

The Terre Haute **Speaker**

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

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Membership in the Lord’s Church

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The Scriptures often speak of membership in the church (Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 5:30).

The Glory and Grandeur of the Church.

The church of Christ is far greater than all human institutions. *God is its author.* “...he that built all things is God” (Hebrews 3:4). The church is “the temple of God” (1 Corinthians 3:16), “an habitation of God” (Ephesians 2:19-22), and “the church of God” (1 Corinthians 1:2). *Christ is its Savior and Head.* He “gave himself” for it (Ephesians 5:25). He is “the saviour of the body” (Ephesians 5:23). With His own blood He “purchased” it (Acts 20:28). He is “the head over all things” (Ephesians 1:22). *All spiritual blessings are contained therein.* The church is “the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Ephesians 1:23). All spiritual blessings are in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). Thus, it is in the church that we enjoy every spiritual blessing God has provided for us in Christ Jesus.

Entrance into the Church. Entrance is regulated by Christ. The church was built by Christ (Matthew 16:18), wears the name of Christ (Romans 16:16), and is under the authority of Christ (Ephesians 1:21-23). He alone as the right to stipulate the rules of admission into the church. We have no right to change His rules (Galatians 1:6-9; 2 John 9-11). *Jesus spoke of kingdom entrance in the*

gospel accounts. Entrance is by spiritual birth. “...Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5). Entrance is by conversion. “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3). Entrance is by doing the Father’s will. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

Be born again.....
Be converted.....
Do the Father’s will.....
	Enter the Kingdom

Examples of entrance in the book of Acts. Remission of sins and entrance into the church go together. A study of Acts 2 will show that when folks in New Testament days were baptized “for the remission of sins” they were “added to the church” by the Lord (Acts 2:38, 41, 47). Every conversion in the book of Acts is a repetition of this same story. “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...” (1 Corinthians 12:13).

What Church Membership Means. To be a citizen in the kingdom of Christ. “...Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son” (Colossians 1:13). *To be a member of the*

body of which Christ is Savior and Head. “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:12). *To be a child in God’s family.* “For ye are the children of God in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Galatians 3:26-27). *To be a stone in the temple of God.* “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house...” (1 Peter 2:5). *To be married to Christ.* “...that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead...” (Romans 7:4). *To be a sheep in the flock of God.* The church of God is the flock of God (Acts 20:28). *To be a laborer in the Lord’s vineyard.* “For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers in his vineyard” (Matthew 20:1).

Local Church Membership. Since the local church is the only unit of organization known in the New Testament for carrying forward the work of the church, a Christian must be part of a local church. There is no such thing in the Scriptures as “membership at large” in the church of Christ. Nor does one attend for several weeks or months and he is automatically a member - there is no “common law marriage” to Christ! *Examples of local church membership. The example of Saul.* “And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join

himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem” (Acts 9:26-28). *The example of Apollos.* “And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace” (Acts 18:27). *Responsibilities of local church membership.* Membership in the church brings the highest privileges, and with those privileges come the greatest of responsibilities. We have responsibility to attend faithfully (Hebrews 10:25), to give cheerfully (1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7), to be a good example and influence (Matthew 5:13-16), to be involved in the work of the church (1 Corinthians 15:58), to participate in worship (John 4:24), to show care and concern for our brethren (1 Corinthians 12:25), to promote peace and unity in the church (1 Corinthians 1:10; Ephesians 4:3), and to bring others to Christ (John 1:40-42).

We invite you to accept the Lord’s terms of entrance into the church, and join yourself to us to carry out your responsibilities to the Lord as a member of the church of Christ at Terre Haute.

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Come Be With Us!



***The Bible Is Our
Only Guide!***

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