Membership Has Its Privileges

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INTRODUCTION

- Membership has its privileges. They basically are saying it's worth it.
- But this morning I'd like to talk about it from the privilege standpoint, the benefits and being a part of a local group such as this.
- God did not intend us to be islands in a sea of worldliness.

1 The Concept of Fellowship

Acts 2:40–42; 1 Corinthians 11

- Every time that the word fellowship is spoken of Christians in the New Testament, it speaks of a spiritual exercise.
- And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship in the breaking of bread and in prayers.
- Now, ultimately, our relationship to God is individual, even worship itself. But it's to be done in a corporate setting.
- We get to come together in spirit and in mind. Because that's the way God made us, and that's the way God made it.

2 Social Contact

Acts 2:44–46; 1 Corinthians 12:26; Romans 12

- Because we have identified one another, and we have this joint participation with one another, we also have social contact. God made us social beings.
- That we are put together in this community of faith, and we should be drawn together in this community of faith.
- Now all who believed were together and had all things in common, and they sold their possessions and goods and divided them among all, as anyone had need.
- If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. Or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.
- Whether it be suffering or rejoicing, there's a great blessing in having others join the chorus.

3 Guided and Helped Along

1 Timothy 4:6; 1 Timothy 4:11

- It doesn't matter how long you've been a Christian, how well you know the scriptures. We understand that we need somebody to help us.
- If you instruct the brethren in these things, you'll be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of good doctrine.

- And being a member of the local church, you have a teaching program.
- I'm so thankful that God told me to seek you out so that you could teach me something, so that you could guide me.

4 Corrective Discipline

James 5:19–20

- Most of the time we think of discipline the idea of a negative aspect of corrective discipline. And that's again something that we don't always look at as a privilege, as a benefit, but we should.
- Maturity causes us to recognize the blessing of even corrective discipline because we see the intrinsic value of it.
- Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death.
- I'm thankful that I'm a part of a group of people who are looking out for me.

5 Sincere Love of the Brethren

1 Peter 1:22

- And this can really all be summed up in one beautiful word. Love.
- As a Christian, I have the obligation to love everyone. Jesus goes so far as to tell me to love my enemies.
- Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart.
- He put us together for a purpose. That we might encourage and admonish and even correct one another.
- Are there obligations, are there duties, are there sacrifices that are going to be required in being a part of not just the body of Christ, but a local church? Yes. But it's worth it.

> THE CHALLENGE
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> **Are you a part of the body of Christ this morning? Let's start there. That's the most important thing is that you're a part of Christ's body.**

MY NOTES