

MEMBER, MEMBERS, MEMBERSHIP

Lot was a prominent **member** of Sodom. He sat at the city gates, which was where rulers sat in ancient times.

- **Genesis 19:1:** "And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;"

When Jacob met Esau, the first **members** of his family who met Esau were his handmaids (Bilhah and Zilpah) and their children. (Jacob loved them the least.)

- **Genesis 33:4-6:** "And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant. Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves."

When Jacob met Esau, the second **members** of his family who met Esau were Leah and her children. (Jacob loved Leah more than his handmaids.)

- **Genesis 33:7:** "And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves."

When Jacob met Esau, the last **members** of his family who met Esau were Rachel and Joseph. (Jacob loved them the most,

by a wide margin.)

- **Genesis 33:7:** "And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves."

The family **members** of the people who rebelled with Korah were given a chance to flee (and save themselves from the wrath of God), but they didn't.

- **Numbers 16:26-27:** "And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of their's, lest ye be consumed in all their sins. So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children."

The spies told Rahab that they would spare the life of her family **members**, as long as she didn't betray them to the king of Jericho.

- **Joshua 2:14, 18:** "And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee. ... Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee."

The Israelites took 400 female virgins from Jabeshgilead and brought them to Shiloh, after they slaughtered all of their

family **members**. (They had made a wicked and bloody plan to obtain wives for the Benjamites and were carrying it out. In those days people did whatever was right in their eyes, and much of what they did was evil.)

- **Judges 21:10-12:** "And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children. And this is the thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man. And they found among the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead four hundred young virgins, that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan."

Saul condemned an entire household to death, simply because he was angry at a single **member** of that household. (He was a cruel and bloody man.)

- **1 Samuel 22:16:** "And the king said, Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou, and all thy father's house."

Job said that all his **members** were as a shadow. (It seems that his disease had caused him to lose weight.)

- **Job 17:7:** "Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all my members are as a shadow."

David said that all his **members** were written in God's book. (This seems to mean that God has a book which contains a detailed list of our body parts. When Jesus said that every hair

on our head was numbered, He was being serious.)

- **Psalms 139:16:** "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

Fights between family **members** are compared to trying to breach the bars of a castle. They're very hard to resolve.

- **Proverbs 18:19:** "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle."

In the millennium there will be a few cases when a priest can approach a dead body, even though doing that will defile him. This will be restricted to the death of immediate family **members**. (The same was true under the Mosaic Law.)

- **Ezekiel 44:25:** "And they shall come at no dead person to defile themselves: but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband, they may defile themselves."

God said that the tribe of Ephraim wouldn't be wholly destroyed. However, its **members** would be scattered among the nations and would become wanderers.

- **Hosea 9:16-17:** "Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit: yea, though they bring forth, yet will I slay even the beloved fruit of their womb. My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations."

When the world reaches a point in the end times when everyone is violent and evil, families will be at war with themselves. Each family **member** will be against the others, and will rise up against them.

- **Micah 7:2, 6:** "The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net. ... For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house."

God expects family **members** to treat one another well. (Since all of mankind is one family, God expects us to treat one another with love and kindness, not treachery and malice.)

- **Malachi 2:10:** "Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?"

Jesus warned that persecution may arise for Christians out of the **members** of their own household.

- **Matthew 10:36:** "And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."
- **Mark 13:12:** "Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death."

Churches don't have the option of ignoring sin in the life of its **members**. Those who are doing evil must be confronted, and if they won't repent then they must be removed from the church.

- **Matthew 18:17:** "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

When Jesus sent 70 disciples out to preach, He commanded them to find a local house and remain there. They were to stay in that one house even if there was no family **member** of peace in the house.

- **Luke 10:5-7:** "And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house."

When Jesus sent 70 disciples out to preach, He told them that some cities would accept the **members** who Jesus dispatched.

- **Luke 10:8:** "And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:"

When Jesus sent 70 disciples out to preach, He told them that some cities wouldn't accept the **members** who Jesus dispatched.

- **Luke 10:10:** "But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,"

If a city refused to accept one of the 70 disciples who Jesus sent out to preach, all the **member** could do was wipe the dust off of their feet as a testimony against that city and then leave. They weren't allowed to punish the city in any way.

