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ECCLESIOLOGY
The Doctrine of the Church



Tuesday, November 23, 2021

Online Bible Study

Zoom Meeting ID 973 678 1217, Passcode 6781293

PART I

I. ETYMOLOGICAL CONTEXT – WHAT IS ECCLESIOLOGY?

- A. “In the English New Testament, the word “**church**” is translated as the Greek word “**ekklesia.**” It is from this word we get the English word “**ecclesiastical**”. This word is formed from the Greek words ek, meaning “**out of**” or “**away from**”, and kaleo meaning “**to call**”. So ekklesia means “**the called out assembly**”.
- B. Church means “**house of the Lord,**” from the Old English words “**cirice**” or “**circe.**” First used in the 13th century. It could mean “**a body of Christian believers**” or “**the place where they gathered.**”

II. QUESTIONS RAISED BY STUDYING ECCLESIOLOGY

- A. What is the church?
- B. What is the “**biblical**” purpose of the church?
- C. How is the church supposed to operate (authority/structure)?
- D. What are the obligations and responsibilities of those who become a part of the church?
- E. By extension, what is a denomination? Why do we have so many different denominations?
- F. What makes this doctrine so complex is the number of “**sub**” issues that should be considered when talking about the church:
 - 1. Membership
 - 2. Life of the body
 - 3. Discipleship
 - 4. Evangelism
 - 5. Polity
 - 6. Leadership development
 - 7. Baptism
 - 8. The Lord’s Table/Supper
 - 9. Discipline & Restoration
 - 10. Preaching
 - 11. Teaching
 - 12. Stewardship
 - 13. Tradition
 - 14. Culture

G. Part of the problem understanding ecclesiology is that the actual word “**church**” does not appear in most English language translations of the Old Testament. However, the “**concept**” of a called out, gathered, holy people of God does exist in both Old and New Testaments.

H. DANGER! DANGER! DANGER! - IT'S ALL IN HOW YOU CHOOSE TO LOOK AT IT.

1. Leviticus 23:3 - “There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a day of sabbath rest, **a day of sacred assembly**. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, it is a sabbath to the LORD.
2. Leviticus 23:8 - For seven days present a food offering to the LORD. And on the seventh day hold **a sacred assembly** and do no regular work.”
3. Leviticus 23:24 - “Say to the Israelites: ‘On the first day of the seventh month you are to have a day of sabbath rest, **a sacred assembly** commemorated with trumpet blasts.
4. Leviticus 23:27 - “The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold **a sacred assembly** and deny yourselves, and present a food offering to the LORD.
5. Leviticus 23:36 - For seven days present food offerings to the LORD, and on the eighth day hold **a sacred assembly** and present a food offering to the LORD. It is the closing special assembly; do no regular work.
6. Numbers 28:26 - “On the day of firstfruits, when you present to the LORD an offering of new grain during the Festival of Weeks, hold **a sacred assembly** and do no regular work.
7. Numbers 29:1 - “On the first day of the seventh month hold **a sacred assembly** and do no regular work. It is a day for you to sound the trumpets.
8. Numbers 29:7 - “On the tenth day of this seventh month hold **a sacred assembly**. You must deny yourselves and do no work.
9. Numbers 29:12 - “On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, hold **a sacred assembly** and do no regular work. Celebrate a festival to the LORD for seven days.

