

# WHAT IS A LOCAL CHURCH?

## Part 1

### I. JESUS REFERS TO CHURCH

- A. Mat. 16:18 - Upon this rock...
- B. Mat. 18:17 - Tell it to the church
- C. Distinction between church and churches
  - 1. Acts 14:23 - "...appointed them elders in every church..."
  - 2. Acts 14:27 - "when they were come, and had gathered the church together."
  - 3. Rom 16:5 - "Salute the church that is in their house..."
  - 4. I Cor. 4:17 - "Even as I teach everywhere in every church..."
  - 5. I Thes. 2:14 - "The Churches of God are in Judea in Christ..."
- D. Need for assembling
  - 1. Heb. 10:25 - "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."
  - 2. Acts 20:7 - "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them..."

### II. DEFINITION OF CHURCH (CALLED OUT; ASSEMBLY)

- A. OT - calling of people together to hear voice of God
- B. NT - Acts 19:32 - assembly confused - "Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly (church) was confused..."
- C. I Cor 14 - "...whole church come together..."

### III. PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL EXPRESSION

- A. Prayer, worship, praise
- B. Counsel
- C. Fellowship
- D. Training

### IV. STRUCTURE OF CHURCH

- A. Organism
  - 1. Likened to human body - I Cor. 12:12 - "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ."
  - 2. Conception
  - 3. Birth
  - 4. Nourishment
  - 5. Training
- B. Organization
  - 1. Self-governing
  - 2. Self-supporting
  - 3. Self-propagating

C. Divine government

1. Theocracy - *The rule of God through delegated authorities...*

2. Plurality of leadership (elders)

a. Acts 20:28-29 - *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers*

*(1) To feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."*

b. Heb. 13:17 - *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."*

V. PROMOTES ORDER AND DISCIPLINE

A. Dispute between believers (Mat. 18:17)

B. Questions of doctrine (Acts 15)

C. Discipline of moral conduct (I Cor. 5:11)- *But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."*