

## A LOCAL ASSEMBLY.

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A LOCAL ASSEMBLY is composed of all the believers in a city or village. Although in this day of ruin only a few of them may meet to express this assembly. The smallest number possible to form it being two. It is viewed by the Holy Ghost, as the Epistle to the Corinthians shews us, as though it were the whole assembly of God on the face of the earth. "Ye are the body of Christ." "Ye are the temple of God." Such an assembly, when gathered to the name of Christ, has Him in its midst, and has His authority for acting in binding or loosing the sins of an offending brother. (Matt. xviii.) Such an act is ratified in heaven. From this decision there is no appeal, save to Christ in glory; as Jesus "committed [His cause] to Him that judgeth righteously." (1 Peter ii. 23.) The assembly is presented in Matthew xviii. as, so to speak, the last court of appeal. "Tell it to the church." "If he refuses to hear the church, let him be," &c. Standing as the local assembly does as an expression of the whole church, all are involved in its acts, so that, for practical effect, what it does, the whole do, though the responsibility is local. Thus a person received or put out by a local assembly stands as received or put out everywhere. Hence the solemnity of such an action, and the deep sense of responsibility which should fill the hearts of those so acting to and for the Lord. The ruin of the church in no way annuls the authority