

WEEKLY WORSHIP GUIDE

January 19th, 2025



Sermon Recap:

The Need for Church Membership

The Church is the only place on earth where believers find a place of true belonging, for here is where they meet with God and his people.

I. The Nature of the Church

a. Kingdom

- Matt. 16:18-19--If you want to be in the kingdom of heaven, you have to be in the church. Church members are the citizens and subjects of the King.

b. Temple

- Eph. 2:19-22--Like the temple of the OT, the gathered church, the congregation, by the working of the Holy Spirit is where God dwells among his people.

c. Body

- 1 Cor. 12--The Church is a body made up of different parts all serving their purpose for the mission of the whole.
 - Col. 1:18- To be a member of the church is to acknowledge that Christ is your head. He has all authority over you and you are submitting to his leadership.

d. Family

- 1 Tim. 3:15- the church of the living God is the "household of God."

From these four illustrations of the church, we see that either we are in or we are out. You can't be a part of the kingdom, temple, body, or family if you aren't *in* them.

II. The Need for Membership

a. It is Covenantal

- Jer. 31:33- How did they know they belonged to God? Then in was by circumcision. Today it is by church membership.

b. It is Assumed

- Acts 2:41- they heard the sermon, they received his word (believed/faith/salvation), they were baptized, and then they were added to the church (membership).
- Letters of the New Testament were written to churches where it was assumed that members gathered to hear them.
- Paul wasn't content with only evangelism. He planted churches where members would be disciplined.

c. It is an Expression of Salvation

- Acts 2:41- Once saved, the Christian should seek to become a member of a local church. Church membership is an expression of what Christ has done in you.

d. It is Essential for Sanctification

- Eph. 4:16- church membership creates the environment where believers grow and are matured.

e. It is Essential for Loving Christ

- Christ loved the church enough to die for her. You cannot love Christ, the Head, without loving His body, the Church.

f. It is an Act of Obedience

- Heb. 10:24-25--If we neglect to meet together as members of the church, we cannot obey the command to stir one another up, encourage one another, or any of the other 50+ "one another statements." If you are obedient to join a church, then you will be provided a context to further your obedience in ministry and worship.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the church?
- What is the nature of the church?
- What can we infer about church membership from the various illustrations of the church?
- How does the New Testament assume church membership?
- How does church membership express to the world that you are saved and belong to God?
- Is it possible to love the head (Christ) without loving the body (the Church)?
- How does church membership create an environment to be obedient?
- Can you be obedient without being a member of the church?
- Why is church membership necessary?
- Why is the church where God's people belong?
- How is being a member of the church different from attending the church?

Application:

- Before today, would you have argued that church membership was necessary or optional?
- Have you supported your argument?
- Are you a member of the church? Is it a meaningful membership?
- Which illustration of the church appeals to you most? Why?
- How do you express your salvation to the world?
- Are you being obedient in church membership?
- Are you being obedient as a church member?
- What is the difference?

Family Worship Hymns:

- Wonderful, Merciful Savior
- By Faith

