

THEME: I AM A CHURCH MEMBER

KEY VERSE: And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?” Luke 2:48 (NKJV)

MEMORY VERSE(S): “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14(NKJV)

*****Remember to listen to this week’s sermon, review the Sermon Notes Sheet and complete the discussion questions BEFORE attending your Connexion Group!**

INTRODUCTION: If we were to survey Christians and non-believers asking them to explain what it means to be a church member we would get a myriad of definitions. Many are reluctant and even reject the concept that church membership is much like a modern business. However, to the contrary, membership as a business is very biblical.

This week we will explore the concept of membership as God business. What His business provides. We will discuss the metaphor of the church being a body with many members. We will examine how love is the central attitude and action all members should have.

GROUP LESSON DISCUSSION

1. What was most helpful, encouraging, or challenging from this week’s sermon? This series thus far?
2. Although "church" has come to mean a building or organization, the original Greek *ekklesia* meant "a gathering, assembly" and is the basis for our word "congregation." And that is what God designed the church to be—a group of people. The definition of a "church" as a separate building specifically for worship would have been foreign to the early believers, as they met in homes. The church was the people, not the building. The truest meaning of the word “church” is a group of believers.

How has the definition of the “church membership challenged your thinking and how will it impact your involvement in ministry. How will this truth challenge you to be more like Christ?

3. Read I Corinthians 12:27--31. To what does the apostle Paul compare Christ's spiritual body, the church?

What does Paul tell us about the role of the Holy Spirit with regard to Christ's spiritual body, the church? What is the more excellent way? Discuss why.

Using the illustrations of the human body, what is Paul teaching about the various members of Christ's body? Why are believers sometimes not satisfied in the specific part of the body that God has assigned to them?

4. Read John 1:14 If we could get the practice of Christ down to two essential ingredients it would be grace and truth. Jesus personifies these two essential qualities of the Christian life. Define truth and grace. Do we receive God's truth when we are in over our heads and faced with life challenges? Why or Why not? Share examples of God grace being shown to you.
5. Read I Corinthians 13. Biblically love is not an emotion; it is an act of self sacrifice. Take a moment to evaluate whether or not you are using your spiritual gift in the power of the Spirit with the motive of love. Think of one person who is hard to love. What is one concrete way you can show that person love?

This week's assignment:

God did not give us the local churches to become country clubs where membership means we have privileges and perks. He placed us in churches to serve, to care for others, to pray for leaders, to learn, to teach, to give and in some cases to die for the sake of the gospel. Write down some specific ways that you can demonstrate love to those in your family, non-believers and to Christians in our local fellowship. Then ask God to give you opportunities to express that love. Pray that you will be church member God wants you to be.

Memorize I Corinthians 13:13 NLT

Three things will last forever—faith, hope and love---and the greatest of these is love..