

Lesson 1

THE MEANING OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP



This is the first of 17 lessons that you will be completing as a member of the Communicants Class. After you complete each lesson, check it with your parent(s) and have one sign it. It should be brought to class the next week.

Find answers to the questions by looking in the paragraphs above them or by looking in the Bible (English Standard Version — ESV) or the Westminster Shorter Catechism (S.C.). **You do not need to guess** unless the question asks what you think about something.

Please write down any questions you have and bring them to class. Questions are always welcome!

1. What was the reason for God's creating man? (See Shorter Catechism #1) Man's chief end is to

and _____ .

- a. **To glorify God** means to give him the place of honor; it is like shining a light on something to show how beautiful it is.

Look up these verses and write down ways we can honor or glorify God:

Psalm 50:23; 86:12 _____

John 4:23 _____

Matthew 5:16 _____

I Corinthians 10:31 _____

- b. **To enjoy God** means that human beings are happiest and most satisfied when they know God.

Augustine was a great Christian who lived around A.D. 400. He said to God: "*Thou hast made us for thyself and our hearts are restless until they rest in thee.*"

Rewrite that saying in modern English the way you understand it: _____



**Think
about it**

In the beginning, God created the universe, the earth, and everything on the earth, including man. He made it all good, and man could enjoy God's good creation and enjoy being with God. But man chose to disobey God and to live without him. This is sin, and sin has brought death, and sickness, and hatred and evil into God's world. But God refused to let sin ruin his world and had a plan to overcome sin. This plan was that he would rescue many, many people from sin and make them his special people, his family.



2. The Bible says man chose to disobey God and live without him. (Find the answer in the paragraphs above.)

a. What is this choice called? _____

b. What has sin brought into God's good world? _____

c. Will God allow sin and death to ruin his creation?

3. What is God's plan? _____

4. What is the Church?

One name for this people or family is the Church. The Church is a gathering of people who trust and serve the true God. God has always had his Church: at first the family of Abraham was the Church; later God used Moses to lead the Hebrew nation out of Egypt and the Hebrews (Israel) became his Church. Finally Jesus came and taught that all who truly believed in him could be part of his Church. So the Church was first a family, then a nation, then gatherings of people from all nations. Now God's special people are called Christians.



- a. What are the three steps in the development of the Church? List the important person in each step.

- b. Now God's people are called _____ .
- c. When people use the word **church** they often mean something else. List some of the other ways you have heard this word used.



What do
You think?



Think
about it

Today the Church is called the Body of Christ. That means Jesus is the head, and we are the parts of the body. Jesus told the people in his Church always to remind themselves that this is true by having Communion (also called the Lord's Supper, because it is just like Jesus' last supper with the disciples). Communion is a way of showing that we have taken Jesus into our lives and are part of his Church. The name Communicants Class comes from the word communion. The Communicants Class is to help you prepare to become a communicant member of one gathering of Jesus' Church. If you were baptized as an infant or a child, you were received as a non-communicating member of the church. Now that you are old enough to understand much more about Jesus, you need to study so that you can confess him as your own Lord and be a communicant member.



5. What is one term we use for the Church today?

a. Who is the head? _____

Who are the parts of the Body? _____

b. What is the ceremony Jesus gave us to remind ourselves that he is our source of strength?

also called the _____

c. What does taking Communion show? _____

6. Were you baptized as a child? _____

a. Ask your parents why they had you baptized and write a summary of their answer.

b. If you were not baptized, ask your parents why they decided not to do that. Summarize their answer.

7. Do you want to be part of Jesus' Church? _____

8. What is the name of the particular gathering of Jesus' church which you attend?



Date Completed _____

Parent's Initials _____