

1. The Images Used to Describe the Church Demand Your Commitment.

The Kingdom of God - just who are the citizens? What privileges and responsibilities do they have?

The Assembly of God - when the assembly is assembled, who may we expect to gather?

The Family of God - how many seats must be set around the table?

The Body of Christ - to have members missing is to have an "amputated" and "handicapped" body.

The Temple/Building of God, each of us being individual stones - won't the building collapse without the presence of all?

The Flock of God - surely the shepherd counts the flock each night before sleep?

The Branches of the Vine - we must know who is connected and who is not.

Quote on pages 43-44...

2. The God-given Responsibilities of Church Leaders Demand Knowing Who Belongs and Who Does Not.

3. The Obligations of Every Christian to His Church Leaders Demand a Clear Relational Commitment

- Acts 20:28
- 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13
- Hebrews 13:17
- 1 Peter 5:1-5a
- Matthew 18:15-18

4. The Well-being of Christ's Church Demands Your Commitment.

5. The Well-being of Your Soul Demands Your Commitment.

- Ephesians 4:7-16
- 1 Corinthians 12:12-27
- Hebrews 10:19-25

Just think of all the one-anothering passages of the Bible (only a sampling is listed here):

- John 13:34f
- Rom. 12:10,16; 13:8; 14:13; 15:5, 7, 14; 16:16
- Eph. 4:2, 32; 5:19, 21
- 1 Thess. 4:18; 5:11
- Heb. 3:13; 10:24f
- Jas. 5:16
- 1 Pet. 3:8; 4:8ff

Thought Questions:

1. What should be required for membership in Christ's Church?

2. Can the hurdle for Church membership be set too high? How so? What are the dangers of this? How would this conflict with the view that ordinarily there is not salvation outside of the visible church?

3. How would you evaluate the oaths/vows that we require for Church membership here at Memorial OPC?
 - (1) Do you believe in one God, who exists eternally in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?

 - (2) Do you believe the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, to be the Word of God, and its doctrine of salvation to be the perfect and only true doctrine of salvation?

 - (3) Do you confess that because of your sinfulness you abhor and humble yourself before God, that you repent of your sin, and that you trust for salvation not in yourself but in Jesus Christ alone?

 - (4) Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your sovereign Lord and do you promise that, in reliance on the grace of God, you will serve him with all that is in you, forsake the world, resist the devil, put to death your sinful deeds and desires, and lead a godly life?

 - (5) Do you promise to submit in the Lord to the government of this church, to participate faithfully in its worship and ministry, and, in case you should be found delinquent in doctrine or life, to heed its discipline?