- **Luke 10:11:** "Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

When the **members** of the 70 disciples who Jesus sent out to preach entered into a city, the kingdom of God had come near to them. This was true regardless of whether the city accepted them.

- **Luke 10:11:** "Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

The kingdom of God isn't as large as it appears to be. Many of its **members** aren't saved at all, but instead are unrepentant sinners. (Leaven makes bread rise and appear to be bigger than it actually is. In the Bible, leaven is always symbolic of sin.)

- **Luke 13:20-21:** "And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

During Abraham's lifetime, he purchased a tomb (a cave) that

was used to bury his family **members**.

- **Acts 7:16:** "And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem."

Paul said that those who knew him from the beginning of his life would agree that he had once been a **member** of the strictest sect of Pharisees.

- **Acts 26:5:** "Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee."

The body of Christ has many different **members**.

- **Romans 12:4:** "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:"

Gaius and Crispus were **members** of the Corinthian church.

- **1 Corinthians 1:14:** "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;"

The household of Stephanas were **members** of the Corinthian church.

- **1 Corinthians 1:16:** "And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other."

The Corinthian church was in such terrible shape that its

members were taking one another to court.

- **1 Corinthians 6:1, 6:** "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? ... But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers."

The **members** of the Corinthian church weren't careful to keep God's commandments. Instead they were defrauding one another.

- **1 Corinthians 6:8:** "Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren."

When it comes to local churches, their **members** aren't supposed to all have the same spiritual gift. That would cripple the church (since vital functions would be missing from the body).

- **1 Corinthians 12:17:** "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?"

A human body that only has one **member** isn't a body at all. Instead it's just a body part.

- **1 Corinthians 12:19:** "And if they were all one member, where were the body?"

There are many different **members** in the church, but it's all one body of Christ. The church needs all of those differences and benefits from them.

- **1 Corinthians 12:20:** "But now are they many members, yet but one body."

The **members** of a church can't tell the rest that they're not needed. The church needs all of its different parts.

- **1 Corinthians 12:21:** "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."

The church must not cast out those who are feeble or less honorable. Instead the body must care for all of its **members**, because it's worse off without them.

- **1 Corinthians 12:22-25:** "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."

All genuine Christians are **members** in the body of Christ.

- **1 Corinthians 12:27:** "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

All Christians are automatically **members** of the church (the body of Christ).

- **Ephesians 4:25:** "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another."

All Christians are one body. We're all **members** of the body of Christ.

- **Ephesians 4:25:** "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another."
- **Ephesians 5:30:** "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."

Paul referred to the **members** of the Philippian church as his brothers in Christ. (This was a common theme throughout his letters.)

- **Philippians 3:1:** "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe."
- **Philippians 4:1:** "Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved."
- **Philippians 4:8:** "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Euodias and Syntyche were **members** of the Philippian

church.

- **Philippians 4:2:** "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord."

Paul wanted the Thessalonian church to focus on faithfulness and pleasing God. He didn't suggest that the church could sacrifice those two goals in order to grow and attract new **members**.

- **1 Thessalonians 4:1:** "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more."

Obedience to God in all things is a requirement for church **membership**.

- **2 Thessalonians 3:6:** "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

Those who reject the teachings of the apostles aren't allowed to be church **members**.

- **2 Thessalonians 3:6:** "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

Paul taught that churches must watch over its **members** and be aware of the lives that they're living. This is because some

people claim to know God but actually don't, and when that happens the church must not ignore that situation. (Instead the church must rebuke those who are living in sin.)

- **Titus 1:13, 16:** "This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; ... They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

Christians must not speak evil of one another. (This is different from rebuking sin, or disciplining church **members** who are living in sin. For example, this letter is full of rebukes but it's not evil.)

- **James 4:11:** "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge."

All of the **members** of the church should submit to one another. (In other words, Christians must serve one another instead of trying to rule over each other.)

- **1 Peter 5:5:** "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

All of the **members** of the church should be humble.

- **1 Peter 5:5:** "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud,

and giveth grace to the humble."

The younger **members** of the church should submit themselves to the older members of the church.

- **1 Peter 5:5:** "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

Jesus promised that those who overcome (which are those who believe in Him) will be a pillar in the temple of God, and they will never leave that temple. (This seems to mean that their salvation and **membership** in His kingdom are secure and will never be lost.)

- **Revelation 3:12:** "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."