

Why Should I Join A Church?

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I. What is a church?

Matthew 16:18...I will build My church...

- Ekklesia – called out ones, a gathering or an _____.
- In the _____ sense, it is all Christians everywhere.

Matthew 18:17...tell it to the church.

The universal church becomes _____ through the local church.

- “It’s common to hear people say a local church is a people not a place. But that statement isn’t quite right. A church is a people _____ in a place.” – Matthew Emadi

“It’s a group of Christians who together identify themselves and each other as followers of Jesus and as the _____ through regularly gathering in His name, preaching the gospel and celebrating the ordinances.” – Jonathan Leeman

II. Does membership really matter?

- “One of the greatest threats to Satan’s dark kingdom is a healthy, Bible-believing, Christ-exalting, Spirit-empowered _____.” – Andy Davis

The Christian life was never meant to be just me and Jesus. It was always meant to be _____ and Jesus.

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.”*

III. So, why should I join?

- 1) To make the invisible _____.
- 2) Display the Gospel.
- 3) _____. **Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 13:2-3**
- 4) Edify and be edified. **Ephesians 4:11-12**
- 5) _____. **Matthew 16:18, Acts 9:4**

“Membership in a local church means nothing more and nothing less than this: Joining your imperfect self to many other imperfect selves to form an imperfect community that, through Jesus, embarks on a journey toward a better future...together.” – Scott Sauls

Small Group Discussion

1. Without looking at the notes, *how would you define a church? Universal vs. local?* Discuss the definition of a local church under **Point I**. *What are six key points within this definition?* **Matthew 16:13-18, Matthew 18:15-17, Ephesians 2:19-20, 1 Peter 2:4-7**
2. Alistair Begg lists three types of people: Debaters (*Is church membership biblical?*), Drifters (come and go, but never commit), and the Deniers (I can just log on). Take some time as a group and see how you could persuade all three from Scripture. **Acts 2:41, 1 Corinthians 12:21, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Timothy 5:9, Hebrews 10:24-25, Hebrews 13:17**
***(see how many more you can find)**
3. Read **Hebrews 13:17**. *What leaders should the Christian obey or submit to? From the other angle, who are these leaders responsible for? Who will they give an account to?*
4. Read **1 Corinthians 5**. With that in mind, *do you believe the church at Corinth practiced church membership? Why or why not?*
5. **Point III**. is not all encompassing. *What other reasons can you think of as to why you should join a church? Can you think of any biblical reasons you should not join a church? What should you look for in a church before you join?*

“Give yourself to the Church. You that are members of the Church have not found it perfect and I hope that you feel almost glad that you have not. If I had never joined a Church till I had found one that was perfect, I would never have joined one at all! And the moment I did join it, if I had found one, I should have spoiled it, for it would not have been a perfect Church after I had become a member of it. Still, imperfect as it is, it is the dearest place on earth to us...As I have already said, the Church is faulty, but that is no excuse for your not joining it, if you are the Lord’s. Nor need your own faults keep you back, for the Church is not an institution for perfect people, but a sanctuary for sinners saved by Grace, who, though they are saved, are still sinners and need all the help they can derive from the sympathy and guidance of their fellow believers. The Church is the nursery for God’s weak children where they are nourished and grow strong. It is the fold for Christ’s sheep—the home for Christ’s family.” (Charles Spurgeon)