

# Lifting Up The STANDARD

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him” (Isaiah 59:19).



Challenging And Encouraging God's Remnant To Remain Faithful

Issue No 20

## Is Local Church Membership Optional?

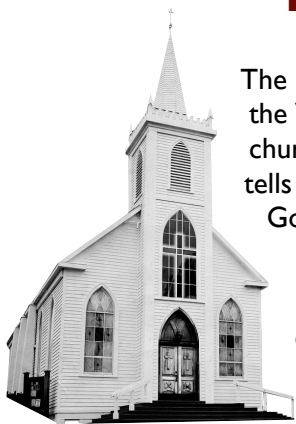
I have read many articles and heard sermons where Scriptures have been taken out of context to prove God “commands” us to join a church; however, I have not found that command in over fifty years of searching the Scriptures.

**Having said that, I hasten to say that some things are so obvious that no command is necessary and local church membership is one of those things.**

### The Local Church Is Important

The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Word of God to refer to the local church over one hundred times. This tells us the church is very important to God; however, this does not prove that membership is a command of God.

Christ did command us to “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19:20). When we compare Scripture with Scripture it is very obvious that this is a local church command; however, this does not prove that membership is a command of God.



Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19:20). When we compare Scripture with Scripture it is very obvious that this is a local church command; however, this does not prove that membership is a command of God.

“Go...Teach...Baptize...Teach”



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Daphne Kirkland

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**We don't get a second chance to make a good first impression**



**The fact** that Christ commands Christians to submit to their spiritual leaders makes it obvious that church membership is not an option. It is impossible to follow the commands below without a membership.

**Hebrews 13:7** says, "Remember them which have the **rule over you**, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose *faith follow*, considering the end of their conversation."

**Hebrews 13:17** says, "Obey them that have the **rule over you**, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

**First Thessalonians 5:12,13** says, "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and **are over you in the Lord**, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves."

**The fact** is, most of First and Second Timothy and Titus are impossible to obey without a church membership.

**The fact** that God gave specific instructions concerning the qualifications for pastors. (First Timothy chapter three and Titus chapter one), makes church membership non-optional for Christians.

**The fact** that the instructions given to Timothy concerning his responsibility as a pastor are impossible to carry out without a church membership.

**The fact** that God gave specific instructions concerning the discipline of church members makes nonmembership impossible.

**First Corinthians 5:9-13** says, "I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. Therefore **put away from among yourselves that wicked person.**"

**The fact** is church discipline is impossible without a church membership.



Michelle Vansickle

## *In Times Like These*



### Devotional Thoughts For Ladies

*"Commit thy works unto The Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established."*  
(Proverbs 16:3)

The Christian life is simple really. Simple because we only need to be concerned about pleasing The Lord in everything we do. But, simple does not mean easy.

It means trusting when all seems lost, it is being afraid but going on anyway, it is trusting in the storm that The Lord controls the wind and the waves. It is to obey the Word of God in a Christ rejecting world and continue speaking, and doing even if no one listens. Walking by faith, trusting in the One who walked this road before us. The world cries they have no king but Caesar. But, my Lord sends me to be a testimony for Him. There is a far greater king than Caesar, and He calls to them today. That He would use my voice, my hands, my feet fills me with wonder! It is not the messenger but the message that is important. Jesus Christ saved even me! This is the power of the message! He chooses the weak things, the foolish, and despised things! In this way, in my weakness He proves His strength!

For only by His strength can I obey Him when everything is falling apart. Through the trials and circumstances that He allows, I find He has emptied my earthen vessel and filled it with His strength, His thoughts, and His desires.

Michelle.



#### Universal Church?

**Third John 1:10**, "Casteth them out of the church."  
**Acts 11:23**, "They had ordained them elders in every church."





