

THE LOCAL CHURCH OR ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Many have never understood the importance of the local church or assembly of Christians
- B. Must understand the word "CHURCH" = "ekklesia" – literally "a calling out of" = "assembly" (In Vine's dictionary under "church" he says "see assembly") "ASSEMBLY" has two applications to companies of Christians:
 - 1. The whole company of the redeemed throughout the present era Matt 16:18
 - 2. To a company of professed believers 1Cor 1:2
 - a. Singular in number Matt 18:17 (RV Congregation)
 - b. Plural in reference to more than one Rom 16:16
- C. Let's examine the whole field of the local assembly

DISCUSSION:

I. THE FACT OF THE LOCAL ASSEMBLY OF EARLY CHRISTIANS

- A. "Place shaken where they were assembled" Acts 4:31
- B. "Twelve called multitude of disciples" Acts 6:2
- C. "Assembled themselves with the church" Acts 11:25,26
- D. "Disciples came together" Acts 20:7
- E. Instructions to church at Corinth: 1Cor 5:4; 11:17,18,20,33,34
- F. Paul & Peter "before them all" (assembled) Gal 2:14
- G. "Sing in the midst of church" (assembly) Heb 2:12
- H. "Not forsaking the assembling" Heb 10:25
- I. Brethren "If there come unto your assembly" Jas 2:2
- J. Note: these passages also emphasize importance of The assembly as well as the fact of it.

II. WHERE SHOULD CHRISTIANS ASSEMBLE?

- A. In one sense, place is unimportant Jhn 4:20-24
- B. In another sense, the place is important
 - 1. An assembly necessitates a place for doing so
 - 2. For Christians to be faithful in their assembling, the place needs to be well known
- C. Early Christians assembled at various places:
 - 1. Private homes Philemon 1:2; Rom 16:3-5; 1Cor 16:19; Col 4:15
 - 2. The Jewish temple Acts 2:46
 - 3. In an upper room Acts 20:7-9
 - 4. In a school building Acts 19:9,10
- D. Caution must be exercised to keep the place of our assembling from becoming an end within itself. The place of assembly just needs to be adequate for authorized activities while assembled

III. WHEN SHOULD CHRISTIANS ASSEMBLE?

- A. First day of the week: Acts 20:7; 1Cor 16:1,2
- B. Daily Acts 2:46; 19:9,10 (disputed = reasoned with or preached to)
- C. For special purposes Acts 6; 14:26,27

IV. WHY SHOULD CHRISTIANS ASSEMBLE?

- A. For worship Acts 20:7; 1Cor 16:1,2; Heb 2:12
- B. For discipline of the unruly Matt 18:15-17; 1Cor 5:4
- C. To take care of special needs Acts 6:1-4
- D. For teaching Acts 11:25,26; 19:9,10
- E. To report the results of evangelism Acts 14:26,27
- F. To discuss matters of difference between and among brethren Acts 15 (concerning circumcision) Gal 2:11-14 (Paul withstood Peter)
- G. To read the Scriptures 1Thess 5:27; Col 4:16
- H. Exhort and provoke to love & good works Heb 10:24,25
- I. Some of these must be done each week others as necessary or desired

V. CHRISTIAN'S DUTY TO ASSEMBLE

- A. It is a command Heb 10:25; (Note Matt 7:21; Rev 22:14)
- B. If one fails through neglect, he does not:
 - 1. Perform duties to be discharged in the assembly
 - 2. Receive the benefits afforded by the assembly
- C. Understanding these principles, how many assemblies must one neglect before he or she sins; must one quit completely before they sin?
- D. If we have the right to neglect one phase of the work of the local congregation, we have the right to neglect all phases of it.

CONCLUSION:

- A. We must guard against the idea that if we attend all the assemblies, we have discharged all of our duties
- B. However, one's attention, or lack of it to the assemblies is a good barometer by which to gauge one's spiritual disposition.
- C. The Bible does not teach church building religion, but observation will show that those who through neglect fail to attend all the assemblies are also negligent in discharging other responsibilities.
- D. Show me a person who habitually neglects the assemblies, and I will show you a person who is doing little, if anything, else for the Lord.
- E. We must recognize the importance of and the benefits derived from the assemblies of the Lord's people.