

Notes on “What Is a New Testament Assembly?”

The word behind “church”/”assembly”

- *ekklesia* (ἐκκλησία) – “called out”
- For the Biblical history of the word ἐκκλησία, which meant originally any public assembly of citizens summoned by a herald, it is sufficient to refer to Hort, *The Christian Ecclesia*, p. 1 ff. It is the LXX term for the community of Israel, whether assembled or no. (*The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament*)

What an assembly is not

- An assembly is not the Body of Christ; it is body-like in its character, but must be distinguished from the spiritual Body which is the entirety of believers from Pentecost to the Rapture.
- An assembly is not an organization or branch of a denomination. Every assembly answers directly to Christ alone and is a distinct entity.
- An assembly is not a group of Christians at any given time in any given place.
- An assembly is not a repair-shop for the unsaved. It is a community of and for the believers, which edifies them, then allowing for true gospel work to be accomplished as outreach for the unsaved.

An assembly by New Testament standards

- It's Identity
 - A distinct member-based congregation of baptized believers in a locality.
 - The place of God's dwelling and administration
- It's Marks
 - Christ-centered holiness
 - Headship
 - Truth
- It's Activities
 - Teaching and applying doctrine
 - Fellowship
 - Breaking of Bread
 - Prayers
 - Gospel Preaching
 - Worship

Verses that identify and define the assembly

- Acts 2:41-42 – Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.
- 1 Corinthians 1:2 – Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in

Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

- 1 Timothy 3:15 – But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.
- (In Type) Genesis 28:16-19 – And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel [meaning “House of God”]

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