

THE CHURCH AS A TEACHING INSTITUTION

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1. The Church is BUILT UP BY THE TEACHING - the Great Commission: "Make disciples of all the nations...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:20). The Great Commission is primarily a teaching/doctrinal enterprise contrary to popular understanding and interpretation.

2. The Church is SUSTAINED BY TEACHING: A consistent commitment to the apostles' teaching. This was the first priority of the apostolic church (Acts 2:42). We must prioritize what is first in the list of the characteristics of the apostolic church.

3. The Church is PERPETUATED BY TEACHING: One of the important topics of the Pastoral Letters would appear to be "didaskalia" (teaching/doctrine). "Didaskalia" has 12 related words, which appear more than 33 times in the Pastoral letters of Paul. Paul wanted Timothy and Titus to consider Church as a teaching institution. So must we.

I am not quite sure whether the Christian assemblies have this understanding of the Church. To begin with, the elders should not be stuck in vain traditions of word ministry practice and precedents in the name of priesthood of all believers, but should develop a biblical vision for systematic and consecutive teaching of the Scripture by gifted men in the corporate gathering of the assembly on Sunday morning (this is the prime time and the best time to systematic teaching of the Word of God). No Bible verse or Scriptural truths prevent us from doing this. The only roadblock is our unwillingness to change and enslavement to man-made precedents in the name of NT pattern. Why are we specializing in "hit & run" type of teaching/Word ministry? I write about this matter frequently on the basis of the feedback I get from frustrated young and old in many assemblies here and around the world. I personally witness it happening in many assemblies (I also rejoice with a minority of assemblies where systematic and consecutive teaching is practiced by gifted men).

We better wake up! Ekklesia is a teaching institution. No wonder, one of the qualifications of the elders is that he must be able to teach. Let us not try to water down these clear Scriptural guidelines in favor of our petty patterns.