

### IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IMPORTANT?

1. "Christians" not baptized - not members of church?
2. Mat 16:18 *I will build My church* - Jn 13:35 *By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.* Mat 28:18-20.
3. Apostles followed blueprint - Acts 2:41-42
4. We are following the blueprint.

#### 1st: It is Mandated by Jesus and Implemented by the Apostles

1. Mat 28:18-20 & Acts 2:41-42
2. To whom are the NT letters addressed? *to the church* [1C 1:2; 2C 1:1; 1Th 1:1; 2Th 1:1; Phm 1:2 & Jn - 3Jn 1:9] Jesus writes to 7 churches [Rv 2-3] *He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*
  - i. Jesus is *in the middle of the lampstands* [1:13] & the throne [Rv 5:13].
  - ii. *He who has an ear to hear...* If we are not part of the church, we will not hear Jesus' words.

#### 2nd: Salvation is Closely Connected to the Church

1. Salvation is individual, personal - Gal 2:20c
2. Balance with community identity - Eph 5:25-27. *Now you are Christ's body & individually members of it* [1C 12:27].
3. Salvation overlaps with the church - but do not confuse them. The church as Christ's saved people; the universal church; the local church; institutional

#### 3rd: In Order to Do What Jesus Commands Us to Do, We Must be a Church

1. Personal maturity requires interpersonal relationships Gal 2:22-23; Jn 13:35
2. Assigned corporate tasks
  - i. Love - Jn 13:35 Love God & neighbor = life.
  - ii. Worship - assembly required. 1C 11:17-18 Lord's Table: requires that we *come together as a church.*
  - iii. Edification - 1C 12:11-12 - exercise of gifts - as one body.
    - a. Eye needs ears; nose; hands; feet - v20 - v27. [Eph 4:14-16]
  - iv. *As a result* [Eph 4:14] of the ministry of the Word by Christ-given Spirit-qualified pastors. Governed by King Jesus: shepherds/flock.
    - a. 1Th 5:11-14 - healthy church-life: congregation & pastors.
    - b. Christ gives gifts of ministry & church is responsible to recognize & receive those gifts - qualified [1Tim 3, Tit 1; 1Pt 5].
  - v. Church discipline - formative & corrective. Cf. 1Th 5:14 & 2Th 3:6
3. Witness - body, temple, family, bride, nation. Eph 3:10 "Jesus is Lord" the church's message to all authorities who are not Lord! - Phil 2:9-11
4. Warfare - *overcome.* Jesus' letters to churches in Rev 2-3 - formula for ending: *he who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.* Next sentence is a promise *to him who overcomes.*
  - i. Enemies: Dragon, Beast, False Prophet, Harlot & men of earth
  - ii. Those who overcome hear & obey what Spirit says to the churches.
5. Is church membership biblical? Is church membership important?
6. Acts 9:31 *So the church throughout all Judea & Galilee & Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; & going on in the fear of the Lord & in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.*