

# “Meaningful Church Membership”

## I Corinthians 12:12-27

In the New Testament the “members” of the “body” of Christ are described in a symbolic way as the individual Christians who together compose the church (cf. Rom. 12:5; Eph. 4:25). Unfortunately, in recent decades, registered membership in the church has been de-emphasized. It was very important in the first century church. Consider the following over-view of Meaningful Church Membership:

- I. The INSTITUTION of which we are members (i.e. “the church”).
  - A. Definition (Holman Bible Dictionary) “A group of persons professing personal trust in Jesus Christ, meeting together to worship Him and disciple one another, and seeking to proclaim the gospel of Christ to others.”
  - B. CHURCH, (EKKLESIA) “the called out ones” An assembly of called out followers of Christ. It is identified as the “Universal” church (all believers for all time everywhere) and the “Local” church (specific believers in a specific group who meet in a specific community).
  
- II. The QUALIFICATIONS for church membership.
  - A. The PRE-REQUISITES for local church membership (at least two).
    1. Members must be BORN AGAIN BELIEVERS IN JESUS CHRIST (cf. Acts 2:41b).
    2. Members must be BAPTIZED AS BELIEVERS AND FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST (cf. Acts 2:41a).
  - B. The PERSISTENCE for local church membership (again two).
    1. Members must be DEEPLY DEVOTED FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST (cf. Acts 2:42).
    2. Members must be GENUINELY FAITHFUL WITNESSES FOR CHRIST (cf. Acts 4:20; 5:42).
  
- III. The RESPONSIBILITIES of church membership (four primary) (specific, practical, duties of a faithful church member)
  - A. PRAYER-Faithfully and regularly pray
    1. ...for yourself (Phil. 3:10)
    2. ...for your leaders (Heb. 13:7)
    3. ...for laborers (volunteers) (II Thes. 3:1; Mt. 9:8)
  - B. ATTENDANCE-Faithfully and regularly attend services
    1. Hebrews 10:24-25
    2. Acts 20:7
    3. Revelation 1:10
  - C. GIVING-Faithfully and regularly tithe and give
    1. Malachi 3:10
    2. Luke 6:38
  - D. SERVICE-Faithfully discover, develop and use your gifts
    1. Serve with your TIME (Eph. 5:16)
    2. Serve with your TALENTS/GIFTS (Rom. 12:6)
    3. Serve with your TREASURE (I Cor. 4:2)

Meaningful church membership carries certain QUALIFICATIONS which include rebirth, baptism, devotion and faithfulness. Every church member also has a DUTY to pray, attend, give and serve. How do you measure up? Meaningful church membership is RESPONSIBLE church membership.