

# Why Join a Church?

We recommend five reasons why Christians should join a local church:

1. **For non-Christians:** The church is a body of people - not who happen to gather together occasionally on Friday mornings - but who have self-consciously committed to each other, to pray for each other and hold each other accountable. As genuine relationships and love are demonstrated in this context of people covenanted together, God is glorified to the outside world. "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35). This witness is peculiarly displayed in the context of a multi-ethnic, multi-generational gathering of people committed to one another.

2. **For weaker Christians:** By committing to other, younger Christians, and praying for them, you can help them grow and avoid the pitfalls you have experienced. The Christian life is not individual, but corporate. We are saved individually, by faith. But we live out our faith in community. Just notice all the "one-another" passages in the New Testament, like Hebrews 10:24-25, 1 Peter 1:22, and 1 John 4:11-12.

3. **For church leaders:** The elders will be called to account for "the flock entrusted to them" (Acts 20:28; Heb 13:17). Are you a part of that flock? If you are not a member, how do the elders know you are a part? How can the elders (or the rest of the church) know to pray for you specifically by name? Do you need this kind of oversight and prayer? (The early church clearly did.)

4. **For yourself:** Church membership means you are submitting yourself to other believers, to the discipline of the whole church. You are saying, in effect, "I know my heart is prone to wander from the ways of the Lord. Please keep an eye on my life and kindly, patiently warn me if my life starts to deny Christ. If necessary, even discipline me so that I might be brought to repentance." (Reflect on Matt 18:15-17; 1 Cor 5:2, 5. Notice the word "majority" in 2 Cor 2:6.) Any time we see reference to "discipline" in the New Testament, there is by implication the concept of church membership. That is, unrepentant sinners were being put out of an identifiable group of people. If you can be put out, you can also be put in. That's membership.

5. **For God:** The church is Jesus' idea. He died for his church (Acts 20:28; Eph 5:25), and he is building his church (Matt 16:18). He identified personally with his church (Acts 9:4). Let's join him in this effort by joining a local church. The early church recognized the need for this. So should we.

Source : RAK Church