

Saints' Internal Responsibilities
("What am I supposed to do as a member?")

- I. This study focuses on the particular responsibilities of church members as a church.
 - A. We have corporate public responsibilities that all are obliged to perform.
 - B. We have mutual individual responsibilities in relating one to another.
 - C. Some have special responsibilities, such as pastors or deacons (where called for).
 - D. All are to have a service mentality. **MAT 20:25-27; GAL 5:13; 2TI 2:24 c/w 2CO 4:5.**
 - 1. Those who love preeminence do not fit nor benefit the church. **3JO 1:9-10.**
 - 2. They have not the mind of Christ. **PHIL 2:3-7.**
 - E. All are necessary members that have a role in the wealth of the church. **ROM 12:4-8; 1CO 12:14-27.**

- II. Corporate public responsibilities.
 - A. We are to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. **HEB 10:25 c/w 2TH 3:6.**
 - 1. forsake: To deny, renounce, or repudiate allegiance to (God, a lord, etc.).
 - 2. Necessary absence from public worship is not a forsaking of assembling but excess unnecessary absences could constitute *de facto* forsaking.
 - 3. "Church" translates *ekklesia* (SRN G1577), which means *a congregation, assembly, a gathering of citizens from their homes into some public place* (Thayer). The very concept of church is one of public convening for presentation to the Lord. **ROM 12:1.**
 - 4. The prophecy of **ZEC 14:8, 17-19** is interesting in this regard.
 - a. The "living waters" days are the era of the Holy Spirit in the church. **ACT 7:38.**
 - b. Jesus Christ is God tabernacled in human flesh. **JOH 1:14.**
 - (1) The word here translated "dwelt" is *skenoo* (SRN G4637) which in its singular or plural form is most commonly translated as tabernacle(s).
 - (2) The King is to be worshipped in the church. **EPH 3:21.**
 - c. God takes the worship of His Son in the church seriously. **HEB 12:28-29.**
 - B. We are to keep the memorial feast of our Savior's sufferings for our sins (Lord's table, communion). **1CO 5:8, 11; 11:2, 23-26.**
 - C. We are to wash one another's feet as Jesus ordained. **JOH 13:13-15.**
 - D. We are to sing congregationally to praise and teach. **HEB 2:11-12 c/w COL 3:16.**
 - 1. Congregational singing is no less optional than other services of worship.
 - 2. "But I can't sing very well." Then make a joyful noise (**PSA 95:1**); take lessons.
 - 3. "I just sing within, like Hannah prayed within (**1SAM 1:12-13**)."
 - a. How does this teach another?
 - b. What if all "sang" this way?
 - c. How about if I preach this way?
 - 4. "Let those refuse to sing, who never knew our God." (Hymn: *We're Marching to Zion*)
 - E. We are to pray together since God's house is one of prayer. **MAT 21:13; ACT 4:23-31.**
 - 1. It is appropriate for a prayer leader to say, "Let US pray..."
 - 2. When one is leading corporate prayer, let the rest be as Hannah (**1SAM 1:12-13**) that there be no confusion. **1CO 14:33, 40.**
 - F. We are to participate in church disciplinary action (and restoration) as needed. **1CO 5:13 c/w 2CO 2:6-8.**

1. Excommunication of a member is not a committee action nor a pastoral action.
 2. The pastor registers the charge and oversees the church court but it is the church that decides upon retaining or excluding a disobedient member. **1CO 5:3-5.**
 3. If the church majority insists on retaining a member whom God has declared unworthy of fellowship, the faithful who stand with God must withdraw from the church. **2TH 3:6.**
- G. Church members are to submit to pastoral authority as exercised from the Scripture. **HEB 13:7, 17.**
1. The pastor is to oversee and feed according to Jesus' will. **1PE 5:1-3.**
 2. The pastor answers to the same law as the brethren. **ACT 23:1-5; GAL 2:11-14.**
 3. Bible-oriented saints have great power from Scripture. **ACT 17:11.**
 4. The pastor makes determinations in discretionary areas where decisions must be made within the framework of God's law since the rule is committed to him.
 - a. This is similar to the principle of Executive Orders which are supposed to facilitate law's enactments, not make law.
 - b. God is the Legislator (**JAM 4:12**); the pastor is only His minister to see that His law is put into practice.
 5. The pastor determines who should become a church member.
 - a. He functions as the *porter* (One who has charge of a door or gate, esp. at the entrance of a fortified town or of a castle or other large building, a public institution, etc.; a gate-keeper, door-keeper, janitor). **MAR 13:34.**
 - b. He determines who meets God's qualifications according to His word and is obliged to baptize those whom God has declared clean. **ACT 10:15, 47-48.**
 - c. As the porter, the pastor determines whether an excluded member is suited for restoration to membership. **2CO 2:6-8.**
 - d. Door-keeping is lowly work of the truly servant-minded. **PSA 84:10.**

