



Church Membership

Part 1: Is Church Membership Biblical?



9 biblical proofs for church membership

1. The NT body metaphors require membership—that is, a tangible connection to others in the local assembly.

1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12 (“Member” is used 15xs!)

- *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* defines *melos* as, “the unity of the body and the multiplicity of the members in their various potential tasks.”

1 Corinthians 12:12, “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.”

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2. The pattern of Acts

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

Saved + baptized + added = the NT pattern

3. The meaning of the word “added”

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

“Added” is the Greek word *pros* (together) + *tithemi* (to put or place) → “to place together.”



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4. The required unity in a local body

1 Corinthians 1:10 I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.

- In this context Paul is not promoting a global “every believer with every believer” unity, but rather a local “every believer in this assembly with every believer in this assembly” unity.

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5. The joint responsibility to of the church to choose officers, missionaries, etc.

Acts 6:3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.

Philippians 1:1; 4:15–16 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons: ... ¹⁵ And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. ¹⁶ Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again.



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6. The joint responsibility of the church to guard doctrine.

1 Timothy 3:15 if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. (Cf. Phil 1:27)

7. The requirement for every believer to be in submission to specific leaders.

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.



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8. The seriousness (and clarity) of leaving a local assembly.

1 John 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

9. The demand for local church discipline.

1 Corinthians 5:7 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.

1 Corinthians 5:13 God judges those outside. “Purge the evil person from among you.”

Church Membership

Part 1: Church Membership is Biblical

Part 2: Church Membership is Beautiful