

~~15~~ WEDNESDAY



# **MEANINGFUL CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

# I.

# What Meaningful Membership Is Not

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A. **Meaningful membership is not primarily a procedural technicality.**

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B. **Meaningful membership is not analogous to membership at the gym.**

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C. **Meaningful membership is not an optional add-on to the normal Christian life.**

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## II. Meaningful Membership is Pervasive in the New Testament

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# Ephesians 1:1-14 (ESV)

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,<sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,<sup>3</sup> eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

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# Ephesians 1:1-14 (ESV)

<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—  
<sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. <sup>7</sup> But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

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# Ephesians 1:1-14 (ESV)

<sup>8</sup>Therefore it says, “When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.”

<sup>9</sup>(In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? <sup>10</sup>He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)

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# Ephesians 1:1-14 (ESV)

<sup>11</sup> And he gave the apostles, the prophets,  
the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to  
equip the saints for the work of ministry,  
for building up the body of Christ,

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# Ephesians 1:1-14 (ESV)

<sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, <sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

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## Ephesians 2:1-10 (ESV)

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

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# Ephesians 2:1-10 (ESV)

<sup>3</sup> among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

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# Ephesians 2:1-10 (ESV)

<sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

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## Ephesians 2:1-10 (ESV)

<sup>7</sup> so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

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# Ephesians 2:1-10 (ESV)

<sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

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# Ephesians 4:1-6 (ESV)

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,<sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, <sup>3</sup> eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

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# Ephesians 4:1-6 (ESV)

<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—  
<sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

# Ephesians 4:11-16 (ESV)

<sup>11</sup> And he gave the apostles, the prophets,  
the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to  
equip the saints for the work of ministry,  
for building up the body of Christ, ,

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# Ephesians 4:11-16 (ESV)

**13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ**

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# Ephesians 4:11-16 (ESV)

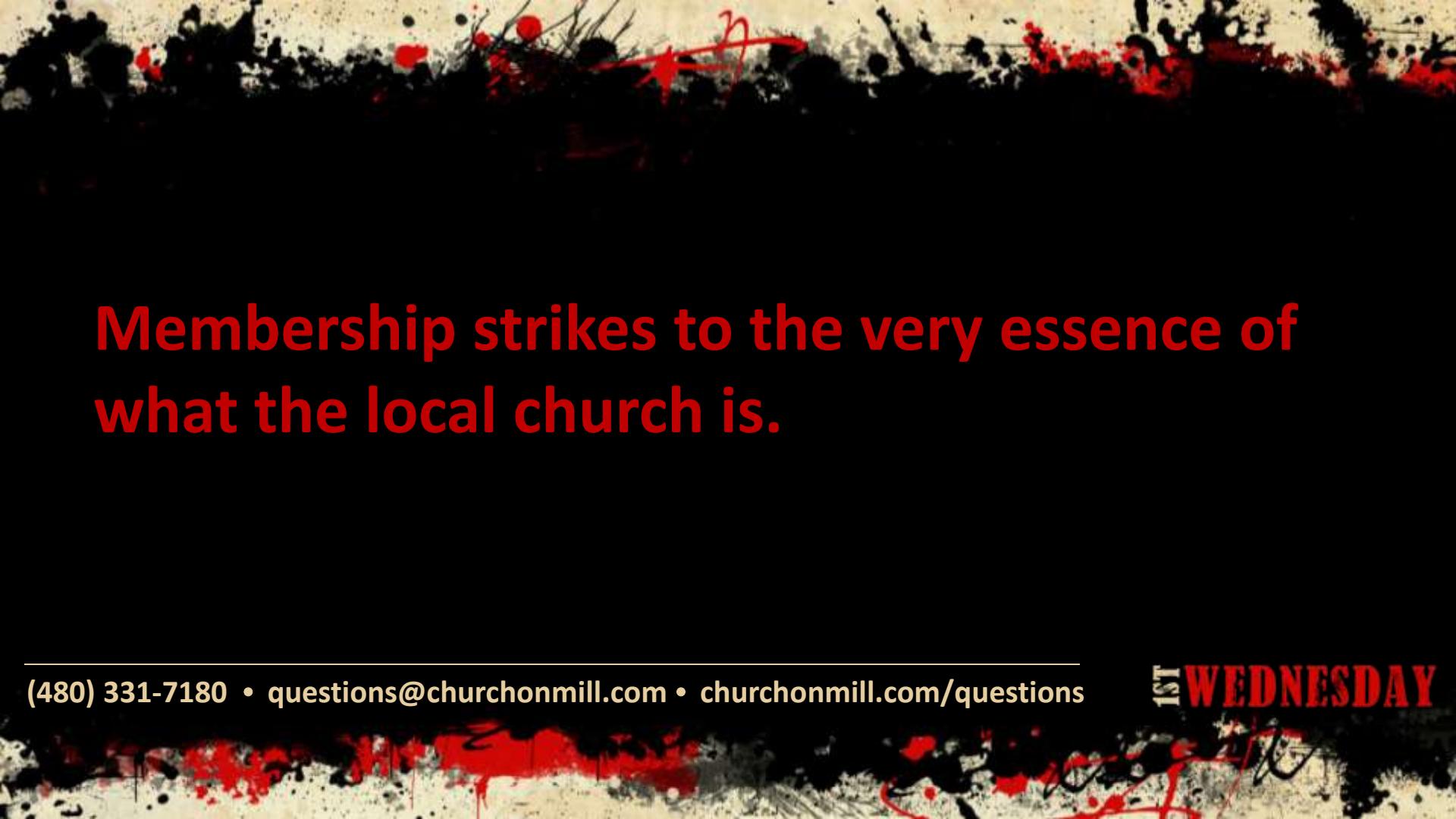
<sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

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## Ephesians 4:11-16 (ESV)

<sup>15</sup> Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

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**Membership strikes to the very essence of  
what the local church is.**

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### III. Meaningful Membership...

