

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP ISN'T:

1. Church membership is not salvation. You must be saved by the blood of Christ alone.
2. Church membership is not a requirement for fellowship or to be treated with love and respect.
3. Church membership is not membership in the body of Christ universally. When you are saved, you become a member of the universal body of Christ, but everyone also needs a local church.
4. Church membership is not a lifelong, unbreakable bondage to a local church in which you must never leave. (Churches that treat membership in this way have control problems and are in deception and error).

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IS:

1. Church membership is an outward sign of your commitment to a local gathering of believers. Many people “live together” in our modern day and time but don't bother to make a commitment to each other through marriage. Church membership helps us to know who is on our team.
2. Church membership is a natural way to help with the business matters of a church. Many banks and other financial institutions require a list of

members in order to process a bank loan, credit and this helps conduct other business matters of the local congregation. So there is also a natural benefit as well as the spiritual and emotional aspects.

SCRIPTURES PERTAINING TO MEMBERSHIP:

Rom 12:5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one *members* one of another. (This is in the context of the local body of Christ as well as the whole body)

Acts 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. (The Greek word here for *fellowship* is *koinonia*, which means PARTNERSHIP) Again we see the principal of *membership*.

1 Sam 18:3 Then Jonathan and David made a *covenant* because he loved him as his own soul. (These covenants of the Old Testament were cut and signed with blood... although, we do not do covenants like this today.) Jesus made a covenant or a contract with us in His own blood and called it the new covenant in Heb. 12:24. The Greek word used there is *diatheke* and means a *contract*.



Water Baptism

AND



Membership

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Water Baptism:

"The next step of obedience."

WATER BAPTISM IS NOT:

1. Water Baptism is not salvation. We are saved by the grace of God alone and not by works. (*Titus 3:5) If water baptism saved you, then the thief on the cross could not have been saved because he was not water baptized.
2. Water Baptism is not a magic formula to make everything right in your life. For any believer to grow in their faith, they must read their Bible, pray, and attend church regularly to get God's word in them and build their faith. Victory in our lives comes through faith. (*Ps. 119:105, Col. 4:2, Heb. 10:25, 1 John 5:4).
3. Water baptism is not for infants. Jesus told us to believe and then be baptized (*Mark 16:16). An infant cannot believe yet and therefore is not ready for water baptism. Even though we do not baptize babies, we do perform baby dedications.

WHAT BAPTISM IS:

1. Baptism is a statement to the world that you have died to your old life of sin and have risen to walk a new life with the Lord. (*Rom. 6:4-5) confession of your trust in Christ. Jesus said if we would confess him before men he would confess us

before the Father in heaven. (*Matt. 10:32).

2. Water Baptism is symbolic of washing and cleansing. Although, the blood of Jesus cleanses us. Baptism outwardly shows what has happened on the inside. (* Eph. 5:26)
3. Baptism is symbolic of God's people escaping from the bondage of Egypt and coming into the land of promise. Pharaoh (a type of Satan) had God's people in Slavery. Moses (a type of Christ) led them away from Egypt (a type of sin) and through the Red Sea (symbolic of baptism) and into the promised land (symbolic of the victorious life in Christ.*1 Cor. 10:1-2)

WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

1. Jesus was water baptized for us and as an example to us: (*Matt. 3:14-15)
2. Jesus commanded believers to be water baptized. (*Mark 16:16)
3. The apostle Peter commanded those who repent to be baptized. (*Acts 2:38)

WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

(*Acts 2:38) When you have repented of your sin and confessed Christ as your saviour in the new birth, and you now have the intention of living a life of obedience to Christ turning from the old ways of sin you are ready for baptism.

Baptism is a sign that you not only believe in Jesus but you are changing your lifestyle and reaching for a life of holiness! When John the Baptist was baptizing in the river Jordan, he cried with a loud voice "REPENT for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" Repentance is a required part of baptism for 1 Cor 6:9-11 says.....

"You know that wicked people will not inherit the kingdom of God, don't you? Stop deceiving yourselves! Sexually immoral people, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunks, slanderers, and robbers will not inherit the kingdom of God. That is what some of you WERE. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of our Lord Jesus the Messiah and by the Spirit of our God." The key word in this passage is "were"! We were all sinners, but we have been washed. These are the things we used to be and do but we are not clinging to or intentionally practicing these things anymore. We may slip, but it's no longer our practice. When we sin we confess that to Jesus and receive a fresh new cleansing (*1 John 1:9)

If you're ready to turn your back on sin and follow Jesus as good as you know how to (not perfectly- cause none of us are perfect) then you are ready to follow him in baptism.