

Episode #1104 The Outcalled Ekklesia

I. As we prepare for the exposition of the book of Acts, we have been studying the important Greek word ekklesia, which is usually translated as church. We see that it comes from ek which means out and kaleo which means to call. They will say it means we are invited, bidden, or summoned out of the world. Yet we saw that kaleo only means to invite, to bid, or to summons in 1/3 of its occurrences, and in slightly more than 2/3 of its occurrences it means to name, to position, or to designate.

II. We were considering passages wherein this understanding of kaleo helps us in understanding what is meant.

1. I Corinthians 7:20. They are told to abide in the same calling wherein they are called, the position in which God has positioned them.
2. Ephesians 4:1. I beg of you that you walk worthy of the position in which God has placed you. That is what it means.
3. Ephesians 4:4. Even as you were called in the one expectation of your calling. This was not an invitation or a summons, this was a position and a naming.

III. Further consideration of the word ekklesia.

- A. When we have this before us, we recognize and go back to the idea that the Greek word ekklesia is formed out of the prefix ek, and that is only the prefix, and kaleo, which everyone says means to call or invite, but which I have shown you and it can be demonstrated that in 2/3 of its occurrences it cannot mean this. What does it mean when it is combined with kaleo? It takes its chief meaning, and these who are called the ekklesia are the out-positioned ones. This word out does not mean severance, but just as my arm is out of my body. So these have a position out of Jesus Christ, and the word ekklesia actually means the out-positioned ones.
- B. Now let us consider this word. We don't use it in English. It has become a religious term, like ecclesiastical. But let's consider what it would mean if we were Greeks, and we were back at this time using their language.
- C. We elect a President of the United States. Because he is elected by the majority of the votes of the people, he has a position out of the people for four years. He has an appointment by the majority of the votes. It would be right to call the President of the United States an out-called, an out-positioned, and out-appointed, an out-named person, out-named by the majority of the votes. Recognizing that this position is out of the people, four years later, the people can take this position right back to themselves. Then after the President has his position out of the people, then he begins to name or appoint others, and they have their positions out of him. For example, he appoints the secretary of state. That is, he names him, and the position of secretary of state is out of the President, so his position is an out-positioned one, and that is what the Greeks would mean by the word ekklesia.
- D. In California, they have the assembly. The reason that is called the assembly is that is based on one meaning of the ancient Greek word ekklesia; the assembly. But that assembly is not just a group of people who got together. These are law-makers, and each one is out of his district. Each law-maker has a position out of his district, out of the people, and he is a part of a legislative ekklesia. He doesn't become ekklesia by joining the legislature. He becomes an out-positioned one by getting a majority of the

votes, and when these come together in assembly they make up this legislative ekklesia.

- E. Now there can be a judicial ekklesia. When you take the Supreme Court, these men in their position become a judicial ekklesia, because they have a position out of the people, appointed by the President. But their position is out of the Constitution, so all Supreme Court justices are out-positioned ones.
- F. There can be a legislative ekklesia, there can be a judicial ekklesia, there can be a peace-keeping ekklesia. For example, a police officer has a position out of the people. He has an authority you and I do not have and we do not hold, even though the position is out of the people. Therefore, he becomes part of a peace-keeping outcalling, or a peace-keeping ekklesia. That is the way that this word was used, and it is used this way in the New Testament, as I will show you a little later.
- G. Many people believe the whole drive of Christianity has to do with something called the church. My theology, however, is Biblically-oriented, not church-oriented. The word ekklesia occurs three times in Matthew, it is never found in Mark, it is never found in Luke, it is never found in John. The book written to people might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God and believing have life through His name never uses the word ekklesia, so the translation church is never found in it!
- H. If I were to say today I am ekklesia, (I know this word is found in Ephesians where we are told things about the ekklesia), if I were to say today I am ekklesia, the out-called of God, that I have a position out of God, a position that first adhered in Him and then that He passed on or gave on to me, then I would have to be claiming that I stand between God and men in my position, and therefore I would have to make the claim that I am a mediator. Therefore, I tell you that in the service that you and I will perform for God in the future, we will have to have a position out of God, we will have to have a position out of Jesus Christ in the future. But we do not have that position today. Therefore, with all proper humility, I tell you that when I make a study of this word, when I know what it means, then upon no basis whatsoever can I make the claim that I am ekklesia except in my expectation and hope, and God, Who calls things that are not as if they were, could even refer to us as ekklesia today.

