

The Christian Assembly

“Not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but **encouraging** *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:25

The Christian Assembly

- The Meaning of “Assembly”
- The Magnetism of an Assembly
- The Marks of an Assembly
- The Metaphors of an Assembly
- The Meetings of an Assembly

The Meaning of “Assembly”

The Mention of the Word

The Greek word “ekklesia” is found 118 times in the New Testament

- 115 times appears in English as “church”
- 3 times appears in English as “assembly”

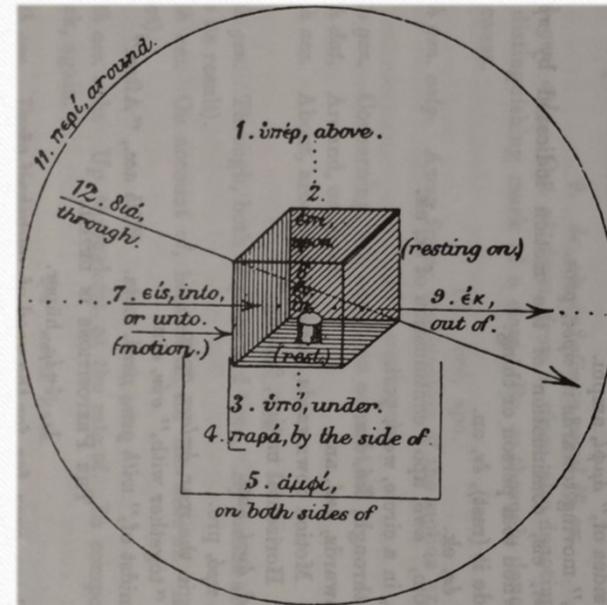
The Meaning of the Word

A compound Greek word:

“Ek” – out of “Klesia” – a calling

“ekklesia” means, “a called out company, called to assemble, an assembly”

“church” from “kuriakos” meaning “pertaining to the Lord” is not an accurate translation of “ekklesia”.



The Meaning of “Assembly”

All 115 references to “church” are an incorrect translation of the Greek word “ekklesia”

“It is worthy of note that the word used to translate *ekklesia* is *kuriakos*, which does not even have the meaning of the word it translates; *kuriakos* is an adjective from the noun, *kurios*, meaning “Lord”. The former word—*ekklesia*—speaks of an “assembly of people” and the later word—*kuriakos*—speaks of “something belonging to the Lord” and then evolves into “the place of worship” (by the Third Century *Kuriakos* was used of places of worship).

The point: the word “church” conveys the wrong concept for the word that it translates in the New Testament.”

The Meaning of “Assembly”

Biblical usage of the word “ekklesia”

In reference to “the assembly of the Israelites” Acts 7:38

In reference to “a gathering or throng of men assembled by chance, tumultuously” Acts 19:32, 41

In reference to “an assembly of the people convened at the public place of the council for the purpose of deliberating” Acts 19:39

In reference to “an assembly of Christians gathered...”

- in a total, or “universal” sense Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 1:22-23

- in a local sense Matthew 18:17, Acts 13:1

The Meaning of “Assembly”

Universal

- Composed of every believer from Pentecost to the Rapture.
- Entered by way of conversion
- Neither male nor female in “the body” Galatians 3:28
- No believer can be put out of the “church, which is His body”
- Only true believers form part of it.
- Perfect unity
- Will not all be together in one place until the Rapture.
- The universal will, without fail, never cease to exist and be presented as a bride to Christ.
- The Lord Jesus said “I will build my church” Matthew 16:18

Local

- Composed of believers within the fellowship of the local assembly
- Entered by way of reception
- Distinctive roles for male and female within the assembly. 1 Corinthians 11:1-16; 14:34, 1 Timothy 2:12-15
- Can be put out by excommunication. 1 Corinthians 5:11.
- False professors can creep in
- Can be division, factions, schisms
- The assembly should regularly be all together.
- The local can cease, the testimony removed in judgment. Revelation 2:5
- Men can build into an assembly with their teaching. 1 Corinthians 3.

