

Meaningful Membership

What it Means to be the Church

Church Membership: Oversight and Submission

Matthew 18:15-20

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

(Matthew 18:15-20)

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How can the church exclude members?

1. This power is not just given to one person, it's given to the church, the regular gathering of Jesus's disciples.
2. Jesus said it.
3. Jesus's ultimate purpose is not to keep people out of the church, but to ensure that they enter the kingdom of heaven.

Church Membership: Oversight and Submission

1. The church has oversight of an individual's membership.
2. Members submit to the church's authority.

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1. The church has oversight of an individual's membership.
 - A responsibility to help each member keep following Jesus
 - The authority to affirm or, if necessary, remove an individual's membership

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2. Members submit to the church's authority.

- We must "listen" (v.15) when other members advise us

Church Membership: Oversight and Submission

Application: What do I do when someone sins against me?

- Ask: Is this person a member?
- Confront or cover
- Humbly deal with it directly with the other person