**The fact** is a pastor cannot carry out his instructions without a church membership. Below are a few examples:

**First Timothy 1:3**

*“charge some that they teach no other doctrine.”*

**First Timothy 2:12**

*“suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.”*

**First Timothy 3:1**

*“If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.”*

**First Timothy 3:8**

*“Likewise must the deacons...”*

**First Timothy 4:7**

*“...refuse profane and old wives' fables”*

**First Timothy 5:20**

*“Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.”*

**Titus 1:5**

*“...ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.”*

1. God did not give any instructions for discipline of any Christians in a para- church organization.
2. All missionaries in the New Testament were sent out by the local church.
3. All offerings in the New Testament were handled through the local church.
4. There are absolutely no instruction in the Bible concerning how to raise funds for a para-church ministry.
5. The only authority structure given in the New Testament concerning service for God is given in the context of the local church.
6. The only ministry Jesus sanctioned for the carrying on of His work was the local church.
7. The only agency given in the New Testament for the teaching of doctrine is the local church.
8. All decisions made concerning the promotion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ were made in a local church context.
9. The only place ordained of God in the New Testament for the making of disciples was the local church.
10. Christ promised the gates of Hell shall not prevail against the local church. He made no such promise for newspaper T.V. programs or any ministry outside of the local church.

# WHY 911?



When evil men took all those lives, the world was asking, “Why?” How could God let this happen? Why did so many die? We need to stop and think a bit, how we have treated God, We spend our lives ignoring Him while living on His sod.

At Christmastime we go to church, sometimes at Easter too, But fifty other weeks a year, we’ve better things to do. We even say a prayer or two when we begin to fear, But living like the Bible says?...We just don’t want to hear.

We do not want Him in our homes, He’s been expelled from school, We do not want Him in our lives, His way is just not ... “cool.” We’ll call on Him when someone dies, make vows at weddings too, When someone in our home is ill, we’ll say a prayer or two.

At school they’re not allowed to pray, the Bible can’t be read, For God is not allowed at school until some kids are dead. At Christmastime we’ll tell the kids of Santa and his sleigh, With just a token mention of the Christ who came that day.

At Easter we might mention God, but bunnies are the thing, Forget the teachings of His Word, to fairytales we cling. When evil men took all those lives, the world was asking, “Why?” How could God let this happen? Why did so many die?

The answer’s very simple, it always has been known, The Bible says we have a choice, we reap what we have sown.

B KIRKLAND



**Universal Church?**

**First Timothy 5:20**, *“Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.”*





**Matthew 18:15-17,**

*“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”*

How do we “tell it unto” a universal “church?” Do we just open a window and yell out the problem and hope it reaches the universal, invisible church in all the world? And should this invisible church hear it, how will they solve the problem?

**Matthew 18:15-17** deals with discipline. How do we enact discipline on visitors who just happen to show up on a Sunday morning? Will we have the visitors fill out a form letting us know about anyone they are having a problem with? Then, do we ask them if they would mind if we send two or more witnesses with them that we might establish the problem concerning whether or not we should consider them heathens or publicans? The fact is, it is impossible to be obedient to Matthew 18:15-17 without a church membership.

**First Corinthians 5:12,13,**

*“But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.”*

What is God talking about when He commands us “not to keep company?” Let the Scriptures explain themselves. The Scriptures below are in the context of the local church.

- **Acts 4:23**, “*Their own company.*”
- **Acts 14:22**, “*Their own company.*”
- **Second Thessalonians 3:14**, “*Have no company.*”

**Without And Within?**

*“For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? 13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.” Who are they that are “without”? Who are they that are “within”?*

Who is God talking about when He refers to someone that is “among yourselves”?

**Universal Church?**  
**Third John 1:10**, “*Casteth them out of the church.*”



**Jesus said, “I will build my church...”**  
 (Matthew 16:18).

**“No not to eat”?**

**First Corinthians 5:12,13,**

*“But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.”*

What does a wife do if her husband has been disciplined by the local church? Is she not allowed to have a meal with him? That makes no sense. The phrase “not to eat” has reference to the communion service in a local church. The fact is, it is impossible to be obedient to First Corinthians 5:12,13 outside of a local church context.

**First Corinthians Chapter 5:1,**

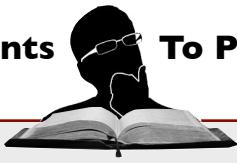
*“It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you.”*

Notice, it says, “among you.” The guilty person must be “taken away from among you” (v.2). How could we possibly do that without a church membership?

