

The Use Of The Word "Church"

Matthew 16:13-18

The Use Of The Word "Church"

ekklesia - The Greek word simply means to "call out" or to "summon forth."

- Thayer's Greek Lexicon says that the term means "the called out."
- Thayer also says that the word means, "a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place: an assembly."

The Use Of The Word "Church"

ekklesia -

- The word is used to describe an **unlawful assembly**
 - "Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the **assembly** (*ekklesia*) was in confusion; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together" (Acts 19:32).
 - When the town clerk had finished speaking, "he dismissed the (unlawful mg) **assembly** (*ekklesia*)" (Acts 19:41).

The Use Of The Word "Church"

ekklesia -

- The word is also used to describe a **lawful assembly** arranged to settle civil disputes. "regular assembly" ASV; "lawful assembly" KJV (Acts 19:39).

The Use Of The Word "Church"

The Church Universal.

- *ekklesia* - Matthew 16:18 - Used by the Lord to refer to those who have been called out of one relationship into another.
- Concept describes the apostles. John 15:19; 17:16
- Concept describes Christians. 2 Thessalonians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 1:9; cf. Romans 12:1-2; James 1:27; Ephesians 4:17; Colossians 1:13; 1 Peter 2:9. "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate ..." (2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1).

The Use Of The Word "Church"

The Local Church.

- *ekklesia*. The Greek word simply means to "call out" or to "summon forth."
- "the church in ..." and "the church of ..." and "the brethren that are in ..." (cf. Acts 9:26; 11:26; 18:1-3; 28:16; Romans 16:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:2; Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1, Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Peter 5:13; Revelation 1:20; 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14).

The Use Of The Word "Church"

The Local Church.

- People working together in a given locality, engaging in specific activities and with functions assigned to them.
- Local church is organized, "And when they had appointed for them elders in every church" (Acts 14:23).
- Local church works, maintains discipline, and controls its own fellowship (1 Corinthians 5:1ff; Romans 16:17-18; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-7; Titus 3:10).
- It is in this sense that a treasury is maintained (1 Corinthians 16:1-3).
- It is "joined" by mutual agreement on the part of those involved, in harmony with the Scriptures (cf. Acts 9:26-28).
- While the local church exists all the time (assembled or not), not every act of the individual members is an act of the local church.

The Use Of The Word "Church"

The Church Assembled. cf. Hebrews 10:24-25

- "For first of all, **when ye come together in the church**, I hear that divisions exist among you; and I partly believe it" (1 Corinthians 11:18).
- "When therefore **ye assemble yourselves together (into one place, KJV)**, it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper ..." (1 Corinthians 11:20).
- "Wherefore, my brethren, **when ye come together** to eat, wait one for another. If any man is hungry, let him eat at home; that your **coming together** be not unto judgment. And the rest will I set in order whensoever I come" (1 Corinthians 11:33-34).

The Use Of The Word "Church"

The Church Assembled.

"When ye come together."

- "Sunerchomai 1 Corinthians 11:17 ff. is theologically important. Here the word is a technical term for the coming together of the Christian congregation, especially to administer the Lord's Supper. Paul attacks scandals in Christian gatherings, e.g., divisions, the lack of order and discipline at the Lord's Supper. In 1 Corinthians 14:23, 26 Paul takes up again the question of Christian gatherings and in his directions on spiritual gifts speaks of the task, position and legitimacy of speaking with tongues" (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament).
 - *sunerchomai* - "It is frequently used of 'coming together,' especially of the 'gathering' of a local church, 1 Corinthians 11:17-18, 20, 33-34; 14:23, 26" (W.E. Vine).
- NOTE: VIRTUAL does not mean ACTUAL.

The Use Of The Word "Church"

The Church Assembled.

- "If therefore the **whole church be assembled together [sunerchomai] (into one place, KJV) and all speak with tongues, and there come in men unlearned or unbelieving, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is reprov'd by all, he is judged by all; the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed"** (1 Corinthians 14:23-25).

The Use Of The Word "Church"

The Church Assembled.

- "What is it then, brethren? **When ye come together [sunerchomai], each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. If any man speaketh in a tongue, (let it be) by two, or at the most three, and (that) in turn; and let one interpret: but if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church [ekklesia]"** (1 Corinthians 14:26-28).

The Use Of The Word "Church"

The Church Assembled.

- "Let the women keep silence **in the churches [ekklesia]: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church [ekklesia]"** (1 Corinthians 14:34-35).

Where Two or Three Are Gathered Together (Matthew 18:18-20)

- Matthew 18:18 a restatement of Matthew 16:19.
- Binding and loosing authority was given to ALL of the apostles.
- “The phrase **shall be bound** (*estai dedemena*) consists of a future (‘shall be’) and a perfect passive participle (expressing a state of existence) – i.e., ‘shall be in a state of having been bound’ in heaven.” (Truth Commentaries)

Where Two or Three Are Gathered Together (Matthew 18:18-20)

- Matthew 18:18 a restatement of Matthew 16:19.
- Binding and loosing authority was given to ALL of the apostles.
 - Heaven does not confirm pronouncements of anyone.
 - The apostles were authorized to speak only the will of the Father (cf. Matthew 10:40; Luke 10:16; Galatians 1:6-9; 2 John 9; 1 Peter 4:11).

Where Two or Three Are Gathered Together (Matthew 18:18-20)

- Broad context. Matthew 18:7-35
 - Verses 7-10 Jesus is teaching about the seriousness of sin and the need to do everything possible to prevent it.
 - Verses 12-18 Seek those entrapped by it.
 - Verses 21-35 The need for forgiveness.

Where Two or Three Are Gathered Together (Matthew 18:18-20)

- Immediate context. Matthew 18:15-20
 - Jesus is addressing our personal responsibility to address a brother who has sinned and our efforts to restore him. (cf. Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20)
 - Verse 15, “And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.”
 - Verse 16, “But if he hear (thee) not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established.”
 - Verse 17, “And if he refuse to hear them, **tell it unto the church** (footnoted congregation in ASV); and if he refuse to **hear the church** also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican.”

Conclusion:

- Matthew 18:20 is not intended to define what the church is.
- The application is that Christ is present with His people when they are acting “in my name,” i.e. by His authority revealed by His New Testament apostles and prophets.
- Let us therefore, respect what God has revealed regarding the conditions for the forgiveness of sins.

The Use Of The Word “Church”

- God’s People Universally.
- God’s People Locally.
- God’s People Assembled.

- In these applications all are the “church” of God, of Christ.
- No denominational names or structures are used.
- Refers to God’s people in different applications.