

The Word “Church”

Eph. 1:22-23

Introduction:

- A. The word “church” has many meanings in today's society.
 - 1. Used *abstractly* — “The church, the state, the home.”
 - 2. Used *denominationally* — “Church of Christ”, Methodist church, etc.
 - 3. Used *materially* — a building.
- B. The word “church” needs to be studied for its biblical meaning.
 - 1. Word is used in 114 verses in the New Testament.
 - 2. *Ekklesia* — a called out assembly — assemblies of various kinds. (cf. Acts 19:32, 39, 41)
 - 3. Suppose never heard of church and begin reading Bible - would soon learn that church used in different ways.

Discussion:

- I. All The Saved Called “Church”. (Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:47; Eph. 4:4; 1:22,23; Heb. 12:22,23).**
 - A. Not saved, then join church — saved are church.
 - B. Not saved, then added later. (Acts 2:36-38,47).
 - C. The “assembly” of the Lord added together in Him. (Acts 2:41,47; 5:14; 11:24).
- II. Local Groups Called “Churches”. (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; 16:1; Rev. 1:7).**
 - A. Groups with organizational structure.
 - 1. Overseers appointed. (Acts 14:26; 1 Pet. 5:1-5).
 - 2. Recognizable bounds of membership. (1 Cor. 14:23).
 - a. One can be member at one place while at another (Rom. 16:1).
 - b. Not merely a loose and vague boundary as some teach.
 - 3. Could and should be joined. (Acts 9:26).
 - a. Paul was later in church at Antioch. (Acts 13:1).
 - b. No record of “membership at large”.
 - 4. One could be put out of it. (3 John 9)
 - B. Groups were not tied to larger organization. (Acts 14:26; 20:17; Tit. 1:5).
 - C. Groups were tied together by common authority, faith and practice. (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 16:1; Col. 4:16).
 - 1. Had same pattern of worship: L.S., singing, prayer, teaching, giving.
 - 2. Had same pattern of work: Evangelism (Phil. 4; 2 Cor. 11:8); Relief (1 Cor. 16:1,2); Edification (Eph. 4)
- III. Local group called “church” when assembled together. (1 Cor. 11:20,21; 1 Cor. 14:34,35).**
 - A. One is “in church” even “at home” when viewed in first two senses.
 - B. One has duty to be a part of assembled church. (Heb. 10:25).
 - C. One can say that he goes to church in this sense of the word.

Conclusion:

- A. Called “Church of Christ”, “church of God”, etc. in each sense.
- B. One needs to be in the church in each sense.
 - 1. That is to say, he is to be one of God's saved.
 - 2. That is to say, he is to become a part of the local organization.
 - 3. That is to say, he is to assemble when the church meets.
- C. Why not become one of God's saved, a member of His church, then become a part of a faithful local church, then be in church when it is assembled.