

## 1. Membership Matters because Christian love is expressed through commitment.

**John 13:34-35** - <sup>34</sup> *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.* <sup>35</sup> *By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."*

Q: What might be examples ordinary or radical acts of Christian love that get the attention of others?

### **One Another" Commands in the New Testament**

1. **John 13:33-35:** love **one another** [repeated over and over in NT]
2. **Ephesians 4:1-3:** bearing with **one another** in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit
3. **Colossians 3:12-13:** forgiving **each other**
4. **Ephesians 5:19-21** - addressing **one another** in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs and submitting to **one another** out of reverence for Christ.
5. **Romans 12:10:** Love **one another** with brotherly affection. **Outdo one another** in showing honor.
6. **Romans 12:16:** Live in harmony with **one another**.
7. **Romans 14:13:** let us not pass judgment on **one another** any longer...not put a stumbling block
8. **Romans 15:7:** Therefore welcome **one another** as Christ has welcomed you
9. **Galatians 5:13:** through love serve **one another**.
10. **Galatians 5:15:** But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by **one another**.
11. **Galatians 6:2:** Bear **one another's** burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
12. **Ephesians 4:25-32:** we are members **one of another**.
13. **Colossians 3:9:** Do not lie to **one another**
14. **James 4:11:** Do not speak evil against **one another**, brothers.
15. **James 5:9:** Do not grumble against **one another**, brothers
16. **James 5:16:** confess your sins to **one another** and pray for **one another**
17. **1 Thessalonians 5:15:** always seek to do good to **one another** and to everyone.

In the relational emptiness of our world, the church is a context where we are learning to love and learning to trust again.

**John Stott** - "It is easier to be enthusiastic about Humanity with a capital 'H' than it is to love individual men and women, especially those who are uninteresting, exasperating, depraved, or otherwise unattractive. Loving everybody in general may be an excuse for loving nobody in particular." *John Stott, The Letters of John, Revised Edition, p. 147*

**Covenant Membership** - We call membership "Covenant Membership" because a covenant is a relational commitment.

**Galatians 6:10** *So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

## **2. Membership Matters because the church is one unified body with many interdependent parts.**

**1 Corinthians 12:13-27** - <sup>12</sup>For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.<sup>13</sup> For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves<sup>[d]</sup> or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. <sup>14</sup>For the body does not consist of one member but of many. <sup>15</sup>If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? <sup>18</sup>But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. <sup>19</sup>If all were a single member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>As it is, there are many parts,<sup>[e]</sup> yet one body. <sup>21</sup>The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." <sup>22</sup>On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,<sup>23</sup> and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty,<sup>24</sup> which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it,<sup>25</sup> that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup>If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

Q: Where do you see unity in this body metaphor?

Q: Where do you see diversity in this body metaphor?

**3. Membership Matters because the elders are accountable to God to care for the flock entrusted to them by God.**

**Acts 20:28** - <sup>28</sup> *Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God,<sup>[a]</sup> which he obtained with his own blood.*

**Hebrews 13:17** - <sup>17</sup> *Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this*

Covenant Membership is how the KCC elders answer this question, “Who is the flock whom have willingly committed themselves to be under our care?”

See also: 1 Peter 4:2-3; 1 Thes 4:12-13

**4. Membership Matters because it gives the congregation a vital role in decision-making.**

**Acts 15 as Elder-Led Congregationalism**

1. The Apostles and elders in Jerusalem came together and debated. (Acts 15:6-7)
2. James (an elder) proposes a solution (Acts 15:19-21)
3. The apostles, elders, and the whole church come to an agreement (Acts 15:22)

**Acts 15:22** - <sup>22</sup> *Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas.*

**KCC Covenant Membership Process**

1. Membership Matters Class
2. Conversation with a Pastor
3. Covenant Commitment