

Essential Commitments

Part One: Church Membership

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Essential Commitments

Acts 2:37-47

- a description of the first community of believers in Jesus (paradigm)

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Essential Commitments

Prior to commitment #1...

- the “conversion event”:
 - Repentance and faith in Jesus
 - Reception of the Spirit
 - Water Baptism

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Essential Commitments

Water Baptism:

1. Baptism symbolizes...

- Purification from sin (washing)
- Identification with Christ (immersion)

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Essential Commitments

Water Baptism:

2. Baptism is always part of the “conversion event”

- “baptism” is used as a synonym for our salvation (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27)
- an “un-baptized” believer is foreign to the New Testament

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Essential Commitments

Water Baptism:

3. Baptism is the outward expression of saving faith

- baptism does not save, nor is it necessary for salvation
- it is the God-ordained, symbolic expression of repentance and calling on God

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Essential Commitments

#1: Church Membership

- connection to and participation in the local assembly of believers
 - pattern – everyone, without exception, who was saved was part of the local assembly
 - it was a vital, vibrant and all-encompassing connection – a community

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Essential Commitments

#1: Church Membership

1. Why is this connection so vital?
 - The church is God's ordained means of sanctification and perseverance in the faith
 - The church is the primary context of...
 - instruction and exhortation
 - encouragement and admonishment
 - accountability
 - worship

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Essential Commitments

#1: Church Membership

2. What is the essence of membership?

- a commitment to the teaching, fellowship and worship of the local assembly
- a commitment to love, serve and encourage one another in mutual accountability
- a submission to the spiritual leaders of the church

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Essential Commitments

#1: Church Membership

3. Why a formal membership?

- (1) a means of evaluating the content and profession of a person's faith
- (2) a means of publicly expressing one's commitment to the body
- (3) a means of enabling leaders to shepherd effectively

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Essential Commitments

Conclusion:

This essential commitment of church membership is expected of every believer!

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