

Is Local Church Membership Essential?

TEXT: Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 1:1-2; 16:19

INTRODUCTION:

- A. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE “**UNIVERSAL**” AND “**LOCAL**” CHURCHES.
1. The universal church (**Matt. 16:18; Eph. 3:10-11**).
 2. References above are obviously to the local church.
- B. ONE BECOMES A MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH
BY OBEYING THE GOSPEL (**Acts 2:38, 47; 1 Cor. 12:12; Gal. 3:26-27**).
- C. WHAT ABOUT MEMBERSHIP **IN A LOCAL CONGREGATION?**

I. HOW DO YOU JOIN UP?

- A. BIBLE EXAMPLES (**Acts 9:26-28; 11:26; 13:1; Acts 18:27**).
- B. THE LOCAL CHURCH HAS AN OBLIGATION TO “ACCEPT” OR “REJECT”
(**Rom. 16:1-2; Acts 9:26-28**).
- C. **SOME SHOULD BE TURNED DOWN**
(**1 Cor. 5:6-7; 13; Rom. 16:17-18; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; 2 John 9-11**).

II. LOCAL CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IS NECESSARY.

- A. FOR THERE TO BE LOCAL CHURCHES (**Phil. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; Rom. 16:16**).
- B. FOR ELDERS TO HAVE THE OVERSIGHT DESCRIBED IN THE BIBLE
(**1 Pet. 1:1; Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17**).
- C. FOR THE BODY TO FUNCTION (**Rom. 12:3-8**).
- D. FOR THE MUTUAL EDIFICATION COMMANDED TO BE CARRIED OUT
(**Eph. 4:11-16**).
1. Each member is important (**1 Cor. 12:22**).
 2. We **all** have an obligation (**Heb. 10:24-25**).
- E. THAT WE MIGHT RECEIVE BENEFICIAL DISCIPLINE (**2 Thess. 3:14-15**).

III. WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO HAVE A LOCAL CONGREGATION?

- A. AGREEMENT TO WORK TOGETHER.
1. Unity of spirit required (**Eph. 4:1-3**).
 2. Doctrinal unity is demanded (**1 Cor. 1:10**).
 3. **Agreement is implied** (**Acts 9:26-28**).
 - a. Paul assayed to join himself.
 - b. They were in the position to receive or reject him.
- B. COMMON OVERSIGHT (**Col. 3:17; Acts 14:23; 20:28; Heb. 13:17**).
- C. A POOLING OF RESOURCES (**Rom. 12:3-8; Eph. 4:16**).

IV. THE IMPORTANCE OF CHOOSING WHICH CHURCH TO JOIN.

- A. **DO THEY TEACH THE TRUTH?** (**2 John 9-11; Eph. 5:11**).
- B. CAN I HELP? (**John 15:8; Rom. 12:4-5**).

“Ask not what your country can do for you,
Rather, ask what you can do for your country.”

JFK

CONCLUSION:

- A. THE LOCAL CHURCH IS GOD’S INVENTION.
- B. HIS BLUEPRINT CALLS FOR US TO PARTICIPATE.

C. SALVATION IS IN THE PATTERN.