

Lesson 8 - By A. Nunnery

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What is a Church?

1. The Roman Catholic Church means ALL Roman Catholics
 2. The Methodist Church means ALL Methodists
 3. The Presbyterian Church meaning all Presbyterians
 4. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church means that branch of Presbyterians
 5. The “Christian Church” is used to mean all who worship Christ
 6. The “True Church” is sometimes used to mean all who are born again
 7. The “Church Militant” sometimes means all the born again on the Earth
 8. The “Church Triumphant” sometimes means the born again in Heaven
- This list could go on and on and on – people are so mixed up on the topic

Ekklesia Defined

- Brother Ray’s material is quoted on pages 94 – 95, covered in earlier lesson
 - Pg 95, Ekklesia has been defined repeatedly as “a congregation, an assembly”
 - The Lord selected to use this word when He referred to His organization
 - If He would have meant a hierarchy system He would have used another word
 - The Lord used this word in the singular and plural 22 times
1. The first time He used this word is in the following verse:
[Mat 16:18] And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
 - - There is really no clear meaning of the word in this text other than it’s definition
 2. The Lord used the word Ekklesia twice in this verse:
[Mat 18:17] And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell [it] unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.
 - - In this text, it is clear that Ekklesia refers to a congregation or assembly.
 3. The Lord uses the word Church (ekkleisia) in the plural and singular 18 times in the first three chapters of the book of the Revelation.
 - - In each of these it is obvious He is speaking to a local congregation.
 4. The Lord uses the word Church again in Revelation:
[Rev 22:16] I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, [and] the bright and morning star.
 - - This is another clear example of the word Church referring to local assemblies
 5. Sound New Testament Baptist Churches stand unique in holding to this view

Miss-uses of the Word Church

1. “Church” is often tied to the whole number of saved in the world.
 - - This is the view of the offspring of the Catholics (i.e. the Protestants)
 - - A wide body of Baptists have drifted into this group and lost their identity

Generic Sense of Church, pg 99

- The use of a “Synecdoche”
- **Defined:** a figure of speech in which a part is made to represent the whole
- Consider how the word “Man” is used in the following verses:
[Gen 6:5] And GOD saw that the wickedness **of man** [was] great in the earth, and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually.
[Gen 6:7] And the LORD said, I will **destroy man** whom I have created from the face of the earth; **both man**, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made them.
[Job 14:1] **Man** [that is] born of a woman [is] of few days, and full of trouble.
- In the strict sense of the word “Man,” it refers to one individual
- The examples above show how it is used to refer all men, women, and children
- Shows how the part (man) is used to represent the whole (all men, women, etc)
- The Lord used Church this way in Matt 16:18, already cited

Church used to Obviously refer to Local Congregations

- [1Co 1:1-2] Paul, called [to be] an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes [our] brother, 2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, ...
 - [Gal 1:2] And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:
 - [1Th 1:1] Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians ...
 - [Phm 1:2] And to [our] beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house:
- Lord’s table placed in Church; has to be a visible assembly:** [Luk 22:29-30]
And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; 30 That ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, ...

At Issue, pg 103

- If Catholics, Protestants, and Invisible adherents admit the Church is local, visible, established by the Lord Jesus Christ, it puts them out of the Church.
- History fixes the date of all man made churches at some period AFTER Lord’s
 - Results in people run to invisible claim saying they can organize as they want

Questions

1. What is evidence of the confused state of understanding what a Church is?
2. How has Ekklesia been commonly defined?
3. If an issue is to be “told to the Church”, what is the nature of the Church?
4. How does Revelation 22:16 illustrate the Church must be a visible assembly?
5. Define the word “synecdoche”.
6. How is the word “man” used as a synecdoche in the verses cited in the lesson?
7. Why do so many hold so tight to the idea of an invisible Church?