

Course Outline

Class 1, September 4th

Unity: A Display of God's Glory in the Local Church

Class 2, September 11th

Church Membership: The Context for Unity

Class 3, September 18th

Preaching: The Foundation for Unity

Class 4, September 25th

Prayer: God's Power Creates Unity

Class 5, October 2nd

Ordinances: Foreshadowing Unity in Heaven

Class 6, October 9th

Church Governance: Godly Authority Fostering Unity

Class 7, October 16th

Church Fellowship: Building a Bond of Unity

Class 8, October 23rd

Discontentment with in the Church: A Test of Unity

Class 9, October 30th

Church Leadership: Submission for the Sake of Unity

Class 10, November 6th

Church Discipline: Preserving God-Glorifying Unity

Class 11, November 13th

Giving and Service: Sacrifice for the Sake of Unity

Class 12, November 20th

Corporate Worship: Celebrating God-Given Unity

Class 13, November 27th

Evangelism: A Harvest of Unity

LIVING AS A CHURCH



Class 2: Church Membership

The Context for Unity

I. Introduction

- To see from scripture that God calls Christians to make a serious commitment to a local church body, and that this commitment is uniquely satisfied in church membership.
- *To show how the commitment of church membership facilitates unity in the church.*
- *To think about how we can promote unity by talking to non-members about the importance of church membership.*

II. New Testament Scripture References

What does the New Testament say about church membership? Although not specifically requiring church membership, scripture gives content to the idea of church membership by setting forth a number of goals and requirements for Christians that are uniquely satisfied in the context of membership.

- A. Church Membership Must Distinguish Between Christians and Non-Christians (I Cor. 5; II Cor. 2:6).

B. Church Membership Should Be a Serious Matter
(Acts 5:13)

C. Church Membership Should Be a Commitment to
the Entire Body and Does Not Allow For Favoritism
(I Cor. 3; James 2).

III. How Does Membership Promote Unity?

A. Church Membership Defines With Whom We
Should Seek Unity -- Christians (1 Cor. 5).

B. Church Membership Requires a Commitment to the
Entire Church.

The New Testament uses various images to represent
the church. For example:

- A Building -- Eph. 2:20-22; 1 Cor. 3:9;
- A Body -- 1 Cor. 12; Romans 12:4-5

In these images, we see that Christians are called to
commit themselves to all the members in the local
body for the edification of the whole church.

IV. Encouraging Christians to Join a Church.

A. How Should We Interact With Visitors Who Might
Be Considering Membership?

B. How Should We Interact With Christians Who Refuse
to Join a Local Church?

Three Points:

- Not joining a church is dangerous (1 John
4:20; 1 Cor. 5; 1 John 3:19-20)
- Joining a church brings God glory through our
relationships (John 13, vv. 34-35).
- Joining a church identifies with Christ (Acts 9;
Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5).

C. How Do We Leave a Church Well?