

# IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP BIBLICAL?

Speaking to a particular church family, the Holy Spirit wrote: *For as the body is one, and hath many **members**, and all the **members** of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one **member**, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the **members** every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one **member**, where were the body? But now are they many **members**, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those **members** of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those **members** of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely **parts** have more abundant comeliness. For our comely **parts** have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that **part** which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the **members** should have the same care one for another. And whether one **member** suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one **member** be honoured, all the **members** rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and **members** in particular.*

-1 Corinthians 12:12-27

## WHY SHOULD I JOIN A CHURCH?

### 1. Demonstrate your obedience to God's Word.

After salvation, we ought to be baptised and added to a church (Acts 2:41).

### 2. Express your commitment.

Ultimately helps your commitment to God (Matthew 22:37; Matthew 6:24).

We can all learn from those dedicated members of those churches in Macedonia — a membership committed to God and one another!

### 3. Experience Christian unity.

No "Lone Ranger" Christians (1 Peter 2:5; Philippians 2:2)

Membership provides me with a spiritual family, along with the support and encouragement accompanying it (Hebrews 10:24-25; Galatians 6:1-2).

### 4. Exercise your gifts.

Gives me a place to discover and use my spiritual gifts for Christ.

The only program God established to accomplish His work on earth today is a local assembly (1 Corinthians 12:4-27).

### 5. Places me under spiritual leaders.

Godly leaders are God's provision for my life and family (Hebrews 13:17; Acts 20:28-31).

### 6. Makes me accountable to others.

Others' concern for me helps me make wiser decisions and grow (Ephesians 5:21).

# MEMBER OR ATTENDER???

*How do you describe the difference?*

<i>THE CHURCH</i>	<i>AN ATTENDER</i>	<i>A MEMBER</i>
<i>A Fellowship</i>	<i>A guest who watches</i>	<i>A fellow-worker who accomplishes the work of the ministry</i>
<i>A Family</i>	<i>The neighbor kid who comes to visit</i>	<i>The child who lives there</i>
<i>A Body</i>	<i>A wristwatch or ring</i>	<i>An organ, living part</i>
<i>A Passenger Ship</i>	<i>Passengers</i>	<i>Crew</i>
<i>A Sports Competition</i>	<i>Spectator</i>	<i>The Team</i>

The Christian life means more than just believing, it means belonging!

*Visitors talk about **THAT** church.  
Attenders talk about **THIS** church.  
Members talk about **OUR** church!*

Members have a sense of ownership. They don't just show up to consume, they contribute.

## HOW DO I BECOME A MEMBER OF ICBC?

- 1. By Salvation and Baptism** — If you will receive Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour and Lord and follow Him in baptism by immersion, you automatically become a member of Illawarra Community Baptist Church.
- 2. By Letter** — As a member in good standing of a church of like faith and practice, should God direct you here, we will be pleased to welcome you into our church family. We will take care of appropriate details for transferring your membership.
- 3. By Baptism from a Church that is *not* of Like Faith and Practice** — If you know in your heart that you are saved, and want to become a member of ICBC, we invite you to join us by baptism. This gives testimony of your salvation and your obedience to His direction. We request this because Christ gave the ordinance of baptism to a church. We simply recognise that not all religious institutions are genuine churches before God.
- 4. By Statement** — In the event church records are not available for a transfer of membership, or if you were once a member of a church of like faith and practice, but currently are not, we will accept you upon your statement of these conditions.

*You may express your desire to fulfil any of the above by requesting and presenting your Membership Application to the Pastor. Of course any decision assumes your commitment to being faithful in prayer and participation in our Lord's work at ICBC.*

*We would count it a great blessing to have you join us as we serve Christ together here at Illawarra Community Baptist Church!*