

**Please Note...**Business Meeting is next Sunday, November 22 at 4:00 p.m..

### Quotations about church Membership

*“I believe that there are too many practitioners in the church, who are not believers.”* C.S. Lewis

*“The church is the great lost and found department.”* Robert Short

*One hundred religious persons knit into a unity by careful organizations do not constitute a church any more than eleven dead men make a football team. The first requisite is life, always.”*

Aiden Wilson Tozer

### November Birthdays

6 Ashley Tanner

10 Daniel Brown

### November Anniversaries

2 Shannon & Susan Hudson

#### Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.  
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

**Preacher:**  
Mike McKnight

**Church of Christ**  
81-377 Ave 46  
Indio, CA 92201  
(760) 342-1859

(Address Service Requested)

# Indio Informer

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## Benefits of Membership

By Mike McKnight

Whenever the topic of church membership comes up, my mind goes back several years to an American Express commercial whose slogan stated that being a card holder had it's "privileges." What about membership of a local congregation? What benefits are there for Christians to place membership in a congregation?

Once a person answers the call of God and becomes His child, they are a member of His heavenly kingdom (Hebrews 12:28); a member of the body of Christ where Jesus is the head of His body, the church (Ephesians 1: 22-23). So, why is joining a congregation so important once you have been added to the body of Christ? First off, some will say that it is not necessary nor is there any New Testament example of Christians placing membership in local congregations. However, in Acts 9 after Paul's conversion, we see that the apostle stayed in Damascus until it became know that the Jews had plotted to kill him and he escaped, returning to Jerusalem. In verse 26 it states that he tried to "associate" (NASB) with the disciples, "but they were afraid, not believing that he had become as one of them." Please note, that the word "associate" or "join" (NKJV, ESV, ASV) is not indicating that Paul wanted to have lunch and be social with the disciples in Jerusalem. Paul desired to join his fellow brethren and be a part of the congregation. The Greek word being used here is 'kollao', meaning to glue, cleave to, fasten together firmly. Figuratively speaking, to touch - in a sense to attach oneself closely to a person or group (TDNT). It is used in verses such as Romans 12:9 where we are instructed to "hold fast" to that which was given; Luke 15:15 when the prodigal son attached himself to another person; or Acts 17:34 "... when men joined Paul and believed ..." (other references can be found in Acts 5:13, 10:28).

Let's put Paul's situation into context. He is a man who is now living for Christ in a world that does not accept Jesus. So why did he desire to be joined to the congregation in Jerusalem? What benefit would Paul derive from placing membership in Jerusalem? The answer is simple...Paul would experience the same benefits that Christians who are part of the local work can enjoy today.

First off, what is the purpose of the body of Christ? We see in Ephesians 4:10-16, that Jesus gave gifts to men so that His body, the church (local congregations), would be "*equipped for the work of service, for building up of the body*" and for the unity of faith. The goal is that the body grows in knowledge to the fullness of Christ and the we as individual members are a part of that process in love, supplying what every person needs for growth. And that we, as individual disciples and collectively as functioning body, will glorify our Lord and Creator.

In Romans 12 we see that God gives each of us talents to use in the exercise of our faith towards others. Verse 10 teaches that we are to "*be devoted to one another*"; "*not lagging in diligence*" (vs. 11); "*contributing to the needs of the saints*" (vs. 13). These are just a few of the many verses found in the New Testament teaching us to purpose ourselves in service for the building up of others.

In other passages, we are instructed to "*admonish one another*" (Romans 15:14); and turning back those who have strayed (James 5:19). We are to hold each other accountable and allow ourselves to be held accountable to the faithful words that have been entrusted to us.

If we are not members of a local congregation, then we can be in a position of convenience. We can attend what we want when we want and no one will be the wiser, except God. We can fall prey to the devil, being deceived into thinking that attending worship service is fulfilling the requirement God has placed on fellowship. That providing for the needs of the saints is accomplished in just a short hour or two and does not require a closer, spiritually intimate relationship with your brothers and sisters in Christ.

If we are members of a local congregation, then we are part of a body that is going to look out for what is in our best interest. We serve one another in the capacity of gifts that God has given so that all can be strengthened. We rejoice together and cry together. We endure hardships together and we strengthen each other's faith. We work side by side and pray for one another. We recognize that our spiritual family is just what God had in mind when we became His workmanship, created for good works. Yes, indeed, membership has its privileges.

## **Burdens Give Us Wings**

(Author Unknown)

An old legend says that long ago God had a great many burdens that He wished to have carried from one place to another on earth, so He asked the animals to lend a hand. All of them began to make excuses for not helping: the elephant was too dignified; the lion too proud; and so on.

Finally the birds came and said, "If you will tie them into small bundles, we'll carry them for you. We are small but we would like to help."

So God fastened upon the back of each a small bundle, and they all set out walking across the plain to their destination. They sang as they went, and did not seem to feel the weight of their burdens at all. Every day the burdens seemed lighter and lighter, until the loads seemed to be lifting the birds, instead of the birds carrying the burdens.

When they arrived at their destination, they discovered when they removed their loads, there were wings in their place, wings which enabled them to fly to the sky and the treetops.

They had learned how to carry their burdens, and their loads had become wings to carry them nearer to God. The burdens we carry for others may become wings of the spirit, to lift us into happiness.

***"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."***

Galatians 6:2