



SERMON NOTES

Church Membership

Ben Wickel // 4-14-24

Recap of Last Week

- We are in a season of Alignment
- Ephesians 4:11-12 = Equip = Alignment
- Alignment to the Head
- Alignment among Pastoral Staff
- Alignment around Core Values
- Alignment within the Body = Church Membership

Common Questions About Church Membership

- What do we mean by Church Membership?
- Is Church Membership Biblical?
- Will Church Membership be helpful or hurtful?
- Is it Really Necessary?

Main Thesis

Church Membership is the New Testament's instrument to help churches remain healthy in their culture and focused on their mission.

“Church Membership” is *the formal commitment to an identifiable and local community of Disciples who have joined together for a specific and divinely ordained purpose.*

Church Membership Defined

1. It is for the Community of Disciples
2. It is to an *Identifiable* and *Local* community
 - **1 Corinthians 12:12-14 and 27** - For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—

Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many... v27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

3. It involves a formal commitment
 - the Commitment you make to a church involves the truth, that you are declaring yourself accountable to a group of people, not just to believe certain things, not just to do things for other people, but to actually be there for them.
 - *“A covenant in the Bible was a relationship between two partners who make binding promises to each other and work together to reach a common goal. They’re often accompanied by oaths, pledges, signs, and ceremonies. Covenants define obligations and commitments, but they are different from a contract because they are relational and personal”*
 - The overarching narrative of scripture is about a God pledging and proving his faithful love towards a wayward people asking for love and fidelity in return. And because of the climactic actions of Jesus 2000 years ago on the cross, we now have His law written on our hearts, His Spirit inside our souls. Therefore, we can now, not only begin to reciprocate love back up to him, but also demonstrate it in our horizontal commitment to our brothers and sisters via the church.

Members of ACC Raleigh: Belong, Believe, and Build

1. Church Membership Cultivates Belonging
2. Church Membership provides clarity and creates unity around “Believing”
 - **Philippians 2:2** complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.
 - *“We are a family with a purpose. Everyone is welcome to join, so long as they share our purpose. This is what we’re up to and where we’re going. Join us! People who have competing agendas are “welcome” to hear what we’re up to, just like Jesus’ audiences heard the parables. But whether they inquire further, join the project, and pursue our purpose is what marks the difference between “insider and outsider.” – Dr. Oman*
3. Church Membership makes us ready to be a people who Build

Church Membership doesn't replace the priority of walking in relationship- but it does create the Baseline understanding of where people are at in their walk.