

I Am a Church Member - Session 6

We have taken a journey into what it means to be a biblical church member. Here are the topics around church membership we have covered so far:

- I Will Be A Functioning Church Member
- I Will Be A Unifying Church Member
- I Will Not Let My Church Be about My Preferences and Desires
- I Will Pray For My Church Leaders
- I Will Lead My Family Members to Be Healthy Church Members

Understanding these particular parts of being a church member, we should be challenged to reflect on our own role as church members. What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses? How can you be an example of being a biblical church member?

1 Corinthians 12:27-28 - New International Version

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. ²⁸ And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues.

Our attitude towards church membership reflect our appreciation for the gift that God has given us. Paul writes in Romans, "Since we've compiled this long and sorry record as sinners and proved that we are utterly incapable of living the glorious lives God wills for us, God did it for us. Out of sheer generosity God put us in right standing with God's self. A pure gift. God got us out of the mess we're in and restored us to where God always wanted us to be. And God did it by means of Jesus Christ." (Romans 3:23-4, The Message) Through grace, God has grafted us on God's family tree and integrated us into God's family. This is the gift that should be the foundation of our church membership and it a gift that we should treasure.

I Will Treasure Church Membership as a Gift

→ Biblical Perspective on the Gift

- ◆ The Gift of Salvation - Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9
 - Regeneration, Justification, and Sanctification
- ◆ The Gift of the Church - 1 Corinthians 12:27-28
- ◆ "You received...the free gift of eternal salvation...It includes forgiveness of sins by Christ's death on the cross,...adoption by God the Father,..[and] the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And it includes becoming a part of the body of Christ...Membership in the body of Christ, the church, is a gift from God...that we should treasure with great joy and anticipation." - Rainer, p. 71

→ *Obligation versus Opportunity*

- ◆ “What Can I Get?” mindset makes serving an OBLIGATION - Mark 10:17-27
- ◆ “What Can I Give?” mindset makes serving an OPPORTUNITY - Mark 9:35, 41

→ *Universal Church or Local Church*

- ◆ “The universal church and the local church are not mutually exclusive.” - Rainer, p. 72
- ◆ Testament to the Importance of the Local Church
 - Book of Acts, Letters of Paul, Book of Revelations
- ◆ Importance of Assembling: Acts 2: 42, 46; Hebrews 10:25

→ *Understanding the Gift*

- ◆ Appreciation of the Gift: “Church membership is a gift...Because it is a gift, we must always be thankful for it. And when we are thankful for something, we have less time and energy to be negative.” - Rainer, p. 72-73
- ◆ The Gift of Adoption: Romans 8:15-17
- ◆ Thank God for The Gift: 2 Corinthians 9:10-15

Church Membership - A Final Word

When we have an attitude of entitlement, we have a lousy attitude. We are always looking for what we rightly deserve. And we get indignant when we don't get our way.

But when we see life, salvation, and church membership as gifts, our whole perspective changes. We don't have any sense of entitlement or expectation. To the contrary, we want to be last and receive the least because that's the way Jesus did it. And we want to be more like him.

Church membership is a gift, a joyous gift.

Treat it as such.

Look at each part of the entire church membership covenant. As you look at the entire covenant, what area will be your greatest challenge? In what area can you make immediate changes?