

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHURCH MEMBER?

What Does It Mean To Be
Part Of A Church?, Part 3

Acts 2:41-44 (NLT)

⁴¹ Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all. ⁴² All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. ⁴³ A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. ⁴⁴ And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had.

Acts 2:41-47 (NLT)

⁴⁵ They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. ⁴⁶ They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—⁴⁷ all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

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What Is A Local Church?

- “... a local church is a group of Christians who regularly gather in Christ’s name to officially affirm and oversee one another’s membership in Jesus Christ and his kingdom through gospel preaching and gospel ordinances.”
 - *Leeman, Jonathan (2012-04-30). Church Membership: How the World Knows Who Represents Jesus (9Marks: Building Healthy Churches) (pp. 52-53). Crossway. Kindle Edition.*

What Is A Church Member?

- “church membership is a formal relationship between a church and a Christian characterized by the church’s affirmation and oversight of a Christian’s discipleship and the Christian’s submission to living out his or her discipleship in the care of the church.” *ibid* (p. 64)

The Church Was A “Mystery” In The Old Testament

- *musterion* = that which is hidden and intended to be revealed in time

Old Testament Clues

- **Genesis 12:3** “And in you [Abraham] all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”
- **Isaiah 42:6-7** “I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, and will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, as a light to the Gentiles, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house.”

New Testament Unveiling

Ephesians 3:2-6 “If indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel”

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- **Colossians 1:24,26** “The church...the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.”

Christ Predicted The Church

- **Matthew 16:18** “I will build My church”

The Church Could Not Function Until Christ, The Head, Was Resurrected

- **Ephesians 1:20-23** “which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places...And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

Spiritual Gifts Would Become Operational After Christ's Ascension

- **Ephesians 4:7-12** “But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore He says: ‘When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.’” (Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

The Church Began When The Holy Spirit Arrived At Pentecost

- **Acts 2:1-5** “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ²And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. ⁵And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.”

I. Church Members Are Identified Through Baptism

- *41 Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.*

II. Church Members Are Devoted To Study The Bible Together

- *42^a All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching,*

III. Church Members Share Life Together – Spiritually, Materially, Socially

- *42b and to fellowship,*

IV. Church Members Commemorate Their Common Salvation Together Through Communion

- *42^c and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper),*

V. Church Members Are Committed To Prayer

- *42^d and to prayer. 43 A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders.*

VI. Church Members Are Committed To Giving To Meet Needs

- *44 And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. 45 They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need.*

VII. Church Members Worship Together Regularly With Praise

- *46 They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity —
47 all the while praising God*

VIII. Church Members Enjoy Giving And Receiving Good Will

- *47b and enjoying the goodwill of all the people.*

IX. Church Members Are Focused On Church Growth

- *47^c each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.*