

## *Study Guide*

**Study Scripture:** Acts 2.46-47

**Church:** Spiritual Membership or Social Membership

**Messenger:** Pastor Keith

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**Objective:** to explain church membership **spiritual** versus **social**.

**Church Membership:** Spiritual or Social

1. \_\_\_\_\_: v46. So, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,
2. \_\_\_\_\_: v47a. praising God and having favor with all the people.
3. \_\_\_\_\_: v47b. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. (NKJV)

**Two types of Memberships:** Social and Spiritual.

a) **Social** Membership – You connect with the church through *external* reasons such as *social, cultural, or traditional* reasons. Accountability that leads to spiritual growth, a transformed life, and a deep personal commitment to Christ, are rare.

**What looks like:** People who *join* socially often speak in terms of:

- Attendance – ‘I go there.’
- Membership – ‘I joined.’
- Service – ‘I volunteer my time.’
- Giving – ‘I give what I can.’
- Benefits – ‘It meets my needs.’
- Preference – ‘I like the worship style.’
- Organization – ‘I appreciate how the church is run.’

**Point: Social** Membership – Membership is primarily external, social, and structural, it requires little commitment to spiritual growth that leads to a deep relationship with Christ, making it easier for people to leave or live without being part of the church. John 15.5

b) **Spiritual** Membership – Your membership is internal, spiritual, and transformational. You connect deeply with other members, building relationships that shape and change your life.

**What it looks like:** People who are spiritually *added* and baptized in the body speak in terms of:

**Spiritual Family:**

‘This is my spiritual family – brothers and sisters.’

‘We are growing together’

‘We share life together.’

**Being Part of the Body:**

‘We need each other.’

‘I connect my life with this body.’

‘God *placed me* in this body.’

‘I cannot imagine myself separated from the body.’

**Calling and Purpose:**

‘God has called me to serve and give here.’

‘This is where God is using me.’

‘My life is connected to the life of others.’

**Point: Spiritual Membership** – Membership is primarily *internal*, *spiritual*, and *life-sharing*. You receive spiritual life from the Body; your language usually reflects life, identity, and calling. Because your membership is internal and life-giving, not just external or social, it makes it harder for people to leave the church or live without being part of the church.

**TAKEAWAY:**

1. **Social** membership is good, but social connection is not enough for true fellowship with Christ.
2. **Spiritual** membership reflects being committed to Christ, connected with His body, and accountable for spiritual growth, not merely participating for social or cultural reasons.

**REFLECTION:**

1. In what ways does your life demonstrate a true commitment to Jesus, beyond just attending church or participating in church activities?
2. How active are you participating in the life of the church, supporting other believers, and allowing them to support you spiritually?
3. Do you see yourself interdependent with the church for your spiritual growth and accountability in Christ?