

The Church (Assembly)

The Greek word translated as “church” is ἐκκλησία (**ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ**) [ek-lay-see'-a]. It is translated a few different ways, which as we will see with other words over the course of our studies, is troublesome. And in many cases gives cover to some meanings that would show a particular doctrine or creed as being false. Different words are used to help support, in particular, Catholic or Calvinistic points of view or doctrines in our English bible translations. We will trace them down as we travel the “narrow path”.

The word **ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ** is translated as church, assembly, or congregation, as well as the phrases The Temple of God, The House of God, and The Body of Christ, many times in the New Testament. **ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ** is a compound word formed from the two Greek words **ΕΚ** (preposition) meaning ‘out of, or out from among’ and the word **ΚΑΛΕΩ** (verb) meaning to ‘call, invite, or summon’. When you combine these two words, they are used as a noun. The literal meaning of **ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ** is “**a called-out assembly**”. It refers to an event and/or people gathered together. It is not a **place** of gathering.

Now most, or I should say, a lot of Christians, already know this, but let’s assume we are doing all of this to reach out to the non-Christians that may be wanting to know a little more about true Christianity. Those are the ones we want to reach anyway.

There are two kinds of Christian assemblies... Your local assembly, which meets in a particular place on a regular basis, and the ‘universal assembly’, which will occur at the resurrection. See Hebrews 12:22-23 and Isaiah 66:10 of the Septuagint (LXX). There is no universal assembly before the Resurrection. Unless, of course, every Christian on the planet did a “zoom” meeting all at the same time. Maybe. We would have to use Linux if we tried that. If we tried that with Windows the “blue screen of death” would return and we’d never get Windows back. HEY!!! Let’s try it. (No bias there. ☺)

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ was used of the first Christian gathering which consisted of the 120 in the upper room that had been gathered together in one place (see Acts 1:14-15; Acts 2:1), and to which the Lord then added daily. See Acts 2:47. The meaning of **ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ** was later expanded to include all of the baptized believers in a particular place even though they were too numerous to all meet in the same building at the same time, meeting from house to house (Acts 2:46; Acts 5:11; Acts 8:1, 3). At other times **ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ** was used specifically of the assembled gathering (Acts 11:22,26).

So when two or more come together to study the word of God. That is “church”. And Jesus is there through the Holy Spirit of the Father. Matthew 18:20. And when the two or more finish and leave, there is no more church. It’s not a building somewhere.