

## CCC ROOTED MEMBERSHIP P7

We have been talking about what it means to be rooted, to be a follower of Christ, to surrender your life to Christ, to repent and turn from your way of thinking to God's way of thinking, to be rooted in Christ. This entire series started from one verse, found in God's word, the bible, in Isaiah 55:11 it says, "*My word will not return void.*" Now I love that promise, I preach it to people, I speak it to people, I believe it with all my heart, but the truth is... I look around and a lot times it seems like the word of God is returning void. And I as the Pastor of this local Body of Christ, this church we call Calvary. It seems like people aren't getting it, it seems like people's lives aren't always being change by it. God says, *My word will not return empty*, yet many Christians are lethargic, there life isn't any different then anybody else's in the world. Children of Christians act the

same as the worlds kids act. It seems like God's word isn't returning at all. We'll this I know for sure... it isn't the message. If God says it... it is the truth. So then what is it... and I truly believe the church universal has forgotten who Jesus really is and what Jesus did for you and me.

### Let us Prayer:

Today I want to talk to you about being rooted in belong, church membership. Look at your notes for a moment... the bible talks very very clearly that being a believer in Jesus Christ includes far more then just believing. **It also involves belonging, belonging to Christ...** We call it membership the word membership has been so misunderstood and misused over the years. So today, I wanted to take sometime and talk to you about church membership from God's word, the bible. See the bible teaches that part of the Christian life is a responsibility to

belong. 58 times in the bible the term, “one another is used,” it says, love one another, care for one another, help one another, encourage one another, serve one another, share with one another, pray for one another and that is the mutual ministry of the body itself and that is the true meaning of membership.

The word member has been so perverted and so abused. What membership means today to most people is put your name on a roll. But that has absolutely nothing to do with biblical membership, with what God intended membership to be for followers of Christ. What we are talking about here is not the organization but the **organic membership**, you becoming part of the body. You are the ear here, you are the hand here, you are the foot here... using your gifts and talents to make this local body, this local church a healthy and functional body of Christ, were

talking organic membership. Membership is not about who’s in and whose out. Were talking about organic here and not organizational. And what is the real difference with those two, is this **commitment**, we are talking about commitment. The difference between an attendee and a member... is this **commitment**. God is calling you to belong to a local church and to be committed to that local body of Christ. It just like the difference between dating and being married. What is the difference between marriage and dating or marriage and living with someone, commitment? And don’t kid yourself that is what separates the two...

Now I want to say one thing here. I realize when I bring these types of message there are people who aren’t able to be as committed to Calvary as they would like to be either health or like me a Senior citizen. Listen I love you

us Senior Citizens, and I appreciate you and I respect what you do and your as much a part of this church as anyone.

Just needed to say this...

So why are people not committed to one church... I can only equate it back to the marriage and dating thing. You can say whatever you want the truth is if I want to I can have some one night stands and just go to another church if I want to when I want to, stay home and watch some TV preacher and say I am going to church. Why do you think that is ok, because... Hey I am not really committed to you. Want to hear what God's word, the bible calls that, spiritual adultery. You just go and do your own thing wherever whenever because there is no leading from God Holy Spirit as to where you should belong and serve and be committed and use your gifts. It's just you and if this church fill your needs right now maybe you will stay...

if not I will find something else. Answer to that way of thinking... NOT.

Where going to talk about it maybe next week when were talking about discipleship that you cannot grow spiritually in Christ without being connected into a local body. I have had people say to me, Pastor, I am part of the invisible church. When ever I hear that just have to say, "that's great where go you give your invisible tithe, where do you use your invisible gifts and talents that God gave you and when you have a need where's your invisible pastor. Where is your invisible accountability? When the word church is used in the New Testament over 90% of the time it's talking about a local committed together group of believers. It only used once or twice to talk about the universal church that's everyone who has ever been a Christian. When the word church is used it is talking about

a specific local body... the church that meets in Lydia's home, the church that meets in Corinth, the church in Riva, Calvary Community Church. A specific congregation... and if we are going to build a church rooted in Christ, rooted in understanding, rooted in becoming all that God has for us. We're going to have to all have an understanding about this... *"In Christ, we who are many form one Body, and each member belongs to all the others."* Romans 12:5 (NIV) Now circle the word *belongs*. Membership is about belonging. Now it's interesting that in scripture, in the bible the two most common phrases used for the church is the **Body of Christ** and the **Family of Christ**. In both of those pictures membership is important you are a member of a family and you are a member of the body. A hand that is cut off is going to wither and die, a hand is useless if it is not connected to a body, it has no use, no purpose and ear

is useless if it is cut off from the body. So where not just talking about a matter of preference of being a member of a church or not... were talking biblical terms if you believe God's word. the bible... you have to be connected to have life in you. Now I want to tell you all too never ever apologize for the church. Never apologizes for being committed to a church. Because listen it's the only thing that will last on this earth. A 1000 yrs from today if Jesus Christ hasn't come back there's not going to be a Microsoft. A 1000 yrs from today if Jesus Christ hasn't come back there not going to be a World Vision or Compassion Intl, or Campus Crusade for Christ. They are great organizations but they won't be here. A 1000 yrs from today if Jesus Christ hasn't come back there won't be a United States of America. No kingdom last forever. If you're thinking oh yes we will. Let ask you, where is the

Hittite Kingdom, were is the Roman Emperor. No kingdom, no political identity last forever. **A 1000 yrs from today if Jesus Christ hasn't come back or not... listen there still going to be a church.** So my question to you today is where is your faith... Is it in the church that will last forever or something else that isn't going to last forever...

