

Forerunners for Christ Los Angeles

January 21, 2023 – God’s Creative Power For Today – Erlinda Cruz

Christ’s Ekklesia

The last concept is the most accurate, based on a strict translation, but still falls far short of communicating what an Ekklesia was when Christ made His stunning announcement.

To the Greeks in Christ’s day an Ekklesia was an assembly of people” called out” of the populace to govern the affairs of a city or nation – in essence, it was a city council, parliament or congress. To the Romans, it indicated governmental authority, as well, but was used more narrowly. To them, it was a group of people sent into a conquered region to rule it, but also to reshape the culture until the region thought like Rome. The Romans realized this was the ideal way to control their empire. They disciplined the conquered region’s government, social structure, language, schools, businesses, etc., until the people thought, spoke, acted like, and considered themselves Romans.

When Jesus said He would build His church (ekklesia), He was without question speaking of a body of people that would “legislate” spiritually for Him, discipling nations and extending His kingdom rule, ideals and principles throughout the earth. His statement that “the gates of Hades will not overpower it” makes much more sense when we understand this. These “gates” are not physical gates, but rather the governmental plans or decisions of hell. In biblical times, gates were often where judges sat to rule, or governing councils of cities met to make decisions; therefore, they often symbolized government (for examples, see 2 Samuel 19:8; Proverbs 22:22-23). In Ruth 4:10-11, the Hebrew word for a gate is actually translated as a “court.”

In this first decree announcing the church, Jesus was stating that He would raise up a spiritual kingdom government on earth, which hell’s government wouldn’t prevail over. He followed this declaration by saying He would give His Ekklesia “keys” (Matthew 16:19), which symbolize authority. Keys lock and unlock, in order to close or open. Christ was declaring His church would have spiritual keys (authority) to lock the gates (government) of hell and open the gates (government) of heaven.

This is accomplished primarily through declarations and decrees made FOR God, not petitions made TO God. When needing provision or help from Him, we do request and petition. When dealing with the powers of darkness and their plans, however, we command and decree. Jesus told us to command His Kingdom (rule) to come and will to be done (Matthew 6:10). The verbs “come” and “be,” are in the imperative Greek tense, meaning to command. Christ was saying, “Command My kingdom rule and will to come forth!”