

What it Means to be a Member of the Church

Acts 2:42-47

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The church was Jesus' idea; he is her founder. Jesus said he would build it. He bought it by his own blood and promised that it will transcend time. Last week we talked about how the church began at the preaching of the apostles in Jerusalem. They proclaimed Jesus as Lord and Messiah and people accepted this message and were baptized into Christ, then they were added to the number of followers. The church is the gathering of those who profess faith in Jesus. Christ's church is made up of local congregations throughout the world. *Have you ever wondered what it means to be member of Christ's church?* The Bible tells us what the church is, how it began and how the members lived. The Bible tells how the church of Jesus is to do.

Acts 2:41-47

After those who believed or embraced the message of the gospel were baptized. They joined the number of disciples. In verses 42-47 we read about what they did after they became members of Christ church.

Members of Christ's church exhibits a passion for his teaching. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching. This was the very teaching of Christ. Jesus had commanded them to make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them everything he has commanded. **Matt.28:20** Christ's church should always be committed to his teachings. As members of Christ's church, we must be committed to God's word; the Scriptures which God has given to us to train us, correct us and lead us to the path of maturity. Paul encouraged Timothy to continue in what he was taught. **2 Tim.3:14-17** But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it **15**and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **16**All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17**that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. ESV

God gave us the holy writings (Scriptures) to teach us, to rebuke us and correct us and also to train us to do the right things. *The Scriptures are the manual God's people have to know exactly who God is, who we are and what is expected of us and also it teaches us where we are going.* They are our God-given GPS for his people. **Members of Christ's church display a devotion to the Scriptures; a passion for reading it, studying it and living it out.**

Members of Christ's church exhibits commitment to the fellowship. What this means is that they show commitment to each other. (v.44) *All the believers were together and had everything in common.* (fellowship to commune with others, to share their lives together). They encouraged each other, helped each other and provided for each other (v.45) Literally, they shared their lives with each other. In **Acts 4:32-36** we are told how they were one in purpose and mind. **They took care of their financial needs of the community.** **There was not a needy person** among them for they met their needs by sharing their goods and resources. *This type of sharing doesn't happen overnight in our churches.* It was a testimony that it was a Christ-centered community. It's easy to spot fellowship in the Bible, every time you hear about the phrase **"One another" or "each other"** this is fellowship. I found a list of all the one another passages provided by Jeffrey Kranz. I will suggest to take a look at this, so that you can understand what fellowship is all about. (www.overviewbible.com) **It also helps us know our responsibility as Christ's church.**

Being a member of Jesus's church means you are committed to doing the one another of the Bible.

Members of Christ's church show a commitment for prayer.

The first Christians were devoted to prayer. They learned this from their master, Jesus, who modeled prayer and taught them how to pray. Jesus was never busy to pray, in fact he at times got away from people so he can commune with his Father in prayer.

The first century followers prayed, in Acts 3 Peter and John were going to the temple at the time of prayer. Prayer was included in their agendas. They just didn't pray when things went wrong in their lives. *Praying was how they sought God's guidance.* This is how they calibrated their focus in life. When they were persecuted they prayed; when they were faced with tough decisions in the church, they prayed; when they sent missionaries to the mission field, they prayed. Before they appointed leaders, they prayed. They always sought God's will and direction through prayer. Christ church is committed to the Bible, God's word, committed to the fellowship with other believers and committed to prayer.

These things will keep you strong during trials and storms in life. Can you imagine a follower of Jesus who doesn't read the Bible, who is not committed to the fellowship with other believers and who doesn't pray