

The work and worship of the church of the Lord

Mat 16:18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Greek *ekklesia* -- the called out -- a group of people

The Greek *ekklesia* is translated church in English from the German *kirche* from the Greek *kurios* which means “belonging to the Lord.”

Act 19:32 Now some cried out one thing, some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together.

RV concurrencia

Act 19:39 But if you seek anything further, it shall be settled in the regular assembly.

Greek *ekklesia*
RV asamblea

Act 19:41 And when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly.

RV Acts 19.40-41 combined
concurrence

The Greek word simply means a group – it does not refer to a building or a meeting place. The group in Acts 19 were meeting in the theater (RV teatro)

Act 9:26 And when he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples. And they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple.

Some have concluded that Paul wanted to place membership, however, this verse indicates they didn't want him to know where they met.

A common situation in countries where Christianity or religion in general are persecuted.

Brethren worry about whether the church should be incorporated or if that's a violation of the Scriptures. It's a legal structure for owning property or taking advantage of tax laws in the US which allow contributions to be deductible for tax purposes.

But it accurately represents not the individuals in the church, but the group. – the collective action.

Act 4:36 Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, 37 sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Act 5:3 But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land?

4 While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God.”

You didn't have to sell the land – you didn't have to give the money to the church -- it was yours!

But then you lied about the amount as though you thought that we, who had been given miraculous powers, would not have God reveal to us that you lied about the amount.

When we have given our money to the Lord, it is His, not ours! To be used by the group, not an individual.

Interestingly, the IRS agrees – you can't designate where the money will go when you have given it to a non-profit. The non-profit has control.

What is the work of the church?

Eph 4:11-14 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

How do the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ ?

One of the first things to come up is the group has to have a place to meet.

Heb 10:24-26 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. 26 For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

This meeting place becomes a matter of what works – a home may be sufficient for a small group, but local laws and the neighbors make a big difference. Even in small meeting places, someone has to pay for the place and the utilities. It may be donated, but remember that someone is contributing those and they are the responsibility of the group.

As the group grows, homes are insufficient, either because of local authorities and zoning in the US, or simply an insufficient amount of room or surroundings.

As the group grows and the number of children grow, the group may say that there is a need for classes for children.

Eph 6:4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Mat 18:5-6 “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, 6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

2Ti 1:5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

2Ti 3:14-15 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Heb 12:9-10 Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? 10 For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.

Certainly the home is where much of a child's learning takes place, but a structured course is beneficial, especially as children learn much from each other. Our smallest children want the company of those who are like them and often cry when they do not make it to Bible classes. They are encouraged, even as we are, by meeting together.

Act 22:3 “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day.

Paul’s education was planned by his parents – under a knowledgeable teacher of the law. A good plan implemented by his parents.

Teaching by godly parents is good, but so is teaching by those who are also knowledgeable in the subject matter – in this case the Bible.

The church has the burden of going into all the world to preach the gospel (Mt 28.18-19) and of teaching the brethren Eph 4.11-14.

A study of one hour a week will not make an educated person in any field.

2Ti 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

Consider Paul's parents who sent him off to school to study the Scriptures.

Parents, how much do you treasure your child's knowledge of the Bible?

local group, I often asked them, “How many people have you converted to the Lord?”

Why? I wanted to know if they knew how to instruct someone else.

Often, the excuse was made, “But you don’t understand, the work why I am is hard.”

Hag 2:19 Is the seed yet in the barn?

Luk 8:11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

Luk 8:15 As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.

Do you mean to say that there are no good and honest

Joh 4:35 Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.

Act 13:1-2 Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

Five good strong teachers who were effective.
for the work to which I have called them."

There are some things that make it difficult to go, but we work with what we have and the Lord has blessed us materially.

1Co 9:13-14 Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? 14 In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.

Php 4:15 And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only.

the only church that gave me help (with money).

2Co 8:20-21 We take this course so that no one should blame us about this generous gift that is being administered by us, 21 for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man.

We have a responsibility to use these funds wisely and to that end, we seek to support men preaching the gospel who are known to us or known by those we trust.

There are always more needs than we can fulfill, both in evangelism and benevolence.

What is the churches responsibility in benevolence.

Other than local needs, the benevolence is given in two instances – to churches where a catastrophe occurred.

About AD 43 -- Act 11:28-30 And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). 29 So the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. 30 And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

About AD57 1Co 16:1-3 Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come. 3 And when I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift to Jerusalem.

Each of these occasions resulted in the church taking funds that were accumulated over time by the members donating to the general fund from which they supported preachers, their local needs and the needs of those who had suffered from the catastrophe. It could be assumed that these funds were held in separate bags (accounts).

Joh 13:29 Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor.

As we think about what wisdom God has shown us, we realize our responsibility is to build each other up.

1Th 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Have you joined in this effort? Why not?

After considering all the things man may devote himself to, Solomon – from the rich man who could involve himself in whatever he wished – said Ecc 12:13 The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

Why not start today?

Mar 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.