

Becoming and Being a Member of a Local Church

Acts 2:14-47

*Theme: People are called to
accept the message of salvation
and to become active members of
a local congregation.*

A. The Qualification for Church Membership

On the day of Pentecost
Peter preached a sermon
and the Holy Spirit moved.

In his sermon Peter showed how anyone becomes a Christian and therefore a member of the Church:

- turn from your sins [repentance];
- turn to God through faith in Christ.

*This is still the only way anyone
becomes a Christian! Cf. Acts
20:21.*

3000 people accepted Peter's
message of salvation and were
added to the Church (2:41).

B. What is the Church?

The New Testament word for *church* means *those called out*.

The Church is made up of people God has called out of the world, away from a life characterised by sin, and into a state of grace, cf.

Eph. 2:8-9.

The Church is not a building!

*When Christians come together in
a particular locality they form a
local church.*

C. Becoming a Member of a Local Church

1. Local churches are identified by their number and location. *Cf.* Acts 2:47; 4:4; Eph. 1:1; Rom. 16:3-5.
2. Christians in a local church can identify their leaders, *cf.* 1 Thess. 5:12; Phil. 1:1.
3. Leaders in a local church can identify their flock, *cf.* Acts 20:28.

4. The Lord Jesus gives church leaders the keys of the Kingdom to bind and loose. *Cf.* Matt. 16:18, 18:18. Keys point to authority to admit and exclude from the church. Binding and loosing refer to authority to regulate conduct within the church. All this requires a defined membership.

5. The Lord Jesus Christ calls the church to administer baptism, the rite of admission, *cf.* Matt. 28:18-20.

A Christian should be a member of a local church!

C. Being a Member of a Local Congregation

means:

- placing yourself under the authority of the leaders, *cf.* 2:42a;
- meeting together regularly for worship, *cf.* 2:42, 44, 46; Heb. 10:23-25;

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- being faithful in praying and studying the Word in private, *cf.* 2:42, 46;
- giving regularly, *cf.* Prov. 3:9; 1 Cor. 16:1-2;
- serving each other and evangelising the lost, *cf.* 2:45, 47b.

Active Membership of a Local Congregation—The Biblical Norm!

*Membership of a local
congregation is the Biblical norm
for Christians.*

*Christians belong together in local
fellowships.*