The Meaning of “Assembly”

Incorrect uses of the word “church”

- As a building where religious meetings are held: “It’s time to go to church”. The “church” is not the building, it is the people.
- As a reference to a denominational group: “The Pentecostal Church” “The Lutheran Church” “The Anglican Church”.
- As a reference to the established form of religion in a country: “The Church of England”

Summary:

- 1) Occurrences of the word “ekklesia” and its meaning, “a called out company, an assembly”.
- 2) New testament usage of the word.
- 3) The word “church” is not the correct word to translate “ekklesia”. Nothing wrong with the word per say and our use of it. Just note that church comes from “kuriakos” and means “pertaining to the Lord”. The best word is “assembly”.
- 4) Differences between the local assembly and universal body of Christ.
- 5) Incorrect uses of the word “church” today.

The Magnetism of an Assembly

“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them”
Matthew 18:20

Common objections to the use of this verse as a description of a local assembly:

- 1) Does not contain all the truth about the functions of the assembly.
- 2) No assemblies existing when these words were spoken.
- 3) It is a matter of personal fellowship
- 4) It is a matter of discipline.

1a) Yes, just as John 3:16 does not provide all of the doctrine of the gospel but is true. This truth is in embryo form, a simple statement that contains a precious principle of gathering and His promised presence.

2a) Correct, he was giving instruction for local assemblies that at that point did not exist. Not a reference to how local synagogues should operate.

3a) Extends beyond to being an assembly matter: from “thee and him alone” to “two or three” to “tell it to the church” to the “binding and loosing”, the action on earth implemented by divine decree.

4a) It is in the context of assembly discipline. 1 Corinthians 5:4 parallels this, “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together”. However, what is true in the context of an assembly discipline meeting, is true in each other meeting of the assembly where Christians are gathered together “in My name”.

The Magnetism of an Assembly

Matthew 18:20

- “gathered together” perfect, passive, participle. “having been gathered together” The passive indicates another has done the gathering, the Holy Spirit.
- “in my name” This “in” is the Greek word “eis” meaning unto or direction toward. The Lord Jesus Himself is the central attraction, the gathering center. Further to the idea of movement towards, “eis” marks the “entrance into a state or sphere”. It marks relationship and identification, within the sphere of his name, person, and authority.
- “in the midst” This “in: is the Greek word “en” meaning “in”. The idea is location and the pre-eminence of His place in the gathering.

What forms the basis of my being a part of the Langley Christian Assembly?

Convenience of location? Real estate prices? A charismatic leader? Children that are my kid’s age? Get along well with the believers?

Can I say, my underlying reason is: I have been Spirit gathered unto the person of the Lord Jesus Christ as our gathering Center. The primary attraction being, his promised spiritual presence in our midst.

“where I am, there will my servant be” John 12:26

The Marks of an Assembly

Non-denominational

Four characteristics of a denomination:

- 1) A distinguishing name
- 2) A union of multiple churches
- 3) A human leader or head
- 4) A earthly center or headquarters

Example: Southern Baptist Convention

- 1) "Baptist"
- 2) More than 50,000 participating churches
- 3) Michael Routt, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention
- 4) The Executive Committee – SBC, 901 Commerce Street, Nashville, TN

The Marks of an Assembly

Baptist Church– we believe in baptism by immersion

Presbyterian Church– we believe assembly leadership being via a body of elders

Lutheran Church – we believe in justification by faith as Luther did

United Church– we believe in assembly unity

We do not take any other distinguishing name, but gather alone to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are terms that others have applied to assemblies which we reject: “Brethren” “Plymouth Brethren” etc.

We gather alone to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and take no names to identify ourselves other than what the scriptures would use of all: “believer” “Christian”

The Metaphors of an Assembly

Local assembly aspect, absence of article in each – the assembly in characteristic is:

Pillar and ground of truth - veracity

House – authority

Temple - sanctity

Tilled field - productivity

Building - quality

Body - diversity

Bride - intimacy

Epistle - transparency

Chaste Virgin - fidelity

Lampstand – testimony

The Meetings of an Assembly

Gospel Meeting: 1 Thessalonians 1:8

Report Meeting: Acts 14:27, Acts 15:4

Discipline Meeting: 1 Corinthians 5:4-5

Remembrance Meeting: Acts 2:42, 1 Corinthians 11, Acts 20:7

Teaching Meeting Acts 18:11, Acts 20:7

Prayer Meeting Acts 2:42, Acts 4:31

Commendation Meeting Acts 13:3

Elder's Meeting: Acts 20:17