



“Bible Reasons why I should be a Church Member”

Rev. David J. Bauer

Many years ago I was called upon by the pastor to lead meeting of a group discussion in a church where only about 30% of the attendees were official members. Ironically, most of the problem issues in this church were being fueled by non-members. As I progressed in my listing benefits of church membership, I was disrupted by a very vocal younger man who demanded, “Just tell me Pastor, what church the Apostle Paul was a member of?”

“That is an easy question to answer,” I replied, “In the church of Antioch, Syria Paul was a member. This was where Barnabas brought him from Tarsus, where he was commissioned to be sent out as a missionary, and where he returned to give a report after each mission trip.”

“Ohhh...” he answered (a silence moved across the group).

Church membership is a legitimate biblical concept. The Scriptures teach us that the local church has an identifiable and specifically accountable membership. Membership in a local church is important for a number of biblical reasons.

Authors of the New Testament *identify* churches by their *location* as well as by their *number*. In Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 5:14, a church beginning at 120 persons grew to 3,000 in one day, then later to 5,000 persons! Souls saved and new converts joining the church were counted and added to daily (Acts 2:47)! Paul the Apostle identifies members in local churches by their location in most of his epistles. He also addresses his letters to the many house churches outside of certain cities (Rom. 16:5; 1 Corinth. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philemon 2). Members in these churches are counted and named.

Leaders are identified in churches where members have submitted themselves under their authority (1 Thess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:17). Leaders of a local church identify with those to whom they must give an account (Acts. 20:28-30; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-4). This means that the sheep should know their shepherd and the shepherd should know his sheep. How can a pastor be responsible for sheep that do not identify as his?

Our Savior has commissioned His church to administer the ordinances of *water baptism and the Lord’s Table*. Baptism is a visible symbol of Spirit baptism (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-17; 1 Cor. 12:12-13). Water baptism is administered in one particular local body. Likewise our Savior has instructed His Local church to remember His death until His second coming by partaking together of the *Lord’s Table* (1 Corinth. 11:23-34). This instruction is clearly to people of a specific local fellowship. Our admonition is to be bound together in fellowship by doing this symbolic and significant ordinance as members of a body in hope of His imminent coming.

Also, our Savior instructs His church in the proper way to *discipline* and

restore wayward brethren, even removing the membership of a disobedient, unrepentant or divisive member of the local church –Matt. 18:15-20. By reasonable deduction, one cannot be removed from fellowship with those of which one has not previously been in fellowship.

The local body and its leadership is where one is to go to submit requests for specific *benevolent needs*. Local churches have the authority to accept or deny requests based on discernment of need (1 Tim. 5:3-8; 2 Thess. 3:10-15; Acts 4:32-35). The local church has a priority to meet the needs of her members.

Specific *leaders* of local churches are to be *supported* by that local assembly. It is the church’s responsibility to provide for their pastor in a material way (1 Cor. 9:14; 1 Tim. 5:17-18). Can a person be obedient to God’s Word if that person feels no obligation to help support God’s spiritual leader (Heb. 13:17)?

The local church is the place where we should focus the majority of our *gracious Christian giving* (1 Corinth. 16:1-2; 2 Corinth. 8:1-5; 9:6-15), with expectation that our God both can and will supply all our needs (Phil. 4:19). Without being members of a local body how will we do this type of giving or be legitimate recipients of such Divine benevolence?

The *discernment* and *authority* of the local church supercedes the legal counsel and judges of our secular world (1 Corinth. 6:1-8). Christ’s church is ordained to make decisions in the present age (Matt. 16:16-19; Matt. 18:17-20). Note that Christ considers His local church of such importance that they are given the power to bind certain things in heaven as well as on earth (Matt. 18:18-20).

God’s People in Old Testament times were required to enter into a *covenant* with God and His Law (Exodus 20-23). There were *requirements* for the people of God to enter into covenant with Him and to be a part of His assembly. It is not unreasonable for local churches to expect members to submit to similar *covenantal requirements*. Membership classes can be a good way of introducing



Rev. David J. & Dolores Bauer
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(Continued) ones seeking to enter into a covenant of membership with a particular local body. Prospective members should consent to identify themselves in covenant with the local church where they attend and support. Churches may require a verbal testimony as to the person’s knowledge of salvation, or even physical baptism (Matt. 28:18-20) as public testimony of such. There should be a public recognition of the addition of new members; perhaps a “*right hand of fellowship welcome*” into the local body of Christ.

There are practical and legal benefits to church membership as well. The State looks upon church members as “*shareholders*” in the non-profit nature of church assets. At a membership meeting only members have a “*right*” to attend, or to vote and vocally express themselves.



