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Is Church Membership Optional???

The word “church” is found in the Bible eighty times. The word “churches” occurs another thirty-seven times. When we consider the word “Christian” occurs only one time in all the Word of God we must conclude the church is very important to God.

Does God Command The Christian To Join A Local Church? 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 fact that , as already mentioned, the Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Word of God to refer to the local church 117 times tells us the local church is not an option.

The fact that Christ commanded 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: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matthew 28:19:20), plainly reveals to us that church membership is an obvious thing.

The fact that Christ commands Christians to submit to their spiritual leaders makes it obvious that local church membership is not an option.

Hebrews 13:7,

“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,

“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.”

These verses make church membership non-optional.

Consider also,

First Thessalonians 5:12,13,

“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 that God had First and Second Timothy and Titus written to pastors that they may know how, “to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

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

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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 discipline of church members makes nonmembership impossible.

First Corinthians 5:9,

“I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators...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. (Communion)...Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.”

The fact that church discipline is impossible without a church membership. The fact that the pastor cannot carry out his instructions without a church membership.

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.”

Titus 1:10,11

“There are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers...Whose mouths must be stopped.”

Titus 3:10

A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject.”

**What Reason
Will Any
Christian
Give Christ
For Refusing
To Join The
Church For
Which He
Died?**