IV. Ekklesia (Church) in the Gospels.

- A. In Matthew 16, we have the first occurrence of this word, and many people believe to be the most important occurrence.
 - 1. Verse 13, the border of Caesarea Philippi. He knew there were rumors and reports going around about Him.
 - 2. Verse 14. Notice He said this to His disciples, this company, and then they said. We do not know who was the spokesman, but since none disagreed, this was the opinion of all. One had to be the spokesman. I do not believe these twelve men became a voice speaking choir and all said this together. James might have spoken up and said, "some say you are John the Baptist," and as far as what people said was concerned that would be a true report. Andrew may have spoken up and said, "Some say you are Elijah." John may have spoken up and said, "Some say you are Jeremiah." Since the question was put to a group, and someone answered and there was no dissent, this was true. This is what people were saying of Him.

3. Verse 15. Now He puts the question direct to them. You here is the plural form, ye in the King James Version. (thou and thee were singular, ye and you were plural. We suffered a loss when we dropped the singular, second person form.)
4. Verse 16. We know that Simon Peter became the spokesman. We do not know who was the spokesman in the 14th verse, but here we know it was Peter. He answered for all of them, and if there is no dissent, then this is the opinion of all of them. In other words, these men now believe the very goal, the very truth for which the entire gospel of John was written, John 20:31. We feel that there were no spoken objections to this, that no dissent was spoken, but I feel very much and I am sure you would agree with me that there was a mental reservation in the man Judas about the whole thing. Therefore, the Lord does not speak next to the twelve, since he knows this mental reservation and dissent on the part of Judas. He speaks to Peter, and since that which applies to Peter can be applied to all the rest of them if they take it, it becomes true of every man here who believed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Now our Lord will direct His remarks right to Peter
5. Verse 17. Flesh is what you are by birth or nationality. That we believe with all our hearts were words that were just as true of the other ten, not Judas, as they were of Peter. There were other ten standing there who believed this same thing. Of them it was true that flesh and blood had not revealed it to them, but the Father Who is in heaven.
6. Verse 18. Not that you are Peter, but that you are Rock, petros, the masculine. Kenneth Wuest tried to bring this out by "You are the Rock-Man," but that is not what it says, but that "You are Rock." If we would go back to the Old Testament, which is not the purpose of this study, and go through all the references to the word rock, we would find that God Himself is described as the Rock. Deuteronomy 32:31. God is referred to as a Rock. These eleven men, Judas excluded, by a Divine revelation and Divine generation have come to see that Jesus is actually the Messiah, actually the Son, the Expression, the Declarer, the Revealer of the Living God. To every one of them it could be said that they are Rock. A rock is something on which you can build. Right here, these eleven men become the foundational ekklesia. For He says it is upon this Rock that I will build My outcalled. My outcalled are going to be built on this. It is not Peter. When He uses the word Rock, that is feminine, and it is used with a feminine pronoun, and when He said "You are rock," that was masculine. Now He is dealing with this, not the confession, but with a God-generated belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, upon this He is going to build His outcalled, and the gates of Hell, meaning the authority of the state of death, even though they take these men and put them to death, will never prevail over it.
7. Verse 19. He goes right on to say I will give you authority, for that is what keys means. This is not just for Peter, but for all of those who had been brought to this God-generated belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. I will give you authority.

8. Verse 20. He stopped all testimony right there. This is the word of our Lord. He as the King of the Kingdom is going to have an outcalling, and these men are going to have a position out of Him.
 - B. Matthew 18:17. Scofield says this is discipline in the future church. Well, it didn't amount to much, as you well know, if that is what it meant.
 - C. Beginning in verse 15. I am perfectly willing to do that. If anyone trespasses against me and I see fit to do so, I will go and tell him his fault between me and him alone.
 - D. Verse 16. In this dispensation of grace, I am not going to do that. I don't want to make a legal matter out of this. To take along witnesses that every word might be established. If someone has trespassed against me, and if he won't deal with me, forget it. I can bear with it and stand it. I might not even go that far. But for these people, they were supposed to take two or three witnesses that every word might be established before them.
 - E. Verse 17. Tell it to the outcalled. I know there are organizations say they are the outcalled and you should bring this to us. The heathen is the Gentile, and tax collector. Are you going to do anything like that?
 - F. Verse 18. This was going to be the power of these men, who were the outcalled of Jesus Christ. It is a power that no man on earth has at this present time.
- V. Conclusion. That is the study of the Greek word ekklesia. A lot more could be said and needs to be said. Dozens of references need to be examined. These references are in the book of Acts, and since our next study begins our exposition of this book, we will reserve our further comments until we come upon the passages in which the word ekklesia is found in the book of Acts.