

A MATTER OF MEMBERSHIP

Acts 2:41-47

What does the bible say about church membership?

I. SOME INDICATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. ADDING - Acts 2:41, 47 and 5:14
- B. EXCLUDING - I Cor. 5:2, 13
- Note also II Cor. 2:6 and the “majority” terminology
- C. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS
 - 1. The widow’s list - I Tim. 5:9
 - 2. The pastor’s flock - I Peter 5:1-2

II. SOME FOUNDATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

- A. SALVATION - Acts 2:41, 47
- B. BAPTISM - Acts 2:41
- C. A COMMITMENT TO FELLOWSHIP - Acts 1:14, 2:41-47
- D. DOCTRINAL AGREEMENT - Acts 2:42 and 5:42
- E. MORAL PURITY - Acts 5:1-11 and I Cor. 5:1-2

III. THE IDENTIFICATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. IDENTIFYING WITH GOD’S PROGRAM
 - 1. A local church that started at Jerusalem - Acts 2:41-47
 - 2. That for which God provides leadership - Eph. 4:11-16
 - 3. That which Paul calls, “the pillar and support of the truth” - I Tim. 3:15
 - 4. That which God’s Word addresses in most of the epistles
- B. IDENTIFYING WITH SOUND DOCTRINE - II Tim. 2:15
 - 1. Elements that include being ...
- Bible-Believing, evangelical, fundamental, evangelistic, independent and Baptist
 - 2. What does your church believe and teach?
- C. IDENTIFICATION THROUGH PUBLIC COMMITMENT

IV. THE PARTICIPATION THROUGH MEMBERSHIP

A. PARTICIPATION IN DECISIONS

1. Minister Decisions
 - a. Apostles - Acts 1:23-26
 - b. Deacons - Acts 6:1-5
 - c. Missionaries - Acts 15:40
 - d. Financial clerks - II Cor. 16:1-4
 - d. Treasurers or Trustees - II Corinthians 8:18-21
2. Money Decisions
 - a. For a needy church - II Cor. 8:1-4
 - b. For a needy missionary - Phil. 4:13-18

B. PARTICIPATION IN LEADERSHIP

1. Leadership was local church identified
 - a. Apostle: Acts 1:21-22
 - b. Pastors and Deacons: I Timothy 3:1-13
 - c. Trustees or Treasurers: II Cor. 8:18-19, 22
2. Leadership is normally restricted to the membership

V. THE PROTECTION OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. PASTORAL PROTECTION - Heb. 13:17
- B. FAILURE PROTECTION - Gal. 6:1-2
- C. CONFRONTATION PROTECTION - Matt. 18:15-18
- D. DISCIPLINE PROTECTION - I Cor. 5:1-7

V. SOME OBJECTIONS TO MEMBERSHIP

- You may object to this matter of membership for any number of reasons. Here are several and a response to each.

- A. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH IS ENOUGH - Col. 1:18
 - Yet consider I Corinthians 12-14 and body life indicated in a local church setting
- B. THERE IS TOO MUCH FIGHTING IN CHURCHES - Acts 15
 - The fact is ministries and churches continue even amid conflict and questions
- C. I DON'T WANT SOMEONE LOOKING OVER MY SHOULDER - Heb. 3:12-13
 - God designed the church for mutual care and concern, lest sin harden us

D. I'VE BEEN BURNED BY A CHURCH IN THE PAST - I Cor. 4:11-13

- Paul kept going though at times it was tough

E. I WANT TO MAINTAIN MY FAMILY'S RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS - Gal. 1:13-17

- The Apostle Paul was saved out of his traditional religion

F. I DON'T TOTALLY AGREE WITH EVERYTHING IN THE CONSTITUTION - Rom. 14

- That is OK, there will be always be some differences in convictions and practices

G. I AM COMFORTABLE AS A NON-MEMBER - Acts 21:37-39

- There is always the possibility of a "mistaken identity" when you fail to identify yourself

H. I JUST NEVER GOT AROUND TO JOINING - James 4:17

- To him who knows to do good and doesn't, it is sin!

I. I DID NOT KNOW THE BIBLE TAUGHT THIS - Acts 2:41-47

- Now you know! What will you do?

CONCLUSION:

What are your convictions about church membership?

Will you become involved in the object of our Savior's great love?

- Will you be a part of God's plan and program for this age?

- Are you willing to commit to membership in this local church?

Process:

1. If you are uncertain about your membership status, check the list posted on the foyer bulletin board
 - Just because you were baptized here does not mean you are a member
2. Come forward during an invitation or go to the prayer room after any service and share your salvation testimony with two deacons.
3. Relate your baptism experience and agreement with our church's doctrinal statement
4. Await word from the deacons regarding their decision about your membership. Deacons meet every month and membership requests are considered at each meeting.
5. Upon deacon's approval you will be received into membership and have your name recorded in the church office