

Meaningful Membership



What is biblical church membership?

The term “church member” can carry a lot of baggage in our current culture. You may think of a member at a country club or a member of a particular store or group. However, membership in a church is much more than a name on a list. Biblical church membership is about accountability to a particular body of believers and a willingness to be shepherded by pastors of that body. Mature disciples are members of local churches. In his letter to the church in Rome, Paul writes, “For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another” (Romans 12:4-5, ESV).

A church member is a person who identifies Jesus as their Savior and Lord and who also identifies with and is accountable to a local community of believers led by a group of elders (pastors). We believe church membership is a beautiful gift from God for the sanctification of His people and for the glory of His Son.

Where is membership in the Bible?

Though the words “church member” might not be explicitly expressed in Scripture, they are certainly implied. We see this early on in the New Testament. In Acts 2, we are told that after believing the gospel and being baptized, a group of 3,000 believers was added to the church (v. 41). These individuals were not saved and then left to figure out their new lives following Jesus on their own. They were not added to a vacuum! They were added to the church. These individuals intentionally identified with a local community of believers to dedicate themselves to the study of Scripture and service to one another (see Acts 2:42-47). This is church membership!

We are also told in Scripture that pastors are given the weighty responsibility to shepherd a particular flock (1 Peter 5:1-5). Leaders are accountable to God for those individuals who are in their specific care (Hebrews 13:17). This imagery presupposes membership in a local church. How can a pastor rightly carry out this exhortation if he does not know whom he is to shepherd? How can church discipline occur if membership in a local body is not implied in Scripture? For more on church membership, please read Mark Dever’s *Why Should I Join a Church?*

What does membership look like at Redemption Hill?

Membership at Redemption Hill is about accountability. A member at is accountable to other church members to play an active role in the body, specifically by using their gifts to build up the church and actively seeking to resemble Jesus for their own spiritual health and the health of the church. Additionally, a member at Redemption Hill is in humble submission to the elders of the church while seeking to be a faithful disciple of Jesus. Members do this by joyfully walking through our discipleship process:

- **Beholding the Gospel**- Members gather regularly, each Lord’s day, to worship our King as his church.

- **Belonging in Gospel Community-** Members aren't just attenders of the church, they are the church. Members are a part of the church by participating in a Small Group and serving regularly on a Serve Team.
- **Being Sent on Gospel Mission** - Members desire the gospel to advance. Members commit to giving regularly to the mission of the church to advance the gospel. Members also commit to living with gospel intentionality everywhere they go for the fame of Jesus.

