



## THE IMPORTANCE OF MEMBERSHIP

**What does 'membership' mean?** Membership means calling a specific church your 'home' and taking responsibility to ensure its health and growth. It begins with the realization that Jesus did not die for you only but for the entire church (Acts 20:28), and it includes joyful obedience to Jesus' commands to selflessly give of your resources (2 Corinthians 8:1 – 9:15) and your abilities in order to build up the church (1 Corinthians 14:12; 1 Peter 4:10).

**Does membership really matter?** Sometimes people question whether or not they need to be part of a church as a contributing member. It's not a bad question, but it seems to be out of step with the teachings of Jesus and the common life of his earliest followers. In fact, the glimpses of the Church throughout the New Testament show us that Christians are called to share life together like a family (1 Tim. 3:15; 5:1-2) and to work together as different parts of the same body (1 Cor. 12:16-17). That's why from the very beginning Christians had a notion of belonging that included an awareness of membership in local churches (cf. Rom. 16:1-16). And if you think about it, even the ability to obey Jesus' teachings *assumes* that a Christian would be a member in a local church, since so many of his commands focus on the "one anothers" in a close-knit gospel community. Most importantly, however, is Jesus' clear teaching that his life and death were inseparably joined to building his Church (Matt. 16:13-18). So maybe the question should be, Why wouldn't you want to be a part of what Jesus is doing?

**What does being a member look like?** Church members are, in a sense, contributing participants of a local church who serve according to their abilities in accordance with Jesus' command to love God and their neighbor. This kind of love and care for the gospel shows up not just in what members feel, but also in what they do. Church members are equipped by the elders in their church (Eph. 4:11-12) to use the spiritual gifts that God has given them for the common good (1 Cor. 12:7).

Additionally, only members are allowed to oversee certain areas of ministry (such as children's ministry, community group leaders, and other leadership roles). Of course, non-members are encouraged to serve throughout the church as a connecting point for community and for the gospel. However, nothing can replace the impact of active members. They encourage others into active participation in the life of the church with the intent of seeing non-Christians trust and follow Jesus and disconnected Christians become vitally connected to the ministries of the church.

**How can I become a member?** To become a member of Remnant Church, you must be a committed follower of Jesus who is actively taking part in our community through serving, giving, and building others up. Members also must complete the five week Membership Class, which explains the essential beliefs of Christianity and the core distinctives of our church. Finally, members will sign a written covenant with the elders of Remnant that displays their intent to serve in the church, pray for the church, give to the church, read the Bible regularly, attend church services, and share the gospel with others in word and deed.