

COMMITMENT TO A LOCAL CHURCH

Church Membership

1. NINETEEN NINETY-SEVEN IS OUR YEAR, AND WE MUST HAVE A PROPER FOUNDATION IN PLACE.
 1. Need for vehicle of commitment.
 2. Church membership.
 3. Covenant agreement.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF COVENANT.
 1. ***Covenant to be taken seriously***
 2. ***I will stand with you; I love you***
 3. ***Honored even when entered deceitfully - Josh. 9***
 1. Gibeon comes to make league with Joshua and princes of Israel
 2. Joshua was bound to oath; but Gibeon became the servants of Israel
 4. ***Covenant says I submit myself to you***
 1. I am your servant; I will stand with you.
 2. God is looking for those who will stand faithfully with this ministry.
 3. Desire to see children grow up, marry, have children, who grow up in church.
 4. What is mine is thine.
 5. Your people shall be my people, your God my God.

3. VALUE OF MEMBERSHIP.
 1. ***It represents a definite and specific commitment on your part in making a public declaration that Living Word Church is your home church.***
 1. God has placed the solitary in families (Ps. 68:6).
 2. That includes the spiritual family--the local church.
 2. ***This is an important covenant toward one another into which we have agreed to enter.***
 1. It means we don't give up the ship, walk away, or give up on our church family because of a disagreement or difference of opinion.
 2. This is true in a natural family or a spiritual family.
 3. It means we are committed to our family and will stand with it during times of crises
 3. ***It gives God's people a sense of belonging--the sense of being a part of God's work through the local church.***
 1. The basic needs of man includes the need to belong; to be a part of something.
 2. There is the need to have the security of a family who is responsible for you and to whom you can be responsible.
 1. The family helps to provide guidelines, boundaries; to set expectations.
 2. Helps to bring stability.

4. ***It gives the shepherd of the flock the true sense as to who are the sheep--those to whom he is committed.***
 1. The role of the shepherd as overseers.
 1. (Acts 20:28 KJV) Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
 2. (1 Pet 5:2 KJV) Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;
 2. The sheep and the shepherd have a relationship.
 1. (John 10:14 KJV) I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.
 2. (John 10:27 KJV) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:
5. ***It represents a willingness to recognize God's government in the earth through the local church.***
 1. In other words, it is a willingness to submit to God's authorities in the local church. No man or woman should be a law unto himself or herself.
 2. The difference between the universal church and the local church.
6. ***As is in a natural family, the local church is a place of training, teaching, and discipline (or discipleship).***
7. ***It represents the means by which we become accountable--answerable to someone in carrying out the responsibility of our Christian duty.***
 1. The covering of the local church; protection.
 1. (Acts 20:29 KJV) For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.
 2. (Acts 20:30 KJV) Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.
 2. The book of Numbers is a book of accountability; the means of accounting for the people; to keep record.
 3. Organization is necessary to carry out the work of the Lord.
 1. Moses. Appointed captains over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. (Deu 1:15 KJV) So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over you, captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes.
 2. Jesus. Fed the 5000 after they sat down in ranks of 100s and 50s.

4. GUIDELINES OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS TO CHURCH.

1. ***Recognize the responsibility of covenant.***
2. ***To be supportive.***
 1. ***Be supportive of pastor and leadership of church.***

2. *Be supportive of the church:*
 1. Prayer.
 2. Faithful attendance.
 3. Tithes and offerings.
 4. To be supportive of the basic teachings and doctrines of the church.
3. *Be supportive of one another.*
 1. Pray for those who are in need.
 2. Be a doer of the word; love in deed, not just in word.
 3. Be committed to a ministry of reconciliation.
 - (1) Quick to forgive.
 - (2) Slow to condemn.
3. ***Be committed to one another as a family.***
 1. To love one another.
 2. To support one another.
 3. To entreat one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.
 4. Seek to edify (building one another up).
 5. Refrain from unedifying communication
4. ***Endeavor to live a proper lifestyle.***
 1. One that is based upon the Word of God.
 2. One which would be pleasing to the Lord, and to exemplify Christian character
 1. To conduct oneself in the manner which would properly become that of a Christian.
 2. Seek to be a proper example to others which would project a positive image of the Lord Jesus Christ and His church.
 3. Refrain from the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21).
5. ***Seek to improve spiritual life through regular and consistent prayer and Bible study.***
6. ***Develop a life of Christian discipline, genuinely seeking to become a true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.***
7. ***Seek to promote unity in the body.***