

Thinking about Church membership

Intro: Individualism & consumerism

1. The Church

i) The place of the Church in God's purposes

Ephesians 1.9-10; 3.10-11

ii) The place of the Church in the Christian's life

We are not alone!

- the household of God – Ephesians 2.19-22
- the temple of God – 1 Peter 2.4-5
- the people of God – 1 Peter 2.9-10
- the family of God – 1 Peter 1.22-23
- the flock of God – Acts 20.28-31
- the vine of God – John 15.5
- the body of Christ – 1 Corinthians 12.12-13
- the bride of Christ – 2 Corinthians 11.2

2. Church Membership

i) The reasons for 'Church membership'

a. The exhortations to mutual encouragement

- e.g. Hebrews 10.24-25; Ephesians 4.32

b. The existence of Church government

- Elders who keep watch (e.g. Acts 20.28; Hebrews 13.17)
- Members who submit (e.g. 1 Peter 5.5; Hebrews 13.17)

c. The exercise of Church discipline

- e.g. Matthew 18.15-20

ii) The reality of 'Church membership'

a. I believe

- as a member

- as an 'office-bearer' in the Church – Westminster Confession

b. I submit

'I gladly submit to the leadership of this Church as they seek to shepherd, love, care for, build up, encourage and, if necessary, confront & even discipline me'

c. I serve

Partners

People

Prayers

Gifts

Money

Votes

Conclusion: The priority of attitude