

## Language of the Apostles

### Lesson 3 – *ekklesia* (ἐκκλησία) and *koinonia* (κοινωνία)

#### Ekklesia (church)

##### History

*kaleo* (to call, invite, summons) becomes *kletos* (called, invited)

*ek-* as a prefix in Greek means “out of”

*ek+kletos* combine to mean “called out” (an adjective)

Taking a noun form it becomes *ekklesia*

*ekklesia* is a \_\_\_\_\_ noun, because as the people are called together, they form something \_\_\_\_\_

In Greek culture, the *ekklesia* was the gathering of citizens \_\_\_\_\_ to address a public legal issue. They were “called out” of their homes and businesses to gather together for a purpose.

We see it used this way in **Acts 19:32, 39, and 41**.

When the Old Testament was translated into Greek (the Septuagint), *ekklesia* was used \_\_\_\_ times,

almost all of them translated “\_\_\_\_\_,” often describing the people of Israel as they gather. However, in the Psalms, it is often translated “congregation.” *Why do you think that is?*

To a Jewish Christian in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, *ekklesia* would evoke thoughts of \_\_\_\_\_ called to gather, either for worship, instruction, or action.

To a Gentile Christian in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, *ekklesia* would evoke thoughts of the \_\_\_\_\_ called to meet, usually for discussion leading to action.

##### Usage

In the NT, *ekklesia* occurs: 88 times referring to a specific or local “church”

24 times referring to the universal church

3 three times in Acts 19 in the Greek political sense

2 times as “congregation” – **Acts 7:38** and **Heb 2:12** (referencing OT \_\_\_\_\_)

Only occurs \_\_\_\_\_ in the Gospels – **Matthew 16:18** and **Matthew 18:17**

##### Meaning

The Bible speaks of God’s people as those who are “called out”

**1 Peter 2:9**

**2 Corinthians 6:17**

**1 Corinthians 1:26**

Those who are called out are not called \_\_\_\_\_.

**1 Corinthians 12:12, 27**

**1 Peter 2:9-10**

**Colossians 3:15**

But they are not just called \_\_\_\_\_ something, they are also called \_\_\_\_\_ something

**Romans 1:6-7**

**1 Peter 2:9**

**1 Corinthians 1:9**

And that gathering is not an end in itself, but had a greater \_\_\_\_\_ in mind

**Romans 8:28-29**

## Koinonia (fellowship)

### **Related Words:**

*koinonia*, and its verb form *koinoneo*, come from the word meaning “\_\_\_\_\_,”  
which (as in English) means both “\_\_\_\_\_” and “\_\_\_\_\_”

### **Usages**

9 times as “fellowship” with various meanings

4 times as “participation”                      4 times as “share” (two of which are more like *participate* or *fellowship*)

5 times as “contribution”                      2 times as “part/partnership”

### **Meaning**

It can be understood in some uses as having a stake in something, like a share of stock

Similarly, it can be like a \_\_\_\_\_ to a group effort or project.

While it comes to have a strong \_\_\_\_\_ meaning, there is still a \_\_\_\_\_-like feel to the word, even in Scripture:

**Galatians 6:6** – *koinoneo* is translated “share” but the meaning is clearly \_\_\_\_\_

**Romans 15:27** – Paul equates \_\_\_\_\_ sharing with financial sharing

But whether it is about finances or fellowship, it always points to a larger \_\_\_\_\_:

The basis of *koinonia* is that something greater than the individuals \_\_\_\_\_ us.

In **Hebrews 2:14** this is expressed as a shared \_\_\_\_\_.

This is what John is getting at in **1 John 1:3**

Our *koinonia* is with God through Jesus – we now share a \_\_\_\_\_ with him.

and that’s what makes *koinonia* among believers possible – that common bond unites us.

*What often ends up being the basis for the fellowship we have with others?*

*How should this set a course for the relationships we have with other believers?*

“The church is not the society of the congenial; it is a fellowship based on common life in Jesus.”  
-Reuben Welch, *We Really Do Need Each Other*

The best example of how the meaning of *koinonia* evolved in the early Church is **Acts 2:42**

Luke says that “the *koinonia*” was one of the main \_\_\_\_\_ of the early Christian Church  
(see **Galatians 3:27-28**)

Both *ekklesia* and *koinonia* create a picture that that church is not merely a collection of \_\_\_\_\_  
*How do we see this in other passages that describe the church? (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Cor 12:25-26)*

*How would our churches look different if we took to heart the Biblical language describing us?*