“Crock-pot Pumpkin Dump Cake”

- 2 -15 oz. Cans of Pumpkin Pie Filling
- ½ Cup Granulated Sugar
- 2 tsp. Pumpkin Pie Spice
- ½ tsp. Kosher Salt
- 1 -15 oz. Box French Vanilla or White Cake
- 1 stick (8 Tbsps.) butter, melted
- ½ Cup Chopped Pecans

Spray the insert of a 6-quart slow cooker with cooking spray. Gently combine the pumpkin, granulated sugar, pumpkin pie spice and salt in a bowl, then dump it into the slow cooker insert. Sprinkle cake mix over the pumpkin, then as evenly as possible, pour the melted butter on top and finish with the chopped pecans. Cover & cook on low for 4 ½ hours. The edges of cake should be starting to brown and crisp slightly. Top w/Cool Whip (optional)

-Buchanan Baptist Church Williamsport, PA



Get more juice out of your lemons. Fresh lemons give almost twice as much juice if they are covered in a pan with hot water for about 20 minutes before squeezing.

Mix in powdered milk instead of fresh when making mashed potatoes. Not only will you save money, but you'll find your potatoes are firmer and less liquidly.

Here's a quick method for freshening slightly stale bread or rolls. Wrap the bread in dampened paper towels and place them in the microwave for 20 seconds. It works on stale Krispy Kreme treats too!

Fluffier omelets are no secret. Just add a dash of cold water, a couple dashes of skim milk and a small amount of corn starch. This makes omelets that are light, airy and fluffy.

If your chicken dries out when you roast it, just place a whole apple inside the chicken before roasting. An apple will keep the chicken moist and tender. Throw the apple away after roast is done.

Leave a legacy for your family & favorite ministries. When planning a legacy, give Terry L. Balko a call at 404-229-1645 or email Mr. Balko for forms and details at terrylbalko@gmail.com. **Don't let your hard earned life-savings go into a probate bureaucracy! NOT PLANNING is a plan, but it is NOT a very good plan!**

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Bible Related Ministries Newsletter

Rev. David J. Bauer, Director

HAPPY THANKSGIVING DAY!



NOVEMBER 2024

"In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

-1 Thessalonians 5:18

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Rev. David J. Bauer's BRM Itinerary



Nov. 24 6:00 p.m. Hessville Bible Church,
Hammond, IN

Bauers will be visiting supporting churches this month.

BRM Interims and Associates Engaged in Ministry:

>Rev. Steve Barack, BRM Associate - Sr. Pastor of Lisle Bible Church, Lisle, IL

>Dr. Al Carsen, Sr. BRM Associate – Sr. Pastor of Merson Church, Merson, MI

>Dr. Joe Stewart, BRM Associate – Sr. Pastor of Grace Bible Church, Dallas City, IL

>Rev. Darwyn Hassert, BRM Associate - Smyrna Bible Church (and vicinity), MI, preaches and assists as needed in nearby areas

>Rev. Don Zimmerman, Interim Pastor of Western Springs Baptist Church, IL

>Rev. Jim Vyleta, Interim Pastor West Madison Bible Church, Madison, WI

The Lighter Side: "You've Got Mail"

Working at the post office, I'm used to dealing with a moody public. So when one irate customer stormed my counter, I responded in my calmest voice, "What's the trouble?"

"I went out this morning," she began, "and when I came home, I found a card saying the mailman tried to deliver a package, but no one was home. I'll have you know, my husband was in all morning! He never heard a thing!"

After apologizing, I got her parcel. "Oh good!" she gushed. "We've been waiting for this for ages!"

"What is it?" I asked.

"My husband's new hearing aids," she replied sheepishly.

How often have we jumped to conclusions before getting all the facts? Why do we not jump at opportunities as quickly as we jump to conclusions? See Proverbs 18:13

BRM Field Report #11

BRM is facilitating churches, pastors and board members for carrying out the Great Commission that our Savior gave us to do. We daily challenge pastors and board members to be the men God intends them to be.

We are reminded about "Pastor Appreciation Day" during the month of October. Church folks truly should show appreciation for the pastor God sent, and some demonstrate this year round too!

BRM has received several calls from pastors who have not been given a raise in salary in several years. It is a hard thing for a pastor to ask for a raise in salary. The request must be brought before the church board and most of the time before the church membership. Someone will usually weigh in on the proposal and be against it for various reasons. In minds of some, the pastor should be the lowest paid of the laborers. Surely God will take care for him?

However it does not take too much imagination to understand that if the past 4 years' of price increases have affected folks in the pews, the pastoral family is surely not exempt from the same costs. Most secular employees and even folks on Social Security are given cost of living raises each year. Why should the pastor struggle with the same salary for years? We recommend churches do cost-of-living reviews annually?

Likewise, when the church income is down from the expenses, either the pastor or his wife feels compelled to go out and get a second job to help cover the deficit. We have yet to see an elder or deacon get a second job primarily to cover the church budget. Why is the church income only the pastor's responsibility? "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,' and, 'The laborer deserves his wages.'" -1 Tim. 5:17-18

Be kind to your pastor; his job is difficult and a great responsibility. Good pastor results -eternal!

Sincerely,

Rev. David J. Bauer -Hebrews 13:17