

All Occurences of ἐκκλησία - *Ekklēsia* in the new Testament listed, and categorised.¹

Gospels

Mat 16:18 And I tell you you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Mat 18:17 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

Act 5:11 And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things.

Act 7:38 This is the one

who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living oracles to give to us.

Act 8:1 And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Act 8:3 But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

Act 9:31 So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit it multiplied.

Act 11:22 The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

Act 11:26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

Act 12:1 About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church.

Act 12:5 So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.

Act 13:1 Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Act 14:23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Act 14:27 And when they arrived and gathered the church together they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

Act 15:3 So being sent on their way by the church, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the brothers.

Act 15:4 When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them.

Act 15:22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers,

Act 15:41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia strengthening the churches.

Act 16:5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily.

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

Act 19:32 Now some cried out one thing, some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together.

Act 19:39 But if you seek anything further it shall be settled in the regular assembly.

Act 19:41 And when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly.

Act 20:17 Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him.

Act 20:28 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to care for the church of God which he obtained with his own blood.

Paul

Rom 16:1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae,

Rom 16:4 who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well.

Rom 16:5 Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia.

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

Rom 16:23 Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

1Cor 1:2 To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

1Cor 4:17 That is why I sent you Timothy my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ as I teach them everywhere in every church.

1Cor 6:4 So if you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church?

1Cor 7:17 Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches.

1Cor 10:32 Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God,

1Cor 11:16 If anyone is inclined to be contentious, we have no such practice, nor do the churches of God.

1Cor 11:18 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part

1Cor 11:22 What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not.

1Cor 12:28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing helping administrating, and various kinds of tongues.

1Cor 14:4 The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.

1Cor 14:5 Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

1Cor 14:12 So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.

1Cor 14:19 Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

1Cor 14:23 If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter will they not say that you are out of your minds?

1Cor 14:28 But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God.

1Cor 14:33 For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints,

1Cor 14:34 the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says.

1Cor 14:35 If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.

¹ I am grateful to STEPbible for the software that generated this list. Any mistakes on it are my own fault!

<https://www.stepbible.org/?q=version=ESV&strong=G1577&options=VHUG&display=INTERLEAVED>

1Cor 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

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

1Cor 16:19 The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.

2Cor 1:1 Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God that is at Corinth with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia:

2Cor 8:1 We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia,

2Cor 8:18 With him we are sending the brother who is famous among all the churches for his preaching of the gospel.

2Cor 8:19 And not only that, but he has been appointed by the churches to travel with us as we carry out this act of grace that is being ministered by us for the glory of the Lord himself and to show our good will.

2Cor 8:23 As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker for your benefit. And as for our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.

2Cor 8:24 So give proof before the churches of your love and of our boasting about you to these men.

2Cor 11:8 I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you.

2Cor 11:28 And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

2Cor 12:13 For in what were you less favoured than the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong!

Gal 1:2 and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:

Gal 1:13 For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it.

Gal 1:22 And I was still unknown in person to the churches of Judea that are in Christ.

Eph 1:22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,

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

Eph 3:21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.

Eph 5:24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

Eph 5:27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

Eph 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church,

Eph 5:32 This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

Phili 3:6 as to zeal a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law blameless.

Phili 4:15 And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only.

Col 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

Col 1:24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church,

Col 4:15 Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

Col 4:16 And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.

1Th 1:1 Paul Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

1Th 2:14 For you, brothers became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews

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

2Th 1:4 Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring.

1Ti 3:5 for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?

1Ti 3:15 if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

1Ti 5:16 If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are truly widows.

Phile 2 and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house:

General Epistles

Heb 2:12 saying, "I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise."

Heb 12:23 and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

Jam 5:14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

3Jo 6 who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God.

3Jo 9 I have written something to the church, but Diotrophes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority.

3Jo 10 So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.

Revelation

Rev 1:4 John 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,

Rev 1:11 saying, "Write what you see in a book 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."

Rev 1:20 As for the mystery of the seven stars that 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.

Rev 2:1 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: 'The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand who walks among the seven golden lampstands.

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

Rev 2:8 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: 'The words of the first and the last who died and came to life.

Rev 2:11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.'

Rev 2:12 "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: 'The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.

Rev 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.'

Rev 2:18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: 'The words of the Son of God who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze.

Rev 2:23 And I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works.

Rev 2:29 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Rev 3:1 "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: 'The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

"I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive but you are dead.

Rev 3:6 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Rev 3:7 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: 'The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.

Rev 3:13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Rev 3:14 "And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: 'The words of the Amen the faithful and true witness the beginning of God's creation.

Rev 3:22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"

Rev 22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David the bright morning star."

What does the bible mean by ‘Church’ (ἐκκλησία - *ekklēsia*)²

Ekklēsia root meaning: Gathering

“*Ekklēsia*, derived via *ek-kaleo*, [called out] was used from the

- a. In the Old Testament the LXX translates קָהָל *qahal* Assembly 77 times with the word ἐκκλησία - *ekklēsia*. It is used when Israel is gathered for judicial, political, and religious reasons.³

In the New Testament in Acts 7:38, Heb 2:12 *ekklēsia* refers to Old Testament Congregations.