III. Mutual individual responsibilities.

- A. We show that we are Christ's disciples by *loving one another*. **JOH 13:35; 1PE 1:22.**
1. There needs to be a personal demonstration of love *one to another*. **ROM 12:10.**
 2. Our love for one another must be expressed in deeds. **1JO 3:17-19.**
 3. If we truly love one another, we will seek each other's good which in turn will bind us together. **1CO 13:4-7 c/w COL 3:14.**
 4. Seeking one another's good should be for *edifying* (building up), not enabling. Be careful as to *how* you love someone. **ROM 15:1-2.**
 5. Fervent love among brethren makes their minister thankful. **2TH 1:3.**
- B. We are to *care one for another* as members of the same body. **1CO 12:12-27.**
1. Church members are one body in Christ.
 2. As members of the same body, church members NEED each other.
 3. As such, we should have care and *compassion* for one another. **PHIL 2:1-4; 1PE 3:8-9; ROM 12:15-16; HEB 13:3.**
 - a. compassion: The feeling or emotion, when a person is moved by the suffering or distress of another, and by the desire to relieve it; pity that inclines one to spare or to succour.
 - b. The good Samaritan is an example of such compassion. **LUK 10:33-35.**
- C. Christians are to *comfort one another*, i.e., to strengthen; to encourage, to hearten; to support, and assist one another. **1TH 5:11.**
1. This is a ministry of edification, of building one another up instead of tearing one

- another down. c/w **ROM 14:19; JUDE 1:20.**
2. Consider how Job comforted others and do likewise. **JOB 4:3-4; HEB 12:12-13.**
 3. Be a comfort to others. Nobody likes to be around a perpetual drag.
- D. We are to use *hospitality one to another without grudging*. **1PE 4:9; ROM 12:13.**
1. hospitality: The reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers, with liberality and goodwill.
 2. entertain: To find room for; to give reception to. To admit and contain; to accommodate.
 3. guest: One who is entertained at the house or table of another. **LUK 19:5-7.**
 4. Remember the account of Mary and Martha: do not burden yourself with overdoing the entertainment. **LUK 10:38-42.**
- E. We are to *bear one another's burdens*. **GAL 6:2.**
1. This does not mean that we fulfill each other's responsibility. **GAL 6:4-5.**
 2. It means that we support each other through prayer, compassion, forbearance (**ROM 15:1; EPH 4:2**), exhortation, comfort, and needed assistance. **ROM 12:13.**
- F. We are to *have peace with one another*. **MAR 9:50; 1TH 5:13.**
1. peace: Freedom from, or cessation of, war or hostilities.
 2. This requires the mortifying of lusts and pride. **JAM 4:1-3; PRO 13:10.**
 3. This requires a deliberate pursuit of that which produces peace. **ROM 14:19.**
 - a. Righteousness makes for peace (**PSA 85:10; ISA 32:17**). When we are personally at war with God, we are likely also to be at war with brethren. **LUK 22:24.**
 - b. Patience and temperance make for peace. **JAM 1:19-20; PRO 14:29.**
 - c. Forbearance and forgiveness make for peace. **PRO 19:11; COL 3:13.**
 - d. Overcoming evil with good makes for peace. **ROM 12:18-21.**
- G. We are to be *forbearing one another*. **EPH 4:2; COL 3:13.**
1. forbear: To bear with, have patience with, put up with, tolerate.
 2. Without this attribute, we are imperiled. We do well to remember our own faults. **ECC 7:21-22; MAT 7:1-5.**
 3. "But men are hopeless creatures, and the less they concentrate on their own sins, the more interested they become in the sins of others." (Augustine)
 4. Those most intolerant of others' imperfections tend to consider themselves to be the model of righteousness. **LUK 18:9-11.**
 4. The merciful will receive mercy. **MAT 5:7; JAM 2:13.**
 5. Love will bear and endure the weakness of others. **1CO 13:4, 7.**
- H. We are to *forgive one another*. **EPH 4:32.**
1. This speaks of private faults which need not be dealt with by church discipline.
 2. The humbled, penitent offender should be forgiven. **LUK 17:3-5; MAT 6:14-15.**
 3. We may even forgive an offender outrightly (**PRO 19:11**) but be cautious that this does not embolden someone's improper conduct.
- I. We are to *submit one to another* as appropriate. **EPH 5:21.**
1. Every member has the power and responsibility to press the claims of God upon one who is out of the way of righteousness. **LEV 19:17.**
 2. The enemy of this vital principle of church health is pride. **1PE 5:5.**
- J. We are to *greet one another with a holy kiss*. **ROM 16:16; 1CO 16:20.**
1. This was fully addressed in a sermon on 4-23-17.
 2. Would you struggle with accepting the words and grammar if God had said, "Greet one another with a holy fist-bump?"