

I am thinking how many people gathered at the church home of Aquila and Prisca, how many at Philemon's house, how many at Nympha's, and how many in a number of other **New Testament households**. Even though they met „only at home“, Luke and the apostle Paul use the usual term „ekklesia“ – „**church**“ for them.

Please imagine the true children of God who together fulfill all the biblical **functions** of the church, as we observed them in the second chapter of the book of Acts. The only difference is that there are not 3000 of those children of God, not 300, not even 30. But at first only five or seven. When such a smaller group performs the FUNCTIONS that the first church did, is it a church **from the biblical point of view**? Some believers stop and want to say: „Oh no! Five or seven people is a small group at most, certainly not a church.‘

I am looking at the functions of the church from the second chapter of the book of Acts and leave the question open: Is there something missing for the five or seven disciples of Jesus to be the New Testament church **when**:



1. They lead people to accept the Lord Jesus and to „repent“,
2. they baptize those who have sincerely believed,
3. they converse with the heavenly Father and with living Jesus,
4. they share the Good News and make disciples,
5. they are together, serve each other and love each other
6. they worship God in different ways,
7. they remember Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection,
8. they share material resources as needed,
9. the clear center of their community is the Word of God,
10. devout leaders serve among them,

11. and from Scripture they have accepted their identity as the church?

Is there something missing for such a „group“ to be a church in the New Testament sense?

I will be very happy if in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, new and new churches of the usual format **with new people from outside** will spring up like „mushrooms after the rain“! For example, thirty-members, fifty-members or even hundred-members! I am very grateful for activities that are being undertaken for this in our country. How many believers can you think of who could start and lead a new congregation of just thirty members? (Of course, with appropriate smaller team.) Do you know one or two such Christian leaders?

And how many believers in Your reach can you think of that could start and guide a community growing from five people to perhaps 10 or even 15? Am I wrong if it seems like there is **a lot** of them? Of course, they would have to learn important things for contact with non-believers and, above all, „untie“ themselves in order to really start something with them and properly persevere in it...

You're watching these videos, so I guess that **you yourself** are one of those who could start a small church like this soon! If you had a trained partner at hand, you would renew your relational maps, you would pray intensely and you would reach out to your unbelieving contacts, I estimate that within a month you could have a Discovery of five people around you! I wouldn't be surprised at all if there were six or seven of you in the next few weeks of prayer and more sensitive invitations. And while a few new people believe, you will be moving step by step toward all the biblical functions of the church.

I know that small groups tend to be fragile. When one person lets up, it can be a threat. House churches of ten or more people tend to be more stable. That is why it is important to reach out sensitively with urgent prayers. And **a network helps** a lot, especially a network of leaders, and also a network of similar communities. I mention this in the next lessons.

Lord Jesus, the more I go through the New Testament instructions for Your church, the more I am fascinated by how simple You have set it up... Please give us the courage to try again, with everything...