

United Together in Christ for Christ

Hebrews 10:19-25

p. ###

Review: What is Ultimate, (2) Essential, and (3) Important.

*We have said that a church's ultimate priority is to glorify God.

*We then identified two essential marks of a healthy church:

→ Expositional Preaching, and → Sound Gospel Doctrine.

*Important marks of a healthy church:

- A right understanding of conversion & evangelism.
- a biblical concern for discipleship and growth;
- biblical understandings of the practices of prayer & missions;
- biblical church leadership;
- biblical church discipline (next week)
- A biblical understanding of church membership.

3 questions to consider when developing a biblical understanding of church membership:

1. What is a church?
2. Why join a church?
3. What does church membership entail?

1. What is a church?

- ▶ "church" is a distinctly Christian term.
- ▶ "church" is not fundamentally a building.
- ▶ "church" is not a religious business or charitable organization.

A church is a local collection of believers committed to Christ, to regularly assemble, and to have his word preached and obeyed, including Christ's commands to baptize and to celebrate the Lord's Supper.

The word "church" can be used two ways:

- (1) Capital 'C' Church → the invisible, universal church
- (2) little 'c' church → a local collection of Jesus-followers who are committed to Christ, His people, and His Word.

2. Why Join a church?

- ▶ Church membership won't save you.
- ▶ Faith is not an individual endeavor, but a corporate journey.
- ▶ We need one another.

We see church membership reflected in...

1. We see evidence of local church membership in the establishment of the New Testament church.

(Acts 2, Acts 5, Acts 6, Acts 8, Acts 11, Acts 12, Acts 14 & 15)

2. We see the evidence of local church membership in the instruction of the New Testament church.

(1 Cor 5:4, 11:18, Heb 10:24-5, Rom 12:3-16, 1 Pet 4:8-11, 1 Tim 5:9-10, 1 Pet 5:2, Acts 20:28, 1 John 2:9, 1 Cor 5:2)

Believers have a responsibility to:

- Care for one another physically and spiritually
(Matt. 25:40; John 12:8; Acts 15:36; Rom. 12:13; 15:26; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Gal. 2:10, 6:10; Heb. 13:16; James 1:27; 1 John 3:17; Deut. 15:7-8, 11)
- Watch over one another and hold one another accountable
(Rom. 15:14; Gal. 6:1-2; Phil. 2:3-4; 2 Thess. 3:15; Heb. 12:15; see Lev. 19:17; Ps. 141:5)
- Edify one another (1 Cor. 14:12-26; Eph. 2:21-22; 4:12-29; 1 Thess. 5:11; 1 Pet. 4:10; 2 Pet. 3:18)
- Bear with one another (Matt. 18:21-22; Mark 11:25; Rom. 15:1; Gal. 6:2; Col. 3:12, including not suing one another 1 Cor. 6:1-7)
- Pray for one another (Eph. 6:18; James 5:16)
- Keep away from those who would destroy the church
(Rom. 16:17; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; Titus 3:10; 2 John 10-11)
- Reject evaluating people by worldly standards
(Matt. 20:26-27; Rom. 12:10-16; James 2:1-13)
- Contend together for the gospel (Phil. 1:27; Jude 3)
- Be examples to one another (Phil. 2:1-18)

Why join a church?

1. Believers join a local church to express our faith.
2. Believers join a local church to evangelize the world.
3. Believers join a local church to embody the gospel.
4. Believers join a local church to edify the church.
5. Believers join a local church to exalt their God.

Our faith may be personal, but it is not private.

3. What does church membership entail?

→ a profession of faith, and → a commitment to this fellowship