

# Church Membership

Acts 11:25-26

Introduction:

- A. Church membership in first century was rather simple for Christians.
  - 1. Moving into community did not need to “shop around.”
  - 2. Traveling did not have to sort out “right church.”
  - 3. Why? No denominationalism — seeds present (1 Cor. 1:10-13).
- B. Church membership today is more complex.
  - 1. Many denominations with sub-divisions and local branches.
  - 2. Many groups lay claim to scriptural names.
  - 3. Modern transportation often makes several scriptural churches within reach.
- C. Church membership needs to be considered at 2 levels:

Discussion:

## II. Universal Church Membership.

- A. Not same as denominational membership — N. T. Church not a denomination.
- B. Same as being “added to the Lord” (Acts 2:47 with Acts 11:24).
  - 1. Baptized to be saved (Mark 16:15, 16).
  - 2. Baptized to be in Christ (Gal. 3:26, 27).
  - 3. Baptized into the church (1 Cor. 12:13).
  - 4. Hence: Saved, in Christ, in church at same time.
- C. “Membership roll” kept by the Lord (cf. Heb. 12:23; Phil 4:3; Rev. 3:5).

## III. Local Church Membership.

- A. Christians band together to act as a unit.
  - 1. Worship together as unit (cf. 1 Cor. 14:26, 40).
  - 2. Work together as unit (Phil. 4:15).
  - 3. A common treasury (1 Cor. 16:2).
  - 4. Local organization (Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1)
- B. Christians must join such a unit (Acts 9:26; cf. Acts 11:26)
- C. “Membership roll” kept by church — hence fallible.
  - 1. To “receive” and “reject” (Rom. 14:1; Tit. 3:10).
  - 2. Mistakes are possible (1 Cor. 5; 3 John 10).
  - 3. Local church has right to investigate one wanting join them (Acts 9:26, 27).
- D. Which local church should I become a member?
  - 1. Primary consideration: Is it scriptural as a local church?
  - 2. Secondary considerations: Their needs, my needs, effectiveness, convenience, etc.

Conclusion:

- A. To those interested in following Bible will concern themselves with church membership.
- B. To be a member universal church — simply obey gospel.
- C. To be a members of local church — “join yourself to the disciples” near you.