Now I have given you a lot many of which you may have never heard... But let me try and draw a clearer picture for you... God created it all because, God created everything, because He wanted a family. When you think about this it says, in God's word, the bible, that God created the entire universe, **just** so He could created this Galaxy, **just** so He could create this planet earth, **just** so it would tilt on a axes at **just** the right angle to support human life, if we tilt 1 degree this way we would burn up

or 1 degree this way we would freeze up... **just** so He could create the human race, **just** so some of those people He created would choose to become a part of His family and except His grace. **Just** so He could have a family, so He made human race and create **you just** so He could love you.

Let me share something very prophetic with you... If you can ever grasp that concept and you really feel that God created the universe, the planet, and the human race so He could have a relationship with you if you want one with Him. You will never again have to deal with inferiority, low self esteem. Because if God likes me and I like me but if you don't like me ... What's your problem... because it really doesn't matter, because if my Heavenly Father, the bible says that He thought of you before the foundation of the world... Hear that... that's how much you matter to

God. All the stuff that you see around is going to vanish someday, your 401K, your home, your job, your every possession... but not you... because you were made to last forever. It's not an understatement for you to say God has long range plans for yourself, because we are talking eternity. You matter, you matter... and Christ died for you. God gave us His Spirit to live in us... That's how much the church matters to God, the church is a family and the family is the Body of Christ.

Now that's not what most people think. If we were to go out here on the street corner and ask people about church. They would say, A = it's a building or B = church is an event you go to... like I'm going to church... and neither of those are an accurate concept of the church. The church is not a building to sit in... it's not an event to go to; the church is actually a family to **belong in**... It's all about

belong, and the Bible says it is going to outlast your physical family. Physical families don't last. They grow up, they die sometime, there is a divorce, a death, a separation. Physical families don't last but the body of Christ, the family of God will last forever.

1. It's all about **belonging** "...let us do good to all people, especially those who belong to the family of believers."

*Gal 6:10 (NIV)* Circle the word *belong*.

Now would you agree with me that there is a difference between attending a service and belonging to a family? There is a very big difference. And that's what we try and do here at Calvary. We try and move people who attend services here to move from attending to belonging. In rooted belonging, rooted membership what we are trying to do is bring people into the Calvary Family. See being a member, being committed to the Calvary Family is

something that I value and others value very much... and we want to encourage others to become part of this wonderful Body of Christ we call The Calvary Family, why well hopefully after today you will see it is because God has design it that way..

Now we do have formal membership here at Calvary and hopefully I will start that class in September. So if your interested in becoming part of this Body, this local Body of Believers you will have that opportunity coming this September, but till then if you want to be part, you are... because it starts when you make in your mind, in your thinking, you say to God, I will commit to service you here lord. That is what makes you a member. But I would love for you to meet with me when we have our formal memebership class not to get your name on a roll but I do it so you can understand more about Calvary and why we do

what we do... that class will give you the how and why's... See being connected, being a member, being committed to this Calvary Family has meaning and that why I meet and we talk for a few hours because you need to understand that value you have and that meaning and worth you have to this family when you join, were not looking for just a roll of a lot of names. We want you, the hand, the leg to become everything God has gifted you to become AMEN!

You need to understand that you are **not** organizationally connected here but organically connected here with your gifts and your talents.

Let me give you a little church history... Joining a church 50 – 100 yrs ago people joined churches out of and act of conformity. In other words you did it because every body else did it... Everybody did and if you wanted to be a

respected person in your community, to be seen to be a person of morals and values you joined a church.

Now today most Christian don't believe that they have to be a member out of the act conformity, but they erroneously believe that they can be a "Good Christian, a follower of Christ" without being attached too a local church body. And in the weeks to come I am going to talk more about that because listen carefully, "It is a lie" If you think you can be a Good Christian, a follower of Christ" without being attached too a local church body. Your believing a lie. And what is a lie, it is believing something contrary, something against God's word, the bible; and if it is against God, things against God we call, it's sin.

And were going to talk about it next week AMEN!  
Why, because I don't want you to be and God doesn't want you to not understand...for yourself, but also for you to be

a witness to those who are believing a lie, your friends, your family, co-workers, the world.

We start this message off today by saying the Christian life is a responsibility to belong. 58 times in the bible the term, "one another is used," If your not connected how do you, love one another, care for one another, help one another, encourage one another, serve one another, share with one another, pray for one another. And the answer is you don't and yet that is what we are called to do, one for another in this Calvary Family, that is the mutual ministry of the body itself and that is the true meaning of membership. So today belonging is **not** an act of conformity but of commitment. I commit as a member of this local church to love you, care for you, help you, encourage you, serve you, share with you, pray for you. It is an act of commitment and that is what rooted belonging is all about.