

## Understanding Church Membership

### What is the Church?

### What is a local church?

### The First Portion of a List of Approximately Thirty-Six Reasons to Commit to a Local Church (come back next week...)

1. Because it reassures the brothers and sisters that you are committed to healthy biblical doctrine.
2. Because it reassures the brothers and sisters that you will work together with them to ensure that healthy doctrine continues to be taught at this particular church (Gal. 1:6).
3. Because it reassures the brothers and sisters that you have a similar understanding of the essentials of Christian living.
4. Because God describes the local church as a household or family (1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 4:17)
5. Because God describes the local church as a temple (1 Cor. 3:16-17)
6. Because God describes the local church as a flock with shepherds (1 Peter 5:3)
7. Because the pastors' job is to equip the saints for the ministry of building up the local church (Eph. 4:11-16)
8. Because God describes the church as a body with members that are necessary and dependent upon one another. They have to show up consistently and carry out their role (2 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:15-16).
9. Because 1 Cor. 12:21 says that the members of the body cannot say that they do not need one another. Each member is essential to each local church.
10. Because all of the Bible's "one another" commands indicate that there was a specific group of people that the believers' knew they were supposed to "one another" (Gal. 6:2, etc.)

11. Because you need a family committed to caring for you, suffering with you, rejoicing with you, and sharing their spiritual gifts with you (1 Cor. 12:25-31).
12. Because every widow should have a committed church family (1 Timothy 5:3-16)
13. Because it fits with the biblical emphasis on loyal, covenant-keeping love (Hosea 2:19 & 6:6, for example).
14. Because it helps to prevent cliques in the church (1 Cor. 12:21)
15. Because it might make you less likely to give in to the tendency to neglect gathering with your brothers and sisters (Hebrews 10:25)
16. Because the Bible tells Christians to obey and submit to their leaders in the local church (Heb. 13:17).
17. Because pastors are called to give an account to the Lord about how they have watched over particular souls (Heb. 13:17) and to faithfully serve "those in their charge" (1 Peter 5:3).
18. Because membership eases the discipling burden on the elders (Eph. 4:1-16).
19. Because membership encourages the elders.
20. Because membership creates a group of people who feel a specific responsibility to care for the pastors (1 Timothy 5:17; Galatians 6:6; 1 Corinthians 9:1-12).
21. Because membership enables a healthy form of church organization in which the pastors benefit from congregational involvement.