian has been saved by grace through faith in Christ and we are ambassadors for Christ, pleading with sinners to be reconciled to God. This, too, is a part of your calling. The command is to *'Go and teach (or make disciples) of all nations'* (Matthew 28:19). That includes our dressing (i.e. modest and appropriate for worship of a thrice holy God and that it will not stumble any one) gait, demeanour and decorum and our thought life and speech as well that it will be befitting of our calling as a Christian. Punctuality in worship honours God and continual lateness shows an irreverent attitude and can be a potential stumbling block to others as well

7. Support and Pray for Your Pastor, Missionaries and Leaders

It is the duty of the pastors or elders to equip the saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:12). Pastors, preachers and missionaries and elders are to teach the word, catechizing the members of the church in the Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF), teaching them the word of God as they equip the church for effectual service and worship.

You are responsible to avail yourself to the elders' instruction and counsel. Hold on to the pattern of sound teaching you've learned from them (2 Timothy 1:13). Follow their teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, love, endurance and praying along with their persecutions and sufferings (2 Timothy 3:10–11).

Membership has Privileges and Responsibilities

The Bible gives blessings and responsibility to the gathered congregation. With authority comes responsibility. By joining a church, you are responsible for what your church teaches and for the member's discipleship.

- You are to discern if a speaker is teaching the true or false gospel (Acts 17:11).
- You are to help a new friend to adequately understand the gospel and feel welcome in church.
- You are to assist in the discipleship of young believers in Christ, and that he or she's being cared for and nurtured toward Christlikeness.
- You are to reach out to the erring or unrepentant member in love with the gentle correction from the word of God (Galatians 6:1-2).

Pray for our pastors, elders and deacons that God will give them wisdom to do His will and His work among us. .

Joining and Being Part of the Church

When a person comes to join our church, they are asked to go for an interview with the elders, where they are asked to share their testimony and to explain the content of the gospel. At the conclusion of any interview of a person for transfer of membership or baptism by the Board of

Elders, we will share the word of God (on the meaning of church membership, salvation and baptism) after examining him or her and praying with him or her as well.

Conclusion

There are privileges and sacred duties of being a member of a local church and we want to fulfill them in the Lord. Pray about how you can play an effective role to serve the Lord and edify the saints in your church. Ephesians 4:16 says, *'From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.'*

Jack Sin

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The baptism of Hao Xin Ming and pray for his walk of faith in the Lord back in his home town.

Interview of Hao Xin Ming by the Board of Elders.



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Thanksgiving – The Bilingual Pocket Card

“Directions for Healthy Marital Relations Within a Covenant Home”

Praise the Lord. Thank you for sharing this wonderful message. I am always encouraged by your messages.

Tamil Nadu, India

Thank God for this article you wrote. I will do well to hear and do according to God's Word. Thank you for thinking of sharing this with me! Will it be okay for me to share your article with the YAF and other Lifers?

Youth Leader, Life BPC

Thank you for the advice on marriage and family unity. It is good to heed words of wisdom and encouragement and not to forsake God and His words.

Member, Galilee BPC

I just reminded my wife about the pocket card on happy marriage rules you wrote.

Chinese Service

Thank you. Can I share with my girlfriend? Thanks for allowing me to share this counsel with her.

Member, Moriah BPC

It is truly edifying material. I will surely translate it into both Kannada and Telugu languages.

Pastor, India

I have forwarded your marriage pocket card. It is so important to remind ourselves again and again on these truths.

Engineer, Pilgrim Covenant Church

Excellent advice in this concise pocket card. Very succinct and true.

Member, Maranatha BPC

I have read it. Thank God for a good reminder through His words.

Mother and teacher, Vietnam

Thank you for the reminder. I need 10 pocket cards. May I know how much does it costs? (NB. It is given out free).

Member, Evangel BPC, Malaysia

Thanking God for the '*Directions for Healthy Marital Relations within a Covenant Home*' pocket card which I have received, every point shared is meaningful and edifying. May the Lord keep me and Brother Dong Wei in our marriage within His love and grace. Pastor and Mrs Angie are our example, may the Lord bless you. '*We love Him, because He first loved us.*' (1 John 4:19).

Newly Wed, Fujian, China

Though the article may be short, but very poignant and edifying, very convenient to carry about for reading, praise the Lord!

Chinese Service

May pastor send me the article on '*The Healthy marital relations within a covenant home*'?

Preacher, Batam

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Two regular visitors to the Chinese Service requested for a Bible and got it from the MRM with joy.

Book Review : Pilgrim Progress

10 Things I have learnt :

1. We all come from the 'City of Destruction' – the Earth.

It is said that Christian was from the city of Destruction.

2. God is going to destroy this "city of Destruction" – Earth.

It is said that Christian saw this vision that has shown him that his home, the city of Destruction, was going to be destroyed one day.

3. We, as Christians are to escape from the wrath to come by turning to Christ.

Christian knowing that God is going to destroy his city immediately tried to find a way of escape.

4. The place that we can rest our eyes on is Heaven.

On the way, Christian met Evangelist, and Evangelist told Christian to run, and rest his eyes at the "shining light" – the Celestial City.

5. Evangelist represents the Pastor, who spreads the gospel.

6. We need not always use the 'sword' to drive 'dragons' or 'monsters' away.

When Christian was walking through the Valley of the Shadow of death, he was terrified, and he also saw dragons flying above him! He wanted to use the sword but did not have a chance to take it out. So, he recited Psalm 23, and the dragons all flew away.

7. Sometimes, we need to give our life up for the sake of Christ.

When Faithful and Christian were at the Vanity Fair, the people there were not happy to hear that instead of selling their goods to earn money, they should come before God to repent. Hence, Faithful had 'disobeyed' their prince, Beelzebub, the Devil and he was burnt to death on the Cross.

8. There are false teachers around the world we live in, so we must be careful.

When Christian and Hopeful were still on the way to the Celestial City, they saw the 'shining one'. The 'shining one' told them he had 'escorted' many people to the Celestial City, but he turned out to be a 'flatterer'. By the time Christian and Faithful realized he was a fake, it was already too late. Fortunately, the real Shining One came to their rescue and rebuked them.

9. When you are in trouble, pray and God will really help you, if it is His will.

While Hopeful and Christian were captured by the giant, Despair, and were trapped in his castle, Christian wanted to die, thinking that there was no hope, However, Hopeful stopped him and he suggested that they pray and see. After praying, the giant, Despair, came out but the angels of God distracted him through a powerful light. Then, Christian and Faithful escaped quickly.

10. Not everyone who says they are Christians can go into Heaven, unless they are truly saved by Christ.

While Christian and Hopeful were very near the Celestial City, they met a person named Ignorance. Ignorance thought that by doing good works he would be able to go into the Celestial City. In the end, Ignorance ended up in Hell! How terrifying!

Conclusion

The Pilgrim's Progress is a very meaningful story for Christians, as it guides us, so it is almost like the Bible, because there are some Bible verses in the story too! And it teaches us about the end times and the second coming of Christ.

May all of us benefit from this story and be challenged to have an enduring faith in us like Christian, Faithful and Hopeful.

Joy Seow
(13 years old)

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Theme for the Quarter :

Discovering and Applying the Johannine Epistles –
Studies in the Book of 1, 2 and 3 John

English Worship Service :

Rev Dr Jack Sin
speaks on

Knowing God and the Practice of Prayer

(Scripture Text : 1 John 5:9-21; Responsive Reading : Romans 10:1-21)

[*End of MM*]