

# H3

## Session 21 Ecclesiology The Church Universal

### Key Texts

Ephesians 2:20

Matthew 16:18

### Definition of the Church

#### Etymology

Church, kirk, and kirche from *kuriakon* "belonging to the Lord"

Greek word in the New Testament for church is *ekklesia* from *ek* and *kaleo*. "called-out ones"

Non-technical usage – assembly (Acts 19:32,39, 41) always referred to the assembly, not to the people.

Technical usage development

Old Testament Septuagint (LXX)

*ekklesia* 100x in LXX, always for *qahal* or related word.

Did not have a technical meaning in the OT. Referred instead to various kinds of assemblies.

*synagogue* had potential for defining an assembly of worshippers, but for its Jewish flavor and its particular reference to the building or place of meeting.

*ekklesia* used 114x in NT, 109x in its newfound technical sense.

#### The church universal/local

The universal church: all believers spiritually united in Christ, scattered or gathered (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23)

The local church: local assembly of professing believers (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 4:17)

Both concepts implied in 1 Corinthians 1:1; 2 Corinthians 1:1 – "The church of God which is at Corinth", not "the Corinthian church" as much as "the church as it is in Corinth."

*ekklesia* is never used in the NT for a building, denomination, or state church.

AKA

"the elect of God" Ephesians 1:4-11; Romans 8:33; 1 Peter 1:2

"saints" 1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 1:1

"faithful" Colossians 1:2

"believers" Acts 2:44; 4:32; 1 Thessalonians 1:7

"disciples" Acts

"Christians" Acts 11:26

"brothers" 1 Timothy 6:2



## Pictures of the Church

**Body** 1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Romans 12:5; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:4,12,16  
Relationships of the members (unity, diversity, interdependence)  
Relationship to the Head (Christ): ownership, leadership, sustenance.

### **Building**

Foundation  
Jesus (1 Corinthians 3:10-11)  
Jesus as Cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20)  
Apostles and Prophets, ie. the message of Jesus (Ephesians 2:20)  
Stones (1 Peter 2:5)  
Builder  
Edification (Ephesians 2:20-22; 4:12; 1 Corinthians 14:12; 1 Peter 2:5)

**Temple** (Ephesians 2:21; 2 Corinthians 6:16)

Priesthood (1 Peter 2:5)  
Sacrifices  
Christ (Hebrews 10:12)  
Believers (1 Peter 2:5; Romans 12:1)  
Praise (Hebrews 13:15)  
Selfless service of others (Hebrews 13:16)  
Giving to others (Philippians 4:18)  
Witness (1 Peter 2:9; 2 Corinthians 5:20)  
Intercession (ie., Ephesians 1:16-23)

**Bride** (Ephesians 5:22-32)

Present union (Ephesians 5:22-23)  
Future union (1 Thessalonians 4:17)

**Flock** (John 10:16; 1 Peter 5:2; Acts 20:28)

Chief Shepherd (John 10; 1 Peter 2:25)  
Under Shepherds [*pastor* is Latin for *shepherd*] (John 21:16; 1 Peter 5:2; Acts 20:28)

**Vine Branches** (John 15)



## **Inception of the Church**

Jacob and His Sons?  
Call of Abraham?  
Promise to Adam?

“The church is a new work of God begun in the New Testament era” (Saucy, 58).

Matthew 16:18

Matthew 18:15-20

Ephesians 2:15

1 Corinthians 3:11

Ephesians 2:20

Ephesians 4:8

1 Corinthians 12:13

Ephesians 2:21-22

Acts 1:5 / Acts 2

## **Task of the Church**

Matthew 28:18-20 / Luke 24:46-49

The New Testament knows nothing of a “Lone Ranger” Christian. Christians have been placed by God into the body, the building, the church universal... and that placement is intended by God to be manifest in a local body of believers.

## **Resources:**

Mark Dever *What Is A Healthy Church, 9 Marks of a Healthy Church, The Deliberate Church*

John MacArthur *The Body Dynamic*

Robert Saucy *The Church in God's Program*