- b. A Secular Gathering in Ephesus (Acts 19:32,39,41)
- c. The universal church. (That will gather one day.)
Matthew 16:18, 1 Cor 12:28,
Eph 1:22, 3:10, 21, 5:23, 24,25,27,29,32
Col 1:18, 24,
Heb 12:23
All Christians of all times and all places
A significant background in Genesis anticipating the multi-ethnic congregation that will gather one day is the promise of an assembly of nations / peoples in Genesis 28:3, 35:11 and 48:4.
- d. The local church (That gathers today)
- i. In an unspecified place as a paradigm for all churches: Matthew 18:17
 - ii. In a specific town / city.
(Sometimes as paradigmatic for all churches, 1 Cor 14:4-35)
 - 1. Jerusalem: Acts 5:11, 8:1, 11:22, 12:1,5 (These might be universal) 15:4, 15:22, 1 Cor 15:9, Gal 1:13, Phil 3:6
(Jerusalem church probably here as archetypal church that Paul persecutes)
 - 2. Antioch: Acts 11:26, 13:1, 14:27, 15:3.
 - 3. Caesarea: Acts 18:22.
 - 4. Ephesus: Acts 20:17, 20:28, Rev 1:11, 2:1.
 - 5. Cenchreae: Romans 16:1.
 - 6. An unspecified local church: Romans 16:23, Phil 4:15, 1 Tim 3:5, 3:15, 5:16⁴, James 5:14, 3 John 6,9,10.
 - 7. Corinth: 1 Cor 1:2, 6:4?, 11:18, 22, 14:4,5,12,19,23,28,33,34,35, 2 Cor 1:1,
 - 8. Laodicea: Col 4:16, Rev 1:11, 3:14.
 - 9. Thessalonica: 1 Thess 1:1, 2 Thess 1:1⁵
 - 10. Smyrna: Rev 1:11, 2:8
 - 11. Pergamum: Rev 1:11, 2:12
 - 12. Thyatira: Rev 1:11, 2:18
 - 13. Sardis: Rev 1:11, 3:1
 - 14. Philadelphia: Rev 1:11, 3:7
 - iii. In the plural referring to churches in a particular geographical area, or to all churches.

² Cf. Robert Strivens “An Independent Theology of the Church” Chapter 2 in John Stevens (Ed.) *Independent Church* (10Publishing: Leyland 2014) 35-36 and Mark Dever, *The Church: the Gospel Made Visible* (Nashville: B&H 2012) 8-9

³ For more on the use of *ekklēsia* in the LXX see L. Coenen “Church” in Colin Brown (Ed) *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Carlisle, 1986: Paternoster) 291-307

⁴ These references in 1 Timothy probably refer to the church in Ephesus but could be paradigmatic for others churches that are being planted out of Ephesus, over which Timothy may have some authority until elders are appointed.

⁵ Note that the Thessalonian church is called “The Church of the Thessalonians” not “the Church in Thessalonica”.

1. Lystra, Iconium, Antioch: Acts 14: 23
 2. Syria and Cilicia: Acts 15:41
 3. Unspecified: Acts 16:5, Romans 16:16, 2 Corinthians 8:19⁶, 23, 24, 11:8,
 4. Gentile Churches: Romans 16:4
 5. All churches everywhere: 1 Corinthians 4:17, 7:17, 2 Cor 8:18, 11:28, 12:13, 2 Thess 1:4,
 6. An unspecified church as a category: 1 Corinthians 10:32
 7. Galatia: 1 Cor 16:1, Gal 1:2
 8. Asia: 1 Cor 16:9, Rev 1:4,11, 20, 2:7,11,17,23,29, 3:6,13,22, 22:16⁷
 9. Macedonia: 2 Cor 8:1
 10. Judea: Gal 1:22, 1 Thess 2:14
- iv. A church that meets in a specific person's house
1. Priscilla and Aquilla: Romans 16:5, 1 Cor 16:19
 2. Nympha: Col 4:15
 3. Philemon: Philemon 2

e. One disputed text. Acts 9:31⁸

Act 8:1 And Saul approved of his execution.

And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Act 8:3 But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

Act 9:31 So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit it multiplied.

John Woodhouse (note: an Anglican) writes.

The word 'church' in the singular applies either to the one church, the spiritual house, which is not seen, or a local gathering in a particular place. The common modern expression 'the New Testament church' or 'the early church' where the singular 'church' is used collectively for the churches of the period, has no parallel in any New Testament writer.⁴

The few apparent exceptions to this rule, according to Robinson, are all references to the Jerusalem church "throughout the first generation it was 'the church' *par excellence*" (so [Acts 9:31](#); [18:22](#); [1 Cor 15:9](#); [Gal 1:13](#); [Phil 3:6](#)). See how Paul impressed this perspective on his churches ([Rom 15:27](#)). On [Acts 9:31](#), notice that this verse concludes the section that began "On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria" ([Acts 8:1](#)). The 'church' that by 9:31 was said to enjoy peace, was the Jerusalem church which was now scattered. It was this church that Saul (Paul) "began to destroy" ([Acts 8:3](#)). It is consistent, therefore, with the record of Acts to relate Paul's own references to his persecution of 'the church' or 'the church of God' to the Jerusalem church.⁹

⁶ This is a very interesting text in discerning how someone who functions as an emissary of more than one church is appointed by more than one church. Co-operation between churches can mean the involvement of more than one congregation in making decisions that will affect mission beyond those congregations. However, once again, it is the churches who choose him, not some bishop or presbytery. See also v.23.

⁷ The references in Revelation to "what the Spirit says to the churches" may imply a universality of the Spirit saying to every church what he says to the churches in Asia Minor.

⁸ Though there is a textual variant, and the TR reads the plural, I will not argue here that the plural reading is original.

⁹ <https://matthiasmedia.com/briefing/2002/02/the-unity-of-the-church/#f4> Accessed 4th June 2019