

TOGETHER SERIES PART 3

UNDERSTANDING MEMBERSHIP

THE POWER OF TOGETHER

This time we look at the practicalities of being a **counter-cultural, committed community of Christ followers on mission.**

1. ATMOSPHERE

Grace

Secure and motivating: Eph 2:8-10, 1 Cor. 15:10, Titus 2:11-14

Family

Secure and motivating: 1 Thes. 2:7-8, 11-12

Mission

Individually and collectively: Matt. 4:19, Matt. 28:19, 1 Thes. 1:8

Encouragement

John Piper: “Those with big-hearts have their heat sensors adjusted for embers of grace that they can fan. Others, have buckets of criticism ready to pour on the ashes of imperfection.”

If you disagree/dislike something, ask, “Does this fall into the category of important?” If not, cheerfully let it slide (Pr. 19:11, 17:9).

Only bring criticism/complaint/tricky/hard communication in person (face to face, or by phone if face-to-face is not possible). Never bring it by email or text or any other written form of comms.

Unity

- If you have an issue with someone, go and talk to them about it. If that doesn't work, draw in someone else. If that doesn't work, draw in an elder(s) to help resolve it (Matt. 18:15-17).

- If you know someone has an issue with you, go and talk to them (Matt. 5:23-24) (but remember to tell them that they should have come to you first!).
- Never gossip (2 Cor. 12:20, 1 Tim. 5:13). That is divisive, and therefore very, very serious. Also, do not use social media in divisive ways.
- Always believe the best of others.

2. BELIEFS AND VALUES

Please see our website for our primary **beliefs** (Statement of Faith). **Values** are things we especially value. They are the personality of our church. We value many things, especially the following “ands:”

- Word and Spirit
- Evangelism and Discipleship
- Prayer and Action
- Church and City
- Generationally and Ethnically diverse

Which side of each “and” you feel stronger in?

3. THE IMPORTANT OF BALANCE

Up. In. Out.

Which of these three do you feel stronger in and weaker in?

LTVC

Which of these three do you feel most, at least, joined by?

4. COUNTING THE COST

As we saw in Part 2, we certainly **lose some personal freedoms** when we become members of Monument. The Isms say this will makes us unhappy. Jesus says the opposite. Counter-culturally, we believe Jesus. But this cost must be counted. A healthy **family** does certain things together consistently *whether they feel like it or not*. A healthy **team** practices and plays together *whether they feel like it or not*. Here are the things that our Monument team/family do altogether:

Prayer & Fasting: The usual do 3 X 48hrs of Prayer & Fasting throughout the year. Whilst everyone might not fast, attending the two evening prayer meetings each time is top priority. Corporate prayer sets a tone of unity, of God's presence, and of God-dependence, that we are not prepared to live without.

Sunday Meetings and SST: Sunday attendance is top priority. We are not a "2 out of 4 kinda church." We are here, unless vaycay, medical, or similar. And, thank you so much for all serving on a monthly Sunday Serving Team!

Small Groups and Socials: We are all part of a Small Group of some sort. Different groups meet 2, 3 or 4 times a month Oct-Dec & Feb-April. Socials happen ad hoc throughout the year, and are great for introducing friends to church life, and for fun!

Supporting Financially: We all give approx. 10% of our income to God's mission through the church. 10% is a biblically popular number for giving, and experience shows it is doable for people, and enables our mission to flourish. See the other handout about Financial Giving for more of our rationale.

Sending Culture: Together, we willingly embrace the cost associated with being a generous/giving/sending church. We know that we will sometimes plant out good friends, and we cheerfully send leaders and teams to periodically strengthen other churches, because we know our mission field is not only our neighbor hoods, but also the nations (Acts 1:8).

These five areas of commitment are the base-line applications of membership that many will exceed and few will miss. Committing to these things together consistently **lays the axe** to the Ism Idols in our hearts, enables us to **grow in the Lord**, and enables us to fulfil our mandate of being a **counter-cultural, committed community of Christ-followers on mission**.

Outside of unexpected seasons of life, if you feel that these five areas of commitment are mostly doable for you, then Monument is probably a good fit for you. However, please count the cost, because as per Part 1 of the Together Series, we are determined to be a “revitalized” church and as per Part 2, we are serious about bucking the commitment-shy, individualistic trends in our culture. We are counter-cultural, God-serving, rebels!

5. COME WITH US

Moses said to Hobab, "We are setting out for the place of which the Lord said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us, and we will do good to you, for the Lord has promised good to Israel." But he said to him, "I will not go. I will depart to my own land and to my kindred." And he said, "Please do not leave us, for you know where we should camp in the wilderness, and you will serve as eyes for us. And if you do go with us, whatever good the Lord will do to us, the same will we do to you." (Num. 10:29-32)

We need you. You probably need us. More importantly, this city needs Jesus, and we can serve it better together than apart.

We don't believe in “signing on the dotted line” but we do believe in a declared commitment to membership, i.e. there is a moment of **opting in**. We do this by:

1. Watching/listening to the 3 Together Series messages.
2. Submitting the “Forward Together” form. If you are comfortable with our *culture and commitments*, no need for coffee. But if you have any questions, or if your situation is somewhat unique, let's get a coffee and figure it out together.