

The Place Of Fellowship

- A. **The church is not a building.** It is those who make up the body of Christ (Christians).
Eph 1:22-23; 5:23-21; Col 1:18, 24; 1 Cor 12:12-13, 27
Note: The word "church" is from the Greek word "ekkleesia" ("ek" - out of; "kleesis" - a calling) literally meaning "a calling out of." Greek usage of the word denotes "a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some, public place; an assembly. cf Acts 19:32, 39, 41; 7:38. With regard to the church of the Lord, it would be those who are "called out of" the world of darkness into the world of light (read 2 Cor 6:14-18; Col 1:13-14; 1 Jn 1:6-7; et al).
1. The universal body Mt 16:18; Eph 1:22
2. The regional body 1 Cor 16:1 (Gal 1:2), 19; 2 Cor 8:1
3. The local body Acts 14:23; 20:28; 1 Cor 1:2; Rm 16:16; Rev 1:11, 20; 2:1, 8, 12, 18
- B. **The church was founded by Christ** (Mt 16:18; 1 Cor 3:11; Eph 2:20) and NOT John the Baptist (Mt 4:10) Peter (Mt 16:19); Paul (1 Cor 1:13) ; Pope Boniface III; Luther; Henry VIII; Calvin; mythe; Wesley; Smith; Russell; etc.
- C. **The church was founded in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost** (33 AD) (Is 2:2-3; Dan 2:44; Lk 24:46-47; Acts 1:8, 12; 2:1,41,47 cf 5:11; 8:1) and not in Rome (606 AD); Germany (1530 AD); England (1534 AD); Switzerland (1536 AD); Holland (1611 AD); England (1739 AD); USA (1830 AD); etc.
- D. **The church is headed by Jesus Christ** (Eph 1:22-23; 5:23-24; Col 1:18, 24; 1 Jn 10:16; 1 Pet 5:4) and NOT the pope; archbishop of Canterbury; "modern day prophets"; preachers; etc..
- E. **The church uses the Bible as it's only source of authority** (Jn 12:48; 20:30-31; Acts 17:11; 2 Tim 3:15-17; 1 Cor 4:6; Rev 22:18-19; Prov 30:5-6; Dt 4:2, 12:32; 1 Jn 5:13)
and NOT catechisms, prayer books, missals, books of the "latter day revelation", etc.
- F. **The church doctrine is Bible doctrine and is defined only by the Bible** (Gal 1:6-9; 2 Tim 3:15-17; 2 Jn 9-11; 1 Tim 4:1-7; 6:3-5; Acts 2:42) and NOT Calvinism, Arminianism, Catholicism, humanism, etc. as defined by traditions, confessions, articles of faith; creeds; treatises, edicts, emotion, subjectivity, logic etc. (Mk 7:6-9; 2 Tim 4:3-4; Rm 16:17; Heb 13:9).
- G. **The church has one organizational plan which demonstrates congregational autonomy** and NOT a system of hierarchy, monks, nuns, reverends, ecclesiastical bodies, synods, councils, general assemblies, conferences, boards, etc.
1. **The head is Christ** (See D)
2. **The body – Christians** (see H)
a. **Elders**
1) **Their title**
a) "episkopos" (bishop, overseer) Acts 20:28; Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:1-2; Titus 1:7
b) "presbuteros" (elder) Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2, 4, 6, 22-23; 16:4; 20:17; 21:18; 1 Tim 5:17, 19; Titus 1:5; Jas 5:14; 1 Pet 5:1, 5

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c) "poimeen" (pastor, shepherd) Eph 4:11; Verb form Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2

Notes: from the word study we see:

(1) All three words apply to the same office:

Titus 1:5, 7 equates a) & b) (cf Acts 20:17, 28)

1 Pet 5:1-2, 5 equate b) & c) (cf Acts 20:17, 28)

1 Tim 3:1-2; Titus 1:5-6 equate a) & b) Acts 20:28 equates a) & c)

thus: a) = b) = c) (this sounds like math to me?)

(2) Preachers and pastors are two different positions cf 1 Tim 5:17

2) Their authority

a) Extends only to their own congregation Acts 14:23; 20:17; Phil 1:1; Titus 1:5

b) Must be exercised only in plurality. No one elder has more authority than any of the others in any given congregation. See above scriptures

3) Their qualifications 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9

4) Their duties

a. 1 Thess 5:12-13; Heb 13:17; plus all the above scriptures.

b. Deacons Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim 3:8-13; Phil 1:1

c. Members (relationship to the elders) I Thess 5:12-13; 1 Tim 5:17-20; Heb 13:17; 1 Pet 5: 5

Notes :

1. Jerusalem (Acts 15) was NOT "central headquarters" for the first century church. It must be remembered that doctrine came from there because that was the home congregation of the apostles (Acts 8:1, 14, 25; 11:1-2, 22; 15:2-4).

a. If Acts 15 authorizes a "central headquarter" then why change it from Jerusalem? (cf Rome, Salt Lake City, Canterbury, Brooklyn, etc.)

b. Is the word that comes forth from the various church headquarters inspired today?

c. Are there apostles in "church headquarters" today?

2. **Those "churches" which promote various systems and doctrines promote confusion** (1 Cor 14:33) and division (Mt 16:18; Jn 10:16; 17:20-21; Rm 12:4-5; 1 Cor 1:10-17; 3:3-4; 12:12-13, 20, 27; Gal 5:20; Eph 2:16; 3:6; 4:4-6; Col 3:15; etc.). Can they all be right? How can they recognize one another?

H. **The church members are called Christians** (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet 4:16 cf Col 3:17) and NOT Catholics, Baptists, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Calvinists, Episcopalians, etc.

(cf Acts 4:12; 1 Cor 1:12) ALL Christians are:

1. **Born again** Jn 3:3-5

2. **Saints** 1 Cor 1:2; 14:33; Phil 1:1; et al

3. **Priests** 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6 (cf Mt 23:9)

4. **Filled with the Holy Spirit** Acts 2:38; 5:32; Rm 8:9-11; 1 Cor 6:19

5. **Children of God** Rm 8:14-17; 1 Jn 3:1-2

6. **Citizens of Heaven** Heb 12:23; Phil 3:2

7. **Saved** Rm 8:1; 1 Jn 1:7; 5:13

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- I. **The church worships in spirit and truth** (Jn 4:23-24) and NOT according to the traditions or doctrines of men Ps 145:18; Mk 7:6-9; Acts 17:22-23
1. **The Lord's Supper** Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 11:17-34 (16:2); cf Mt 26:26-29
 2. **Singing** Eph 5:19; Col 3:16
 3. **Preaching by Godly men** 1 Cor 14:34-35; 1 Tim 2:11-12
- J. **The Purpose Of Fellowship**
- A. **To Worship** Acts 2:42, 47; Phil 3:3; Jn 4:21-24
 - B. **To Love** Rm 12:10; 1 Pet 1:22
 - C. **To Serve** Gal 5:13; 6:2; Rm 12:15; 1 Thess 5:14; Jn 13:1-17
 - D. **To Edify** 1 Thess 5:11; Eph 4:11-16; 1 Cor 12:12-31; Heb 10:24-25
 - E. **To Admonish** Rm 15:14; Col 3:16; 1 Thess 5:14
 - F. **To Learn** 1 Cor 14:31; 1 Tim 4:11-16; 2 Tim 2:15
 - G. **To Work** Eph 4:12; 2 Cor 5:17-20

Note: Can the above scriptures be followed if I am not fellowshiping with the SAINTS on a Regular basis?