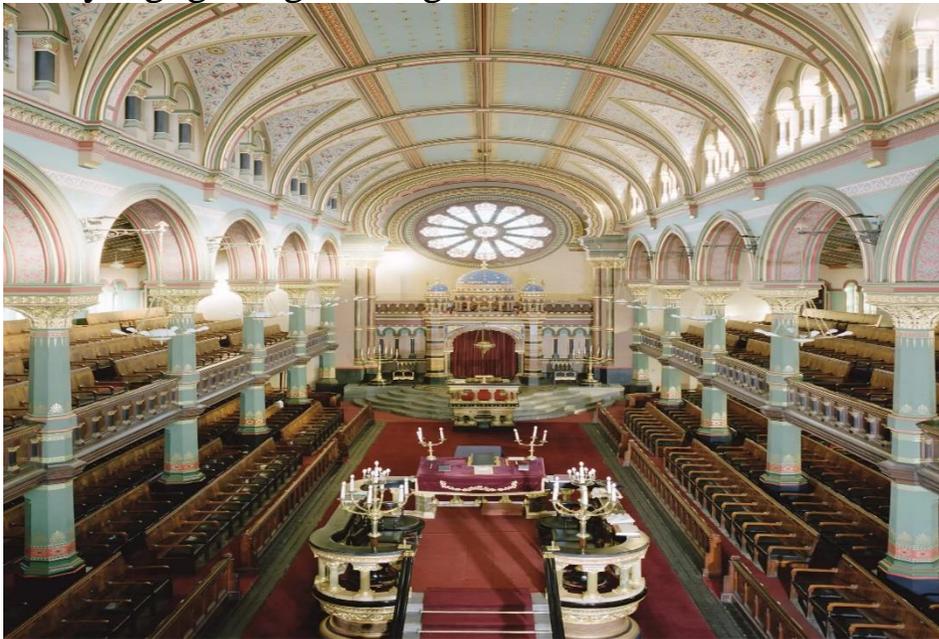
10. [Deuteronomy 9:10](#) - The LORD gave me two stone tablets inscribed by the finger of God. On them were all the commandments the LORD proclaimed to you on the mountain out of the fire, on **the day of the assembly**.
11. [Deuteronomy 10:4](#) - The LORD wrote on these tablets what he had written before, the Ten Commandments he had proclaimed to you on the mountain, out of the fire, on **the day of the assembly**. And the LORD gave them to me.
12. [Deuteronomy 18:16](#) - For this is what you asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on **the day of the assembly** when you said, "Let us not hear the voice of the LORD our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die."
13. [Joshua 9:27](#) - That day he made the Gibeonites woodcutters and water carriers for **the assembly**, to provide for the needs of the altar of the LORD at the place the LORD would choose. And that is what they are to this day.
14. [1 Kings 8:65](#) - So Solomon observed the festival at that time, and all Israel with him—a **vast assembly**, people from Lebo Hamath to the Wadi of Egypt. They celebrated it before the Lord our God for seven days and seven days more, fourteen days in all.
15. [2 Chronicles 7:8](#) - So Solomon observed the festival at that time for seven days, and all Israel with him—a **vast assembly**, people from Lebo Hamath to the Wadi of Egypt.
16. [2 Chronicles 7:9](#) - On the eighth day they held **an assembly**, for they had celebrated the dedication of the altar for seven days and the festival for seven days more.
17. [Ezra 10:8](#) - Anyone who failed to appear within three days would forfeit all his property, in accordance with the decision of the officials and elders, and would himself be expelled from **the assembly of the exiles**.
18. [Nehemiah 8:2](#) - So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before **the assembly**, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand.

19. [Nehemiah 8:18](#) - Day after day, from the first day to the last, Ezra read from the Book of the Law of God. They celebrated the festival for seven days, and on the eighth day, in accordance with the regulation, **there was an assembly.**

20. [Nehemiah 13:1](#) - On that day the Book of Moses was read aloud in the hearing of the people and there it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever be admitted into **the assembly of God,**

I. To complicate the matter even further, there is a difference between:

- A Synagogue - gathering



- The Temple (of Jerusalem) – central place of worship



- The Tabernacle – rituals, portable



III. THE FOUR ATTRIBUTES (MARKS) OF THE “CATHOLIC” CHURCH

- A. From the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed completed at the First Council of Constantinople in 382 AD.

Four Marks of the Church

- In Protestant theology these are sometimes called the **attributes of the Church**.
- They are still professed today in the Nicene Creed, recited in the liturgy of Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican (Church of England), and many Protestant churches' worship services.
- The Four Marks, when defined the same way, represent a summary of what historically have been considered the most important affirmations of the Christian faith.

- B. The possible problem with this.
 C. Do we believe, accept this interpretation?
 D. What do the Bible and Jesus say about the church?

IV. BRIEF VIDEO ON ECCLESIOLOGY

Join us on the St. Matthew Prayer Line daily at 6 am & 9:30 pm.

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