

# R – REGENERATE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP / A GATHERED CHURCH

For many countries: to be \_\_\_\_\_ is to be Christian!

In some countries this is still the law. In a few, the death penalty awaits the convert.

In many more: Citizenship = religion (or at least, this is the understanding)

When we discuss RCM / a Gathered Church – what do we mean?

## 1. The Church is **not** the state / territory / the world

**1 John 5:19** And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness (ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ).

This is central to our beliefs and the teaching of the NT. The Church ≠ the Roman Empire or any other empire!

**John 15:16** Ye have **not** chosen me, **but** I have chosen you, and ordained you, **that** ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. **John 15:17** These things I command you, that ye love one another. **John 15:18** **If** the world hate you, **ye know** that it hated me **before** it hated you. **John 15:19** **If ye were of the world** (Εἰ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου ἦτε), **the world would love his own: but because ye are not** (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου οὐκ ἐστέ) **of the world, but I have chosen you out of** (ἐγὼ ἐξελεξάμην ὑμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου) **the world, therefore the world hateth you.** **John 15:20** Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. **John 15:21** But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, **because they know not him that sent me.**

**James 4:4** Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is **enmity** with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the **enemy** of God.

**John 14:30** Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath in me. **John 14:31** But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

**This is obviously distinct from the OT.**

<b>OT:</b>	<b>Church / the Faith = the State</b>  <b>A nation among the nations</b>  <b>Ezekiel 5:5</b> Thus saith the Lord GOD; <b>This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her.</b> <b>Deuteronomy 4:6</b> Keep therefore and do them; <b>for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations,</b> which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. <b>Deuteronomy 4:7</b> <b>For what nation is there so great,</b> who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for? <b>Deuteronomy 4:8</b> <b>And what nation is there so great,</b> that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? <b>1 Kings 4:34</b> <b>And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth,</b> which had heard of his wisdom.
<b>NT:</b>	<b>Church ≠ State</b>  <b>Christians and churches in every state / territory / nation</b>

**Matthew 5:13** **Ye are the salt of the earth:** but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.  
**Matthew 5:14** **Ye are the light of the world.** A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

**Revelation 1:11** Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, **and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.**

**Revelation 1:12** And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, **I saw seven golden candlesticks; **Revelation 1:13** And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.**

**Revelation 1:20** The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

This was all corrupted gradually after 313. It started when Christianity was tolerated, then legalized, and finally adopted as the official Roman Religion.

## **2 God Himself gathers the Church &/ churches out of the world!**

**John 17:2** As thou hast given him power over all flesh, **that** he should give eternal life to as many as **thou hast given him.**

**John 17:3** **And** this is life eternal, **that** they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

**John 17:6** I have manifested thy name unto the men **which thou gavest me out of the world:** thine they were, **and thou gavest them me;** and they have kept thy word. **John 17:7** Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. **John 17:8** For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. **John 17:9** I pray for them: **I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.**

**John 17:11** And now I am **no more** in the world, **but these are in the world,** and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name **those whom thou hast given me,** that they may be one, as we are. **John 17:12** While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: **those that thou gavest me** I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. **John 17:13** And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. **John 17:14** I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, **because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.** **John 17:15** I pray **not** that thou shouldest take them out of the world, **but** that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. **John 17:16** They are **not** of the world, **even as** I am **not** of the world. **John 17:17** Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. **John 17:18** **As** thou hast sent me into the world, **even so** have I also sent them into the world. **John 17:19** And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

**John 17:22** And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: **John 17:23** I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. **John 17:24** Father, I will that they also, **whom thou hast given me,** be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

## **3. God Himself gathers the Church &/ churches by His grace and for His glory!**

**Acts 15:7** And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago **God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.** **Acts 15:8** And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, **even as he did unto us;** **Acts 15:9** **And put no difference between us and them,** purifying their hearts by faith. **Acts 15:10** Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? **Acts 15:11** **But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.** **Acts 15:12** Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

**Acts 15:13** And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: **Acts 15:14** **Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. Acts 15:18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.**

**John 6:44** No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: **and** I will raise him up at the last day.

**Galatians 1:6** I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: **Galatians 1:7** Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

**Acts 5:31** Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, **for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. Acts 5:32** And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

**Acts 11:18** When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, **Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.**

**Acts 11:21** And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. **Acts 11:22** Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. **Acts 11:23** Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

**Acts 13:48** And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: **and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.**

**Acts 14:26** And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. **Acts 14:27** And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed **all** that God had done with them, **and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.**

**Acts 16:14** And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: **whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.**

**Acts 18:27** And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much **which had believed through grace:**

## **4. God continues to gather His Church with &/ by his Church / Churches**

**John 17:18** **As** thou hast sent me into the world, **even so** have I also sent them into the world.

**John 20:21** Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: **as** my Father hath sent me, **even so** send I you.

**Matthew 28:19** **Go** ye therefore, and **teach** all nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: **Matthew 28:20** **Teaching** them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

**Mark 16:15** And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

**Acts 1:8** But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.