

Be the Church Week 5 - Church Membership

Intro Question - *Who do you think is part of your church?*

Main Point - The church is made up of Christian members who are committed to advancing the purpose of the church together.

Will Teaching Part 1

Question 1 - *What kind of memberships have you been a part of before and how do you think they are different from church membership?*

Memberships may include gym memberships, club memberships, shopping reward memberships, etc. These memberships may be compared to church membership in that you receive benefits from the membership and you have something to contribute to it. But church membership is a much deeper belonging that depends on who you are as a child of God and a part of his body.

Question 2 - *How does viewing the church as a body or a family make you feel about being a member?*

When we think about the church as a body or a family it should help us see that there are both benefits and responsibilities that come with membership. Each body part or family member benefits when other members fulfill their role. But each role that is not fulfilled brings a challenges to other members.

Will Teaching Part 2

Question 3 - *If you went to live in a different place and had to look for a new church home, how could you use theological triage to make a decision?*

Most churches have public statements of their beliefs that you can look at. Either by looking at these statements or by having conversations with pastors and church members you can make sure you find agreement on first tier and most second tier issues. If you find disagreements, you can have deeper discussions about those issues to clarify whether that is a place you should go. If you find strong disagreement on first and second tier issues, you should probably look for a different church. If you find agreement on first and second tier issues, then you can consider other factors like their ministry strategy, preaching style, or missions involvement. It is possible that you go to a church where you disagree about some of these practical things, but you can still thrive because of shared doctrinal convictions.

Question 4 - *How would you address a doctrinal disagreement with a pastor or another church member in a healthy way?*

Sometimes we find ourselves in disagreements within our church body. It is important that we don't let these disagreements grow bitterness in our hearts. First, consider the weight of the disagreement. If it is not something that matters very much, then it may be best for you leave it alone and live with the disagreement. If the disagreement is more significant, church members should have a loving, patient conversation about it. Some disagreements may be significant enough to make someone leave a church. But often we can work through our issues patiently and either come to a resolution or learn to love and worship with the person with whom we disagree.