

Church Membership

Pastor Tim Allen

Key Truth: Membership in the local body of Christ is an expressed commitment to Christ and to one another as a reflection of the union that all believers share in the Holy Spirit.

Since the Church is both universal (made up of all believers in all places in all time) and local (situated in one location at one time), church membership becomes an important means to care for and protect the flock of God. It is, according to one pastor, “a formal commitment to love and to be loved by those Christians we live around, with whom we regularly interact, whom we desire to hold accountable, and to whom we are held accountable.” This mutual accountability, far from being oppressive or stifling, is quite freeing, and is a blessing to both the Church and the individual Christian because it means that not only do we give care to other believers, we receive the same as well.

DISCUSS

Read **1 Corinthians 12:12-27** and discuss with the group a statement or concept that stood out to you or impacted you in the sermon entitled “Church Membership.”

DIG IN

The Bible pictures the local church as ...

1. A Physical Body

In verses 15 and following, Paul uses the imagery of members of a physical body to describe the church. In what ways is the church a physical body?

In what ways does the physical nature of the church reflect the spiritual union with have with Christ and with one another through the Spirit (see v. 13)?

2. An Organized Body

In what ways does proper organization strengthen the members of the body?

Where have you seen organization at FBC used to the advantage of the body here? In what ways can we strengthen that organization?

3. A Unified Body

In what ways is the body healthier when its members work together in unity? What does that look like for the local church?

Read Ephesians 4:2-3: In what specific ways should the local body of believers strive to “maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?”

In what ways does covenant church membership contribute to this unity?

4. A Committed Body

In what specific ways can or should the people of FBC express their commitment to one another? How does covenant membership exemplify this commitment?

What are the advantages of formal commitment to one another?

DO

What lessons do you learn from these verses that you will take with you throughout the coming week?