


Lesson 1

GOD'S CALLED-OUT ASSEMBLY THE CHURCH

The Meaning of the Word "Church"

[In doing these lessons, it is best to use the King James Bible]

The dictionary defines the word "church" as "a **building** for public worship." Let us see if the word is used this way in the New Testament.

<p>Is the word "church" used in the New Testament to describe a literal church building? See the following verses of Scripture listed below:</p>	
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1. Acts 12:5. Can a building pray? _____
2. Acts 15:22. Can a building be pleased? _____
3. Acts 15:4. Can a building receive and welcome people? _____
4. Rom. 16:16. Can buildings send greetings? _____
5. 1 Cor. 15:9. Can a building be persecuted? _____
6. 1 Cor. 16:19. Can a building be in a house? _____
7. Rev. 2:23. Can a building know anything about God? _____

After reading these seven verses, is the dictionary definition given above a correct or incorrect way of describing the way the word "church" is used in the New Testament?

_____ And yet, there is some sense in which the church is a building. The Lord Jesus said that He would _____ His church (Matt. 16:18). In 1 Peter 2:5 we discover that the church is indeed a **building**, a _____ house, composed of and built with (circle the correct answer):

- a. Brick b. Steel c. Wood d. Living Stones e. Cement

Thus, the church is not a **literal** or **physical** building, but it is a **spiritual** building made up of those who have been quickened (made alive) in Christ (Eph. 2:5). Therefore Paul could write in 1 Corinthians 3:9 (at the end of the verse): Y___ (the Corinthian believers) are God's

The word "church" as it is used in the New Testament always means "**an assembly**, a company of people gathered together for a certain purpose." Therefore as we read the New Testament we are not surprised to find the word "church" used with words that mean "gather together, come together, assemble together." Here are some examples:

1. Acts 11:26: "for a whole year they _____ with the _____."
2. Acts 14:27: "And when they were come, and had _____ the _____."
3. Acts 19:32: "for the _____ was in confusion; and the greater part knew not for what reason they were _____."
[The word "assembly" in this verse is the word that is usually translated "church." This verse is not talking about a New Testament church but it is talking about an angry mob of people in the city of Ephesus who had **come together** and had **assembled together** for the purpose of stirring up trouble.]
4. 1 Cor. 11:18: "For first of all, when ye _____ in the _____."
5. 1 Cor. 14:23: "If, therefore, the whole _____ be _____ into one place"
6. Hebrews 12:23: "To the general _____ and _____ of the first-born"

Did the early Church **assemble together** (Acts 2:42,46)? _____ Since the word "**church**" means "**assembly**," it would be unfitting and inappropriate for a person who is a member of the church **not** to assemble together with others who also belong to the church. If you are part of the **assembly** then you should **assemble**! Thus GOD tells us that we are **not** to forsake the _____ (Hebrews 10:25) as the manner of _____ is. Some refused to assemble.

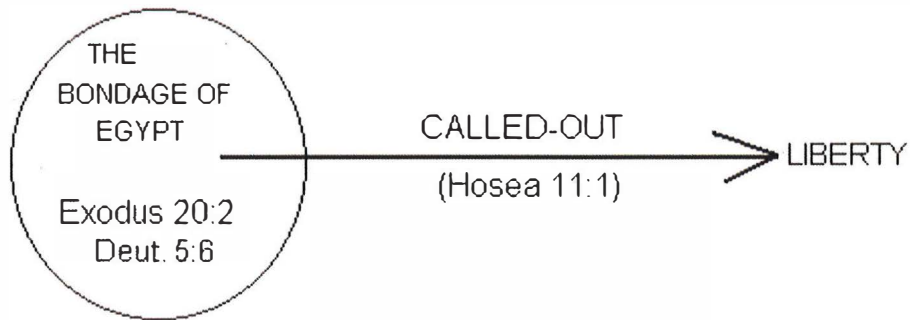
What kind of people assemble together in all the assemblies (churches)--(see 1 Cor. 14:33)? S _____ (those people who have been **set apart** and **separated** unto the Lord).

