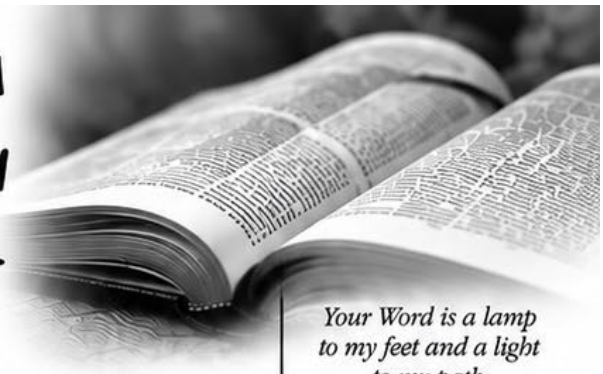
NEW ORLEANS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP
BAPTIST CHURCH
Leonard M. Parker, Jr. † Pastor

BIBLE Study

GROW • LEARN • APPLY • TOGETHER



Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
PSALM 119:105

TOPIC:

Churchgoer vs. Child of God:

Being in the Church Is Not the Same as Belonging to Christ

October 27, 2026

KEY SCRIPTURE: *John 8:31*

INTRODUCTION

There is a difference between attending church and living a life surrendered to God. A person can attend church every Sunday, know the songs, quote Scripture, and participate in church activities without allowing God's Word to transform their heart. A churchgoer may attend the house of God, but a child of God seeks to walk with God every day. Church attendance is important, but attendance alone does not establish a relationship with God. Calling Jesus "Lord" is not the same as surrendering to His lordship. Genuine faith produces a desire to obey Him. *(Matthew 7:21)*

1 A CHURCHGOER KNOWS CHURCH CULTURE; A CHILD OF GOD KNOWS THE SHEPHERD

The Churchgoer – May know the traditions and activities of the church. May recognize the pastor's voice but struggle to follow God's direction. May focus more on what happens inside the church than on walking with God outside of it.

The Child of God – Desires a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Seeks God's direction through prayer and His Word. Strives to follow Christ daily. Is more concerned with serving others rather than themselves.

Scriptures: *James 4:8; John 10:27; Mark 10:45*

2 A CHURCHGOER MAY HEAR THE WORD; A CHILD OF GOD SEEKS TO LIVE THE WORD

Spiritual growth is demonstrated by our willingness to apply God's Word.

The Churchgoer – Hears the sermon but may not apply it. Identifies what others need to change while overlooking personal shortcomimgs. Knows what the Bible says but does not consistently practice its teachings.

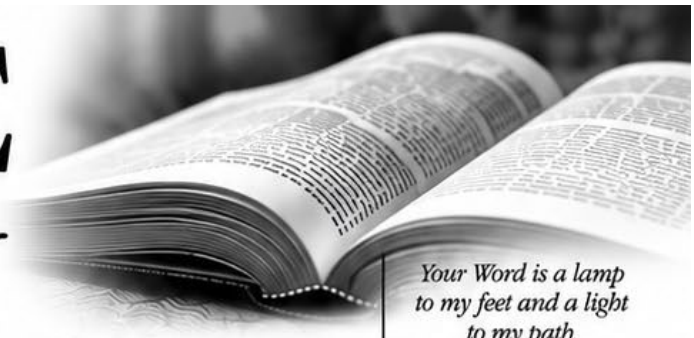
The Child of God – Applies God's Word to daily life. Allows Scripture to correct attitudes and behavior. Seeks to obey God out of love rather than obligation.

Scriptures: *John 14:15; James 1:22; Psalms 119:97*

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3 A CHURCHGOER MAY MAINTAIN AN APPEARANCE; A CHILD OF GOD ALLOWS GOD TO CHANGE THE HEART

God is concerned with the condition of our hearts, not merely our outward appearance.

The Churchgoer – May be concerned about appearing spiritual. May prioritize reputation over character. May behave differently in public than in private.

The Child of God – Pursues integrity both publicly and privately. Acknowledges personal faults and seeks forgiveness. Desires a clean heart and a renewed mind.

Scriptures: *Psalm 51:10; 1 Samuel 16:7; II Timothy 3:1-5*

4 A CHURCHGOER MAY SPEAK ABOUT LOVE; A CHILD OF GOD DEMONSTRATES LOVE

Love is demonstrated through actions, not merely words.

The Churchgoer – May talk about love while holding onto bitterness. May refuse to forgive others. May show kindness only to those who agree with them.

The Child of God – Seeks to love others even when relationships are difficult. Understands the importance of forgiveness. Treats others with dignity and compassion. Speaks the truth with humility and love.

Scriptures: *1 John 3:18; John 13:34-35; Galatians 5:13*

CONCLUSION

As we reflect on the lesson, the self-examining question is not, "Do I go to church?" The question is, "Do I belong to Christ?" A churchgoer may be familiar with all the ins and outs associated with the church, but a child of God is transformed by a relationship with Jesus Christ. God is not looking for people who merely occupy a seat in the sanctuary. He is seeking hearts that are surrendered to Him. In these last and evil days, church attendance is extremely valuable, but salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ. The evidence of that faith is a life that seeks to know Him, obey Him, and reflect His character. When will we stop playing church and be about our Father's business?

