

Ekklesia - The Church

Taken from the CP series

EKKLESIA: an assembly of those called out and responsible for declaring war, planning military strategy, and electing those to lead in war and other officials. It was responsible for nominating and electing magistrates, it had the final say on legislation and the right to call magistrates to account after their term of office.

- 1. Where do we get that definition?**
- 2. It's actually correct.**
 - > It ties back into the Ekklesia of Athens in Greece.**
 - > There's a huge amount of history behind the word that the Holy Spirit chose to use to describe this group of people he called the church.**
- 3. An awesome source for this history is:**

C. Rick Renner: "A Light in Darkness". (Pg. 264ff)

(PROJECTOR) - Word church comes from 2 words that.....:

- 1. Gr. > 'Ek' and 'Kaleo'.**
 - a. "Those who are called out".**

(PROJECTOR) - I took excerpts from his book..... We'll read.....

2. 'Kaleo'

a. "It is often used to convey the idea of an invitation that isn't made available to everyone else. Because everyone isn't invited, those who are should view the invitation as a privilege and a prestigious honor to be appreciated, treasured, prized, and revered".

b. Used this way 148 times in the New Testament.

c. Examples: Matthew 22:2-10

> Invitation to the Wedding Banquet.

Luke 14:17-24.

> Invitation to the Great Banquet.

(PROJECTOR)

3. 'Ekklesia'

a. "The earliest use of the word was in ancient Athens, where it was used only in a political context. It was still being used this way when the N.T. was being written."

b. It is a historical, political, and judicial word.

- c. **"In Classical Greece, the word Ekklesia denoted an assembly of citizens who were invited to participate in a closed assembly in Athens. At this assembly, a variety of political functions were performed:**
- **Laws were created.**
 - **Governmental decision were debated**
 - **Policies affecting both internal and external affairs were formulated.**
 - **Key judicial cases were decided.**
 - **Customs and cultural norms were adapted and changed.**
 - **Officials were appointed.**
 - **State decisions were proclaimed.**
 - **The chief magistrates of the land were elected.**
- d. **"Every Athenian citizen was invited to attend the meeting and participate in this ruling body, regardless of his class or status in society; however, only citizens could attend. Delegates were 'called out' from their private lives and 'summoned' to take their seats in this distinguished assembly. In many respect, the Athenian Ekklesia was considered the most prestigious group of people in the land, and people counted it a great privilege and honor to participate in this illustrious body. It's decisions were so far-reaching that they affected every aspect of public and private life. The meetings of**

the Athenian Ekklesia were conducted 30 to 40 times a year."

e. "It is worth noting that political parties and factions were strictly forbidden in this respected assembly. It was a body of equal citizens with equal voices who gathered to assist in the orderly development of society. Thus, the idea that such an illustrious group could degenerate into a group of contentious factions was an intolerable prospect. There was simply too much prestige attributed to the Ekklesia for Athenian citizens to allow its meetings to deteriorate into ugly fights and divisions."

f. "A herald (Kerux) made proclamations at the Ekklesia meetings, which included the following responsibilities:

- Summoning the citizens of Athens to the Pnyx when it was time to conduct an Ekklesia meeting.**
- Opening and closing each session.**
- Maintaining order and providing oversight to the assembly.**
- Bringing correction to members who were out of order.**
- Publicizing the final decisions of the assembly and its leadership.**
- Calling soldiers to battle in times of war.**

"The Kerux was a chosen spokesman for a higher Authority. Consequently, the Kerux didn't have the authority to negotiate or mitigate issues; rather, his role was to be his superior's voice and to speak on behalf of his sender. The Kerux was to lift his voice loud and clear and to accurately deliver the message that had been entrusted to him, regardless of the crowd's response."

- g. The word Kerux is the same term used in the New Testament to describe a preacher's responsibility to proclaim the Word of God. In 2 Timothy 4:2, where Paul admonishes Timothy to "preach the word," the word translated "preach" is derived from the Greek word Kerux. Paul used this word in reference to the task of a pastor or preacher to speak on behalf of Christ and to accurately represent Him. The minister doesn't have the authority to mitigate the truth or to change the message to satisfy his listeners. Regardless of the people's response, the pastor or preacher must lift his voice loud enough to make the Lord's message clearly heard and to accurately deliver the truth entrusted to him by Jesus Christ."**
- h. "As citizens of God's Kingdom, all believers have the right to participate in the affairs and the life of their church - a right that is at once a joyful privilege, a profound honor, and a sober responsibility. Just as the Athenian Ekklesia ruled in matters of law, business, society,**

customs, culture, and judicial matters, God calls upon a local church to exert its influence in every arena of the society in which it exists."

- I. **"Many make reference to the universal Church, and certainly there is a universal Church. (1 Cor. 10:32; Eph. 3:10, 11; 5:23-32). Universal (was) used as an early declaration that the Church at large includes all those who have received Jesus Christ as their Savior.**

However, in Paul's writings and in the book of Acts, the word Ekklesia most often refers to a visible church located in a real geographical location. There are many New Testament examples of this, such as: (1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1). The New Testament mentions such churches in many cities including Antioch, Assos, Colassae, Derbe, Didyma, Ephesus, Hierapolis, Iconium, Jerusalem, Laodicea, Lystra, Melitus, Perga, Pergamum, Philadelphia, Philippi, Pisidia Antioch, Rome, Sardis, Smyrna, Thessalonica, Thyatira, and Troas.

In each city where a church was located, that local church became God's Ekklesia - a body of individuals whom God had called forth to assemble together and further His Kingdom in the hearts of people and in every arena of life."

- j. **"The use of the word Ekklesia tells us that it was never God's intention for the local church to be a small group of silent, unnoticed people who gather to quietly discuss religious affairs. This power-packed Greek word clearly tells us that God's original intent was that each local church would have a voice of influence both in private and public life. Just as the Athenian Ekklesia was a key component in the development of democracy that eventually impacted the entire civilized world, the Lord intends for local churches to have a powerful impact on society. Thus, the scriptural concept of the word Ekklesia can be described as a body of believers who are called out of darkness into light to become citizens of Heaven and to apply God's laws in the affairs of the earth. To be called as members of such a distinguished body is both an honor and a privilege."**