

Church Membership Matters

Session 1

Course Overview:

<p>Session 1 – What is a Healthy Church? Session 2 – Why Should You Join a Church? Session 3 – What is our Statement of Faith? Session 4 – What is our Church Covenant? Session 5 – Church History Session 6 – Conservative Baptists Session 7 – Elders & Deacons Session 8 – Congregationalism & Our Local Fellowship</p>

I. Introduction

- A. *What is a Healthy Church?* by **Mark Devor**. Preface: A Parable
- B. What are you looking for in a church?
- C. What does the Bible say the Church should be?

II. What does the Church have to do with Your Christianity?

- A. What is a Christian?
 - 1. Is reconciled to God in Christ (WIAHC – p. 22)
 - a. Does not trust in his own moral resources
 - b. Recognizes that he is an idol worshiper (ibid. p. 22-23)
 - c. If he were to die today...
 - d. Free from sin
 - e. Rejoices that Jesus is on the throne
 - 2. Is reconciled to God's people (**Ephesians 2:14-16**)
 - a. Adam's sin...Cain's murder
 - b. The two greatest commands (Matthew 22:34-40)
- B. We have become part of a *Family*, a *Fellowship*, and a *Body*
 - 1. Adopted into a family (parents & siblings; e.g. **Hebrews 2:11**)
 - 2. Fellowship with Jesus...one another (e.g. **1 Corinthians 1:9-10**)
 - 3. A body (e.g. **1 Corinthians 12:21**)
- C. Joining an Actual Church
 - 1. Like relationship between Justification and sanctification (Romans 6:1-18; 8:5-14; James 2:14, 18)
 - 2. Stirring one another up (Cf. **Hebrews 10:23**) Quote p. 28-29 & bottom p. 29
- D. Who is Responsible for Defining and Defending the Church?
 - 1. Are pastors & leaders?
 - 2. Are all Christians?

3. Whose body is it? (Cf. Acts 9:4)
4. How will you answer God? (Quote p. 30-31; Cf. **1 Cor. 12:21-26; 1 Tim. 5:17**)

III. What does the Bible say the Church should be?

A. A People, Not a Place

1. The new covenant, blood bought people of God
("this *gathering*" of NBC; Ephesians 5:25)
2. Remembering the Church is a People not a place/program (e.g. style of music)
3. What we *do* is also important
4. Expectations within a family (Quote p. 35-36)

B. A People, Not a Statistic (Quotes p. 37 & 38)

1. Love your family
2. Especially love your church family (Cf. **Mark 3:32-35**)

C. What Every Church Should Aspire to Be: Healthy

1. One definition (Quote p. 40)
2. We are thoroughly equipped by God's word (Cf. 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
3. Image is everything
 - a. Creation (Gen. 1:26)
 - b. Fall (Gen. 5:1; 9:6)
 - c. Israel
 - 1) Blessing to all nations (Gen. 12:1-3)
 - 2) kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:5-7)
 - 3) Be holy for I am holy (Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7)
 - d. Christ (Cf. **John 8:28b**; 6:38; 12:49; **Col. 1:15**; Heb 1:3)
 - 1) holy – righteous & just
 - 2) holy – love & mercy
 - e. Church (Cf. John 17; **2 Corinthians 3:18**)
 - f. Glory (Cf. **1 John 3:2**)

4. What are you looking for in a Church? ... Quote p. 48

D. The Ultimate How-To Guide: How to Display God's Character

1. Two kinds of people (Cf. **2 Timothy 4:2-4**)
2. Listen & Obey... Quote p. 55-56

IV. What are the *Essential* Marks of a Healthy Church?

A. Expository Preaching

B. Biblical Theology

C. A Biblical Understanding of the Good News

D. A Biblical Understanding of Church Discipline/Spiritual Growth