The word “churches” occurs another thirty-seven times in the New Testament. Obviously not referring to the so-called universal church unless those who promote that nonsense want us to believe there are more than one universal, invisible church.



**Points To Ponder**



**Third Generation Fundamentalists**

We are now living with second and third generation *fundamentalists*.

First generation *fundamentalists* took a solid stand concerning *salvation, separation, and standards*.

Second generation *fundamentalists* made some major changes.

The focus changed from preaching the truth to reaching crowds. We decided to be “*seeker sensitive*,” therefore, our preaching took on a new non-offensive tone.

The doctrine of separation was offensive so we decided to remain silent about it. To tell people they had to repent was offensive and when you are offensive you can not draw a crowd so, leaders like Jack Hyles and Curtis Hutson influenced thousands of preachers to drop the doctrine of repentance.

As a result thousands upon thousands of people who prayed a little no repentance prayer will spend eternity in Hell because of this “*damnable heresy*” that was promoted by two of our heresy promoting fundamentalists.

**It was Jesus who said,**

**Luke 13:3,** “*I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*”

In case we might be a little slow in grasping this important truth Jesus said it again just two verses later.

**Luke 13:3,** “*I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*”

**Moments To Remember**

**Melissa’s Graduation Speech**

This school has been one of the best things that have happened in my life. Since I was in a public school my whole life up to the end of grade seven has been a burden. For the friends who do not understand you standards, priorities, and religion has been very difficult. In the summer of 2006 all the families were deciding whether or not we would be in a Christian School.

For Chynna I knew it was hard, At times she would come up to me and say that she didn’t think that she would be in the Christian School; and I could see that she would be on the verge of tears.

They prayed earnestly that this Christian School would be for all of us. Pastor constantly kept preaching about having faith and exercising it. Although Chynna would come up feeling hopeless I knew that this Christian School would happen, and in the end it did happen. And I’m really thankful for our parents who let us have a new beginning. From the homework, pop quizzes, tests, and exams you really had to work hard to get a good passing mark. The one thing that surprised me about the school was the marks.

When a test or an exam came along it was not like you could just go in and take it, you really had to study hard. I really appreciate all the people who sacrificed and surrendered their time to be with us everyday because I know that’s not always easy or fun. But I’m glad that they always set the godly testimony before me, because I know I can really look up to them as an example. Even when I see them in the most difficult situation in their life they were always praising God, giving thanks, and were very contented.

The one thing I enjoyed the most was the chapel services in the morning. There would be nothing better then to start off the school than opening God’s Word. I am just so grateful for all the people who were there to make sure we have a good Christian education; and I just want to thank all of them. I always thank God everyday for our Christian school.



Melissa Galgalan



Article

**Billy Sunday’s Greatest Message**

Audio

**Fighting Discouragement? This Might Help!**

Three Minute Broadcast



## The Hot Chocolate Story

A group of graduates, well established in their careers, were talking at a reunion and decided to go visit their old university professor, now retired. During their visit, the conversation turned to complaints about stress in their work and lives. Offering his guests hot chocolate, the professor went into the kitchen and returned with a large pot of hot chocolate and an assortment of cups - porcelain, glass, crystal, some plain looking, some expensive, some exquisite - telling them to help themselves to the hot chocolate.

When they all had a cup of hot chocolate in hand, the professor said: *"Notice that all the nice looking, expensive cups were taken, leaving behind the plain and cheap ones. While it is normal for you to want only the best for yourselves, that is the source of your problems and stress. The cup that you're drinking from adds nothing to the quality of the hot chocolate. In most cases it is just more expensive and in some cases even hides what we drink. What all of you really wanted was hot chocolate, not the cup; but you consciously went for the best cups...And then you began eyeing each other's cups."*

Now consider this: Life is the hot chocolate; your job, money and position in society are the cups. They are just tools to hold and contain life. The cup you have does not define, nor change the quality of life you have. Sometimes, by concentrating only on the cup, we fail to enjoy the hot chocolate God has provided us. God makes the hot chocolate, man chooses the cups.

The happiest people don't have the best of everything. They just make the best of everything that they have.

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### Universal Church?

**First Corinthians 6:4**, "Set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church."

