

Uses of *ecclesia* in the New Testament

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Universal - [19]

In this category, the church is mentioned in the singular form without a concrete instance specified in the context. The meaning therefore indicates a universal entity (*catholic*) comprised of all authentic disciples of Christ.

Matthew 16:18 - ^{18a}I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

1 Corinthians 10:32 - ³²Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God;

1 Corinthians 12:28 - ²⁸And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.

1 Corinthians 15:9 - ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

Galatians 1:13 - ¹³For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it;

Ephesians 1:22 - ²²And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,

Ephesians 3:10 - ¹⁰so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 3:21 - ²¹to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 5:23 - ²³For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.

Ephesians 5:24 - ²⁴But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

Ephesians 5:25 - ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

Ephesians 5:27 - ²⁷that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

Ephesians 5:29 - ²⁹for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church,

Ephesians 5:32 - ³²This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

Philippians 3:6 - ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

Colossians 1:18 - ¹⁸He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

Colossians 1:24 - ²⁴Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

Hebrews 12:23 - ²³to the general assembly and **church** of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

Here "the household of God" contextually indicates the local church, though Paul connects it to the *universal* "church of the living God."

1 Timothy 3:15 - ¹⁵but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the **church** of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

Regional - [1]

The singular form of ἐκκλησία with the definite article is used indicting the singular identity of "the church" spanning multiple cities and territories. Very close in meaning to the "universal" designation, though not used in abstraction here.

Acts 9:31 - ³¹So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.

Local (city, village, local region) - [86]

Clearly the most prevalent use of ἐκκλησία. This represents the category that we refer to even today as the "local church." It is the assembly of saints in a given residential area, ranging in scope from a general local region to a particular city (*polis*).

Matthew 18:17 - ¹⁷“If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

Acts 5:11 - ¹¹And great fear came over the whole church, and over all who heard of these things.

Acts 8:1 - ¹Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Acts 8:3 - ³But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.

Acts 11:22 - ²²The news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch.

Acts 11:26 - ²⁶and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Acts 12:1 - ¹Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church in order to mistreat them.

Acts 12:5 - ⁵So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.

Acts 13:1 - ¹Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Acts 14:23 - ²³When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Acts 14:27 - ²⁷When they had arrived and gathered the church together, they began to report all things that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

Acts 15:3 - ³Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren.

Acts 15:4 - ⁴When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.

Acts 15:22 - ²²Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas—Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren,

Acts 15:41 - ⁴¹And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Acts 16:5 - ⁵So the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number daily.

Acts 18:22 - ²²When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and went down to Antioch.

Acts 20:17 - ¹⁷From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church.

Acts 20:28 - ²⁸“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has

made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Romans 16:1 - ¹I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea;

Romans 16:4 - ⁴who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;

Romans 16:16 - ¹⁶Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Romans 16:23 - ²³Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus, the brother.

1 Corinthians 1:2 - ²To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:

1 Corinthians 4:17 - ¹⁷For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.

1 Corinthians 6:4 - ⁴So if you have law courts dealing with matters of this life, do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the church?

1 Corinthians 7:17 - ¹⁷Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk. And so I direct in all the churches.

1 Corinthians 11:16 - ¹⁶But if one is inclined to be contentious, we have no other practice, nor have the churches of God.

1 Corinthians 11:18 - ¹⁸For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part I believe it.

1 Corinthians 11:22 - ²²What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you.

1 Corinthians 14:4 - ⁴One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church.

1 Corinthians 14:5 - ⁵Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying.

1 Corinthians 14:12 - ¹²So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek to abound for the edification of the church.

1 Corinthians 14:19 - ¹⁹however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind so that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue.

1 Corinthians 14:23 - ²³Therefore if the whole church assembles together and all speak in tongues, and ungifted men or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad?

1 Corinthians 14:28 - ²⁸but if there is no interpreter, he must keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God.

1 Corinthians 14:33 - ³³for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

1 Corinthians 14:34 - ³⁴The women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says.

1 Corinthians 14:35 - ³⁵If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church.

1 Corinthians 16:1 - ¹Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also.

2 Corinthians 1:1 - ¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God which is at Corinth with all the saints who are throughout Achaia:

2 Corinthians 8:1 - ¹Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia,

2 Corinthians 8:18 - ¹⁸We have sent along with him the brother whose fame in the things of the gospel has spread through all the churches;

2 Corinthians 8:19 - ¹⁹and not only this, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and to show our readiness,

2 Corinthians 8:23 - ²³As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brethren, they are messengers of the churches, a glory to Christ.

2 Corinthians 8:24 - ²⁴Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.

2 Corinthians 11:8 - ⁸I robbed other churches by taking wages from them to serve you;

2 Corinthians 11:28 - ²⁸Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches.

2 Corinthians 12:13 - ¹³For in what respect were you treated as inferior to the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not become a burden to you? Forgive me this wrong!

Galatians 1:2 - ²and all the brethren who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:

Galatians 1:22 - ²²I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ;

Philippians 4:15 - ¹⁵You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;

Colossians 4:16 - ¹⁶When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read my letter that is coming from Laodicea.

1 Thessalonians 1:1 - ¹Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in

God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

1 Thessalonians 2:14 - ¹⁴For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews,

2 Thessalonians 1:1 - ¹Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Thessalonians 1:4 - ⁴therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure.

1 Timothy 3:5 - ⁵(but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?),

1 Timothy 5:16 - ¹⁶If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.

James 5:14 - ¹⁴Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;

3 John 6 - ⁶and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.

3 John 9 - ⁹I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say.

3 John 10 - ¹⁰For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire to do so and puts them out of the church.

Revelation 1:4 - ⁴John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Revelation 1:11 - ¹¹saying, "Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

Revelation 1:20 - ^{20a}As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Revelation 2:1 - ^{1a}To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:

Revelation 2:7 - ⁷He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'

Revelation 2:8 - ^{8a}And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this:

Revelation 2:11 - ^{11a}He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'

Revelation 2:12 - ^{12a}And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this:

Revelation 2:17 - ^{17a}He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'

Revelation 2:18 - ^{18a}And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:

Revelation 2:23 - ^{23a}And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

Revelation 2:29 - ^{29a}He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Revelation 3:1 - ^{1a}To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.

Revelation 3:6 - ^{6a}He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Revelation 3:7 - ^{7a}And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this:

Revelation 3:13 - ^{13a}He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Revelation 3:14 - ^{14a}To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this:

Revelation 3:22 - ^{22a}He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' "

Revelation 22:16 - ^{16a}I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

These three references of the "local church" simply specify the place of their meeting, which is descriptive and not prescriptive. Illustrating more of the intimacy and nature of church-life integration in the first century.

Romans 16:5 - ⁵also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epänetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.

1 Corinthians 16:19 - ¹⁹The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

Colossians 4:15 - ¹⁵Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house.

Uses of *ἐκκλησία* not referring to the NT church - [5]

Acts 7:38 - ³⁸“This is the one who was in the **congregation** in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai, and who was with our fathers; and he received living oracles to pass on to you.

Acts 19:32 - ³²So then, some were shouting one thing and some another, for the **assembly** was in confusion and the majority did not know for what reason they had come together.

Acts 19:39 - ³⁹“But if you want anything beyond this, it shall be settled in the lawful **assembly**.

Acts 19:41 - ⁴¹After saying this he dismissed the **assembly**.

Hebrews 2:12 - ¹²saying, “I will proclaim Your name to My brethren, In the midst of the **congregation** I will sing Your praise.”