

**1 Corinthians 12:27-31:** Now you are the **body of Christ and individually members of it.**<sup>28</sup> And God has **appointed in the church** first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.<sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?<sup>30</sup> Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?<sup>31</sup> But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

**Intro:** If you are not a formal member of a faithful, Bible-believing church, you shouldn't take the Lord's Supper. Why is church membership so important? Why should you be or become a church member? (**Dever Book**)

**Church:** Universal or Local? Ekklesia: Used 114 times in the N.T. At least 90 of those times refer to local church!

**Membership:** What does it mean to be a member here at Olney Baptist? Christian; Classes; Interview; Vote

**MacArthur:** Belonging to the church is at the very heart of Christianity.

**Martyn Lloyd-Jones:** We must grasp once again the idea of church membership as being the membership of the body of Christ and as the biggest honor which can come a man's way in this world.

**1. Become A Church Member Because It's Where God's People Are Under God's Rule In God's Place**

**2. Become A Church Member Because Christians In The Early Church Joined The Church**

**3. Become A Church Member Because Christians In The Early Church Kept Lists**

**4. Become A Church Member To Display The Gospel**

**THE GOSPEL!**

**5. Become A Church Member Because Jesus Gave The Church The Authority To Declare You To Be A Citizen Of Christ's Kingdom**

What is the only institution on earth that God has given the authority to declare you a true citizen of Christ's Kingdom? The local church!

Read from Leeman's book, Church Membership: pages 58-62

**6. Become A Church Member Because Christians In The Book Of Acts Were Added To The Church**

-**Acts 2:41:** So those who received his word were baptized, & there were added that day about three thousand souls

-**Acts 2:47:** And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

**7. Become A Church Member To Love One Another**

1) Be at peace with each other (Mark 9:50)

2) Love one another (John 13:34)

3) Be devoted to one another in brotherly love (Romans 12:10)

4) Outdo one another in showing honor (Romans 12:10)

5) Live in harmony with one another (Romans 12:16)

6) Stop passing judgment on one another (Romans 14:13)

- 7) Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you (Romans 15:7)
- 8) Instruct one another (Romans 15:14)
- 9) Greet one another (Romans 16:16)
- 10) Serve one another in love (Galatians 5:13)
- 11) Carry one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2)
- 12) Be patient, bearing with one another in love (Ephesians 4:2)
- 13) Be kind and compassionate to one another (Ephesians 4:32)
- 14) Forgive one another (Ephesians 4:32)
- 15) Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:19)
- 16) Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ (Ephesians 5:21)
- 17) In humility consider others better than yourselves (Philippians 2:3)
- 18) Admonish one another (Colossians 3:16)
- 19) Encourage one another (I Thessalonians 4:18)
- 20) Spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24)
- 21) Confess your sins to one another (James 5:16)
- 22) Pray for one another (James 5:16)

### **8. Become A Church Member To Seek The Peace Of And Unity With The Church**

**John 17:20-23:** I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,<sup>21</sup> that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.<sup>22</sup> The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,<sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

### **9. Become A Church Member To Care For One Another Physically And Spiritually**

- **Physically: Acts 6:1-4:** Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. & the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples & said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit & of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer & to the ministry of the word."

- **Spiritually:** We are to help one another be conformed to the image of Christ.

### **10. Become A Church Member To Watch Over One Another And Hold One Another Accountable**

**Galatians 6:1:** Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

### **11. Become A Church Member To Edify And Build Up One Another**

**1 Corinthians 14:1-5:** Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. <sup>2</sup> For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit. <sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. <sup>4</sup> The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. <sup>5</sup> Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

### **12. Become A Church Member To Bear With One Another**

**Ephesians 4:1-3:** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, <sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, <sup>3</sup> eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

### **13. Become A Church Member To Pray For One Another**

**James 5:16:** Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. **(Church Membership Directory)**

### **14. Become A Church Member To Keep Away From Those Who Would Destroy The Church**

**Romans 16:17:** I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.

### **15. Become A Church Member To Reject Evaluating People By Worldly Standards**

**James 2:1-4:** My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

### **16. Become A Church Member To Labor Together For The Spread Of The Gospel**

**Matthew 28:18-20:** All authority in heaven & on earth has been given to me. Go therefore & make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father & of the Son & of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

### **17. Become A Church Member To Be Godly Examples To One Another**

**Hebrews 13:7:** Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.

**1 Corinthians 11:1:** Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

### **18. Become A Church Member To Submit To Church Leaders**

**Heb. 13:17:** Obey your leaders & submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy & not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

### **19. Become A Church Member So Church Leaders Will Know Who They Are Accountable For**

- **Heb. 13:17:** Obey your leaders & submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy & not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.  
- **1 Peter 5:2:** shepherd the flock of God that is among you

### **20. Become A Church Member Because God Forbids You To Say To Other Christians: "I Don't Need You"**

**1 Corinthians 12:21:** The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

### **21. Become A Church Member Because Christ's Body Consists Of Individual Members**

**1 Corinthians 12:12, 27:** For just as the body is one & has many members, & all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ . . . <sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ & individually members of it.

