



Sermon Notes:

Message:

It's Complicated: Church Membership

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Text Reference:

Hebrews 11:24-26 ESV

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+11%3A24-26+%26amp;version=ESV>

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

²⁵ **choosing** rather **to be** mistreated **with the people of God** than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

²⁶ He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

Hebrews 13:17 ESV

<https://biblia.com/bible/esv/hebrews/13/17>

“Obey your leaders and 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 and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you”.

Many people view churches as unnecessary, or even manipulative.

They see the Church as a institution with no value.

Not necessary for spiritual growth or personal wellness.

Marriage and the Church (A mystery/Fraternity) Spiritual unity and special relationship with God. Ephesians 5:32

And this is where the **mystery** comes into focus: **Marriage** symbolizes the created for us as a couple ...

Great falling Away (2 Thessalonians 2:3)

This mindset is prevalent in our culture. Because of this, joining a church is one of the most unpopular things for a person to do. In today's lifestyle.

The “My Way” living is popular.

Church Membership Vs. Individualism

Becoming a church member means leaving behind the comfort of individualism and voluntarily connecting yourself to others.

The requirement of a Commitment.

All are perfect examples of the Gospel.

For our sake Jesus joyfully left behind his comfort and joined himself to us.

It's Complicated.

For many people Church membership is a complicated topic. They aren't sure why membership is necessary.

Due to:

Church hurt

Shortcoming of Leadership

Money

Lifestyle decisions

Politics.

Racism

Five Components of Church Membership

Church Membership: Defined in Scripture The Bible by 5 components. That make the case for local church membership.

Display of Validity

Each displaying validity. Important to developing strong faith. That without them, walking by Faith in God would be minimized. With the absent of the local Church.

1) Body

1 Corinthians 12:21-26 ESV

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2012%3A21-26&version=ESV>

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." ²² On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,

²³ and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty,

²⁴ which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it,

²⁵ that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

Church membership is compared to the body of Christ.

There is a unity and a relationship that's suggested by using the body as a comparison.

There is something not natural about a Christian calling themselves a member of a body of believers and yet not choosing to be a functioning member of that body.

2) Shepherding

Acts 20:28 ESV

<https://biblia.com/bible/esv/acts/20/28>

"Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood"

Church membership is explained in the New Testament it's necessary for elders to care for the flock in their charge. Elders can care for anyone. However, the Bible gives elders a special task to care for a specific group of people.

These verses do not say elders cannot invest in unbelievers or those who are not yet church members, however it is clear that their first responsibility is to a particular flock. How do elders know their flock. Through membership.

3) Discipline

Matthew 18:15-17 ESV

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+18%3A15-17&version=ESV>

¹⁵ "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.

¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ 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.

Church membership is described by how it disciplines its members. ***The church*** is the ***final court of appeal in matters of church authority relating to membership.***

The Church:

Weighty Matters

“The church” must be the group to handle such weighty matters. The church is the group the Scripture is describing when it says “take it to the church.”

4) Excommunication

1 Corinthians 5:12-13

<https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1-corinthians/5/12-13>

12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge?

13 God judges those outside. “Purge the evil person from among you.”

The fact that excommunication exists implies the following:

There are two group of people:

- “in the church” group
- “outside the church” group

A person can be removed from being “in the church.” Such a removal would not be possible if there were no such thing as membership.

Membership helps to define who is an **accountable** part of the church body.

5) Submission

Hebrews 13:17 ESV

<https://biblia.com/bible/esv/hebrews/13/17>

“Obey your leaders and 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 and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you”

Church membership is depicted as a biblical requirement of all Christians to be submitted to a group of church leaders, elders, or pastors. The New Testament directs individuals to submit to a specific group of leaders.

This verse implies people need to have expressed willingness or agreement to submit to a group of leaders.

Membership determines those who have made the commitment to be led.

It is also important to know who has been chosen to lead in this process.

Without membership we cannot obey this command.

All of the above points. Help to **model the Church** after **how God envisioned it**.

Church membership must be offered to attendees.