The word "church" is the translation of the Greek word **EKKLĒSIA** which is really made up of two Greek words: 1) **EK** which means "out, out of" and 2) **KLĒSIS** which means "a calling" (from the verb **KALEŌ** which means "to call"). If we put these two meanings together we have "a calling out." Therefore the term "church" (**EKKLĒSIA**) means "an assembly of called-out ones, a called-out assembly."

In Acts 7:38 we learn about a called-out assembly, the nation Israel: "This is **he** (Moses) who was in the _____ (assembly)." Where was this assembly (Acts 7:38)? _____
 _____ The children of Israel had been brought **out of** what land
 (Acts 7:39-40)? _____ Read Hosea 11:1. Whom did the LORD love?
 _____ Who is God's son according to Exodus 4:22? _____ God
 says in Hosea 11:1, "I loved him, and _____ My son _____ Egypt." Was
 Israel God's called-out assembly (Acts 7:38)? _____ NOTE: This does not mean that the
 assembly of Israelites who gathered in the wilderness was the same as the New Testament
 Church. They were different, but there are similarities. The same word "church" is used to
 describe both. The following charts may prove helpful:

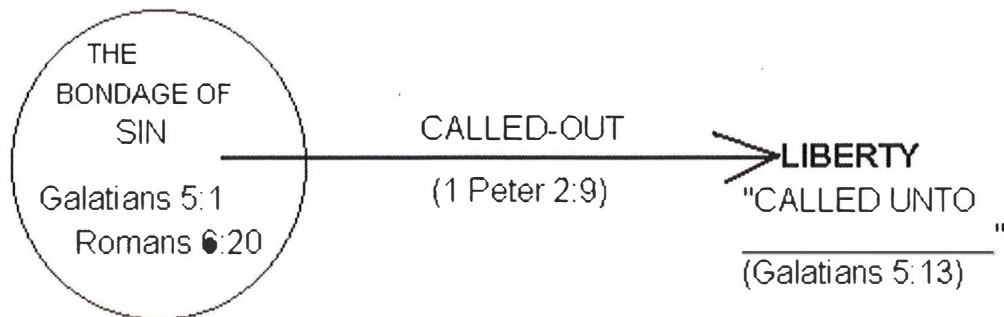
1. THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL

God's called-out assembly (Acts 7:38)



2. NEW TESTAMENT BELIEVERS

God's SPECIAL called-out assembly--THE CHURCH



As believers in Christ we are God's called-out ones! What has God called us **OUT OF** (1 Pet. 2:9)? _____ What has God called us **INTO** (1 Pet. 2:9)? _____

GOD HAS CALLED US]
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OUT OF _____ (1 PETER 2:9)
 _____ (1 JOHN 3:14) **INTO** _____

The church is a **called-out assembly**, a company of people gathered together for a certain **purpose**: "to them who are the _____ according to His _____" (Rom. 8:28). God's glorious purpose for the believer, according to Romans 8:29 is that he might be "conformed to the I _____ of His S _____" (that he might be like the Lord Jesus-- compare 1 John 3:2). When Paul wrote to "the C _____ of G _____ which is at _____ (1 Cor. 1:2), he told them that they "were _____ unto the _____ of His _____ Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).



Today GOD is calling out and taking out a special group of people for Himself: "Simeon (Peter) hath declared how _____ at the first did visit the Gentiles (nations) to _____ of them a _____ for His Name" (Acts 15:14). This special called-out group is **the church**.

According to Matthew 16:18, the **church** belongs to whom?
 _____ According to 1 Timothy 3:15 the **church** belongs to whom?
 _____ Is the Pastor speaking the truth if he says: "This is **my** church!"?
 _____ Should the elders or deacons say this? _____ Those who really understand what the Bible teaches about the church will say, "This is _____ church!" It is **His Church!** Therefore, this special called-out assembly belongs to the living God, the Lord Jesus Christ. In this set of study notes we will continue to study **God's Called-Out Assembly--The Church**.