### **22. Become A Church Member Because Temples Are Made Up Of Individual Stones**

- **Ephesians 2:19-22:** So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

<sup>22</sup> In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

- **1 Corinthians 3:16:** Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

### **23. Become A Church Member Because Flocks Contain Individual Sheep**

**John 10:16:** And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

### **24. Become A Church Member Because Families Are Made Up Of Individual Family Members**

**John 1:12-13:** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

**1 Timothy 5:1-2:** Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father. Treat younger men like brothers, <sup>2</sup> older women like mothers, younger women like sisters, in all purity.

**Eric Lane:** God has given us four pictures of the church, not one. This is not just to emphasize and prove the point by repetition, but also to say four different things about what it means to be a member of a church. To be a stone in his temple means to belong to a worshiping community. To be part of a body means to belong to a living, functioning, serving, witnessing community. To be a sheep in the flock means belonging to a community dependent on him for food, protection, and direction. To be a member of a family is to belong to a community bound by a common fatherhood. Put together you have the main functions of an individual Christian. Evidently we are meant to fulfill these not on our own but together in the church. Now can you see the answer to the question why you should join a church?

### **25. Become A Church Member To Obey Jesus' Command For Church Discipline**

**Matthew 18:15-17:** If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup> But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup> If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

**1 Corinthians 5:1-13:** It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality **among you**, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. <sup>2</sup> And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this **be removed from among you**. <sup>3</sup> For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. <sup>4</sup> **When you are assembled** in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, <sup>5</sup> you are to **deliver this man to Satan** for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. <sup>6</sup> Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? <sup>7</sup> Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. <sup>8</sup> Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. <sup>9</sup> I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people - <sup>10</sup> not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. <sup>11</sup> But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler - not even to eat with such a one. <sup>12</sup> For what have I to do with judging **outsiders**? Is it not **those inside the church**

whom you are to judge? <sup>13</sup> God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."

### **25. Become A Church Member For Assurance Of Salvation**

- **John 14:15:** If you love me, you will keep my commandments.
- **1 Cor. 6:9:** Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived . . . .
- **1 Corinthians 15:33:** Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals."
- **James 1:16:** Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.
- **2 Corinthians 13:5:** Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith.

### **26. Become A Church Member To Help Expose False Gospels And False Churches**

**Acts 17:10-11:** The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. <sup>11</sup> Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

When you join a church as a member, you are affirming its statement of faith, and you continue to seek the purity of the teaching and practice of the church. In so doing you expose false gospels and false churches around you.

### **27. Become A Church Member Because You're Commanded To Meet Regularly Together**

**Hebrews 10:24-25:** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

**Meaning of the word "church"** – gathering of people; local congregations

- Jonathan Leeman on church gatherings:**
- 1) It's where Christians go public to declare our highest allegiance
  - 2) It's the outpost or embassy, giving a public face to our future nation
  - 3) It's where we worship our King
  - 4) It's where our King enacts His rule through preaching, the ordinances, and discipline
  - 5) It's where God publicly makes His people known and marked off – where He draws a line between the church and the world.

### **28. Become A Church Member To Love Jesus**

- **Matthew 25:37-40:** Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? <sup>38</sup> And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? <sup>39</sup> And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' <sup>40</sup> And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, **you did it to me.**'
- **Acts 9:4:** And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, **why are you persecuting me?**"
- **Ephesians 5:25-27:** Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church & gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy & without blemish.
- **Matthew 16:18:** I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

### **29. Become A Church Member To Glorify God**

**Ephesians 3:8-11:** To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, <sup>9</sup> and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, <sup>10</sup> **so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known** to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. <sup>11</sup> This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord . . . .

We come from different backgrounds, ethnicities, etc, All we have in common is Christ!

Jesus Came To Save His Bride  
The Church He Loves And For Her Died  
Then Rose So She'd Be Purified  
He Calls Us One So Don't Divide  
Join In Membership Abide

Love And Serve And Die To Pride  
And Sacrifice For Jesus' Bride  
For When You Love Her Side By Side  
You're Loving Christ He's Testified  
And God Is Praised And Magnified!