

Sermon Title:

“Why Membership Matters”

11.22.15

Sermon Text:

Selected Scripture

Pastor Don Jennings

Introduction:

Harbour Shores Church

- *In the New Testament there are at least **three** reasons given for why church membership matters;*

I. It Matters Because The _____ *(Romans 12:3-5; I Corinthians 12:12-26)*

- In both these passages Paul is talking about the importance, the uniqueness, and the function of the Church, which he refers to figuratively as _____!

“Everyone who has experienced God’s glorious, redemptive work of Grace is not only united to Christ and to the other members of His Universal Body, but they are now also qualified to become members of a local expression of that Universal Body, which is otherwise known as a local church.”

- Although the word **“membership”** itself is not found in the New Testament, the _____ of membership is.
- The essence of the New Testament’s teaching is that if you’re part of the _____ of Christ, then you should want to make that association known through membership in a _____.

- ***The biblical basis for church membership can be seen in at least _____ ways:***

1) **The Example Of The** _____ *(Acts 2:41-42, 47; 5:14; 16:5)*

The idea that a person would experience salvation without belonging to a local church is something that is completely _____ to the New Testament.

2) **The Existence Of** _____ *(I Timothy 3, Titus 1)*

The specific duties that were given to Elders clearly assumes that there was a _____ of church members who were under their spiritual oversight and care.

3) **The Exercise Of** _____ *(Matthew 18:15-17; I Corinthians 5)*

The Bible’s teaching on church discipline _____ church membership

4) **The Exhortation To** _____

The Bible exhorts all believers to consistently edify the other members of the Body by both practicing the “_____” of the New Testament and by exercising their _____.

II. It Matters Because The _____ It

- *The Bible gives us several reasons why the Christian needs to be part of a local church:*

A. Because Our _____ Demands It

- When believers join a church, they are actually entering into a covenant relationship with _____ and with _____.
- *In I Corinthians 12 Paul didn't say that the church is _____ a body; he said that the church _____ a body.*
- Membership can be defined as a _____ and a _____ to the Body of Christ!
- *I John 4:7*

B. Because Our _____ Depends Upon It

- *Galatians 4:18; Ephesians 2:19-22*
- Christ's design for the church is that it provides the _____ for well-rounded and balanced Christian growth.
- *Ephesians 4:13*
- Please don't misunderstand, membership doesn't _____ but it does _____ to grow and become mature in Christ!
- *Perhaps the most often overlooked reason for joining a church is that it establishes a base from which we can reliably care for and minister to _____.*

III. It Matters Because The Effectiveness Of _____ Depends On It

- Church membership provides a context for _____ to a fallen world.
- *John 13:35*
- Being part of a _____ Christian _____ is increasingly important in our witness today.

"When the whole community of faith comes together to put Christ on display, they can do it a whole lot better than any individual Christian can ever do it alone!"

Conclusion:

- Whether you call it “*membership,*” “*partnership,*” or something else, the New Testament assumes some form of _____, _____ for every true follower of Jesus.
- *It’s only when every believer is _____ to this kind of commitment that the church will be able to live up to her calling as Christ’s _____ here on earth.*

To put it simply, _____!

Remember, it is your responsibility to make the divine principles and truths contained in this message real by consistent application of them in your own life.