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A. Is reserved for Christians.

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# **1 Corinthians 1:1-3 (ESV)**

Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes,<sup>2</sup> To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

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# **1 Corinthians 1:1-3 (ESV)**

**<sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

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## **Acts 2:41 (ESV)**

**So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.**

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B. Is for those who actively engage the family of faith.

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## **Hebrews 10:19-25 (ESV)**

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,<sup>20</sup> by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,<sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

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## **Hebrews 10:19-25 (ESV)**

**22** let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

**23** Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

# **Hebrews 10:19-25 (ESV)**

**24** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, **25** not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

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## C. Is a commitment of both belief and lifestyle.

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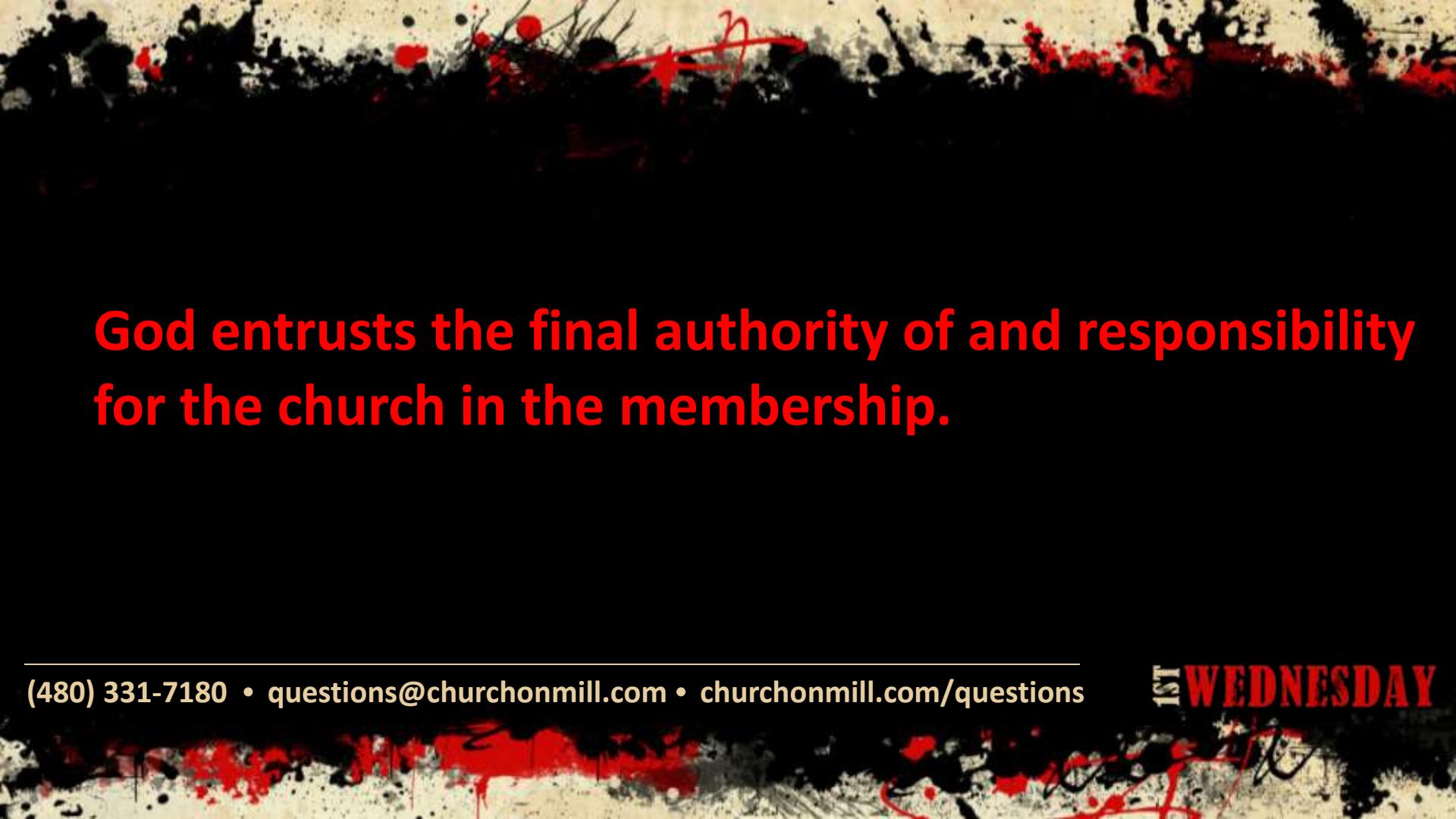
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## D. Is a necessary support to biblical polity.

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**God entrusts the final authority of and responsibility  
for the church in the membership.**

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E. Is to enjoy certain blessings and be given specific responsibilities.

## F. Is an unspeakable honor and blessing!

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# Questions?

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