

BENEFITS OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Constant as the sun, the church beams its blessings of songs, prayers, sermons, teaching, guidance and love into the lives of individuals, members and non-members. These things are appreciated more or less as they seem to apply to one's individual need, but there are certain benefits that may be attained only by the obligation of Church membership. Consider these benefits of church membership.

1. Because God made man a social being, he has a desire to "belong." That is, he wants to be accepted as a part of society. This desire is met in uniting with the church, the society of the redeemed whom Christ is pleased to call brethren (Hebrews 2:11). This is **SOCIAL BENEFIT**.
2. As no other institution on earth, the church recognizes man as the spiritual being that he is – body, soul and spirit. The bond of church membership establishes an affinity by which we share mutually in the spiritual strength of each other. This is **SPIRITUAL BENEFIT**.
3. There is a moral obligation to receiving. Although one may be on the receiving end of the life-giving beams of church blessings, there are experiences of blessings that cannot be known until one has shared by adding his/her song, prayer, testimony and ministry of love to this ever-beaming flood of church ministry. It is more blessed to give than to receive. This is **MORAL BENEFIT**.
4. Only by becoming a partner in the great plan of redemption can the commission of our Lord be fulfilled. As a member of God's church, one becomes a partner in the worldwide mission campaign of redemption. This is **UNITED BENEFIT**.
5. Man must some day stand before God for judgment, and God expects the obedience of man. *"To obey is better than sacrifice."* (1 Samuel 15:22) We are instructed, *"Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves,"* (Hebrews 13:17) *"for this man is answerable."* Solomon said, *"Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick."* (Matthew 5:15) John writes, *"The seven golden candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."* (Revelation 1:20) This all adds up to the fact that the born again soul should find his/her place in the church. Revelation 2:1 tells us that Jesus *"walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks."* In man's unfallen state, the voice of God walked with him in the garden in the cool of the day. Today it pleases Christ to walk in the midst of His church. Will you be there? This is the benefit of **FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST**.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A MEMBER?

The difference between “attenders” and “members” can be summed up in one word: **“COMMITMENT.”**

At ICC we recognize the need for a formal membership. We ask you to commit to membership for four reasons:

- 1. A Biblical Reason:** Christ is committed to the church. *“Christ loved the Church and He gave His life for it.” Ephesians 5:25*
- 2. A Cultural Reason:** It is an antidote to our society. We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything . . . a job . . . a marriage . . . our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of “church shoppers and hoppers.” Membership swims against the current of America’s consumer religion.” It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.
- 3. A Practical Reason:** It defines who can be counted on. Every team must have Roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every army has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership identifies our family.
- 4. A Personal Reason:** It produces spiritual growth. The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for Spiritual growth. One cannot be accountable when he/she is not committed to any specific church family.

One said, there are at least thirty functions in the New Testament that are impossible to accomplish without being a member of a local church.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME AS A MEMBER?

AT ICC WE NEVER ASK OUR MEMBERS TO DO MORE THAN THE BIBLE CLEARLY TEACHES. WE ONLY EXPECT OUR MEMBERS TO DO WHAT THE BIBLE EXPECTS EVERY CHRISTIAN TO DO. THESE RESPONSIBILITIES ARE SPELLED OUT IN THE MEMBERSHIP COVENANT.

PROCEDURE FOR MEMBERSHIP:

Pastor Price will inform you when the next opportunity for membership will be presented. At this service, he will read the Teachings of the Church of God. Then, he will invite those interested in becoming a member to stand in front of the church facing the congregation.

PLEDGE OF MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENT:

You realize in presenting yourself for membership that you are assuming a solemn obligation, and it is expected that you will always be true to your promise, and faithfully fulfill and discharge your obligation as a loyal member.

Do you publicly confess and testify that you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Personal Savior in the full pardon of your sins? (The applicant(s) will answer, I do.)

Are you willing to walk in the light of the Scripture as it shines upon your path? (I am.)

Are you willing to abide by and subscribe to the discipline of the Church of God as outlined by the Scripture and set forth in the Minutes of the General Assembly? (I am.)

Are you willing to support the Church with your attendance, tithe and offerings to the best of your ability as the Lord prospers you? (I am.)

Do you agree to be subject to the counsel and admonition of those who are over you in the Lord? (I do.)

If there be any member who has a legal objection to any of these becoming members of the Church, the objector may now so state.

By the authority vested in me as a minister of the Church of God, I take great pleasure in welcoming you into this membership and extending to you the right hand of fellowship. May I encourage you to call for the services of your pastor when needed.

I have confidence that you will ever be a faithful member and a blessing to the Church, and the Church a blessing to you. I pray our fellowship will always be bound together with unbroken love.