

Eph. 5:25 - 27

- “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,
- Eph 5:26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,
- 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.” (ESV)

Fundamental Principles That We Need To Know...

Who are the People of God in the broadest sense?

What is meant by the phrase: *local church*?

Do I have a relationship with Christ?

Jesus gave us an amazing blessing... when He created His church!

As individuals He called us...

- Out of the darkness of sin into His marvelous light. (1 Peter 2:9)
- To be active in good works (Eph. 2:10)
- To grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus (2 Peter 3:18)
- To a life of purpose and meaning.



Jesus gave us an amazing blessing... when He created His church!

- Christ is the Savior, while the church is the **product or result** of **His** saving process.
- Only those “added” by the Lord (Ac. 2:47) are members of this church, and the Lord makes no mistakes (2 Tim. 2:19).
- “The Lord knows those who are His.”



Jesus gave us an amazing blessing... when He created His church!

And He Made Us Part Of His Church

- In the figure of “kingdom,” Christ is the **King**, and those ruled are citizens - Eph. 2:19.
- When likened to a “body,” Christ is the **Head** to whom members (foot, hand, etc.) And a special relationship with our fellow Christians.
- In terms of a “building,” Christ is the **Foundation**, and individuals are living stones - Mt. 16:18; 1 Pt. 2:5.



Jesus gave us an amazing blessing...
when He created His church!

And He Made Us Part Of His Church

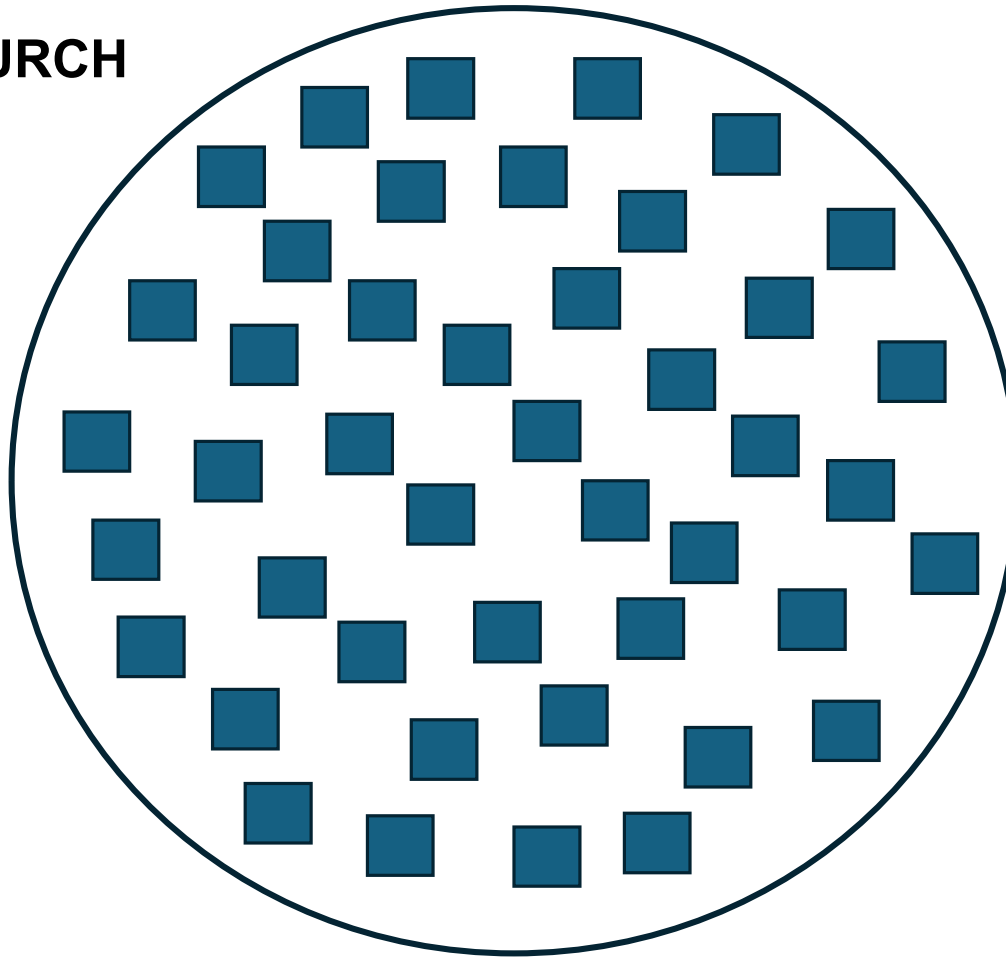
- As a collectivity we have a special relationship with Christ – His Kingdom, His Body, His Family, House...
- And a special relationship with our fellow Christians.





CHURCH OF CHRIST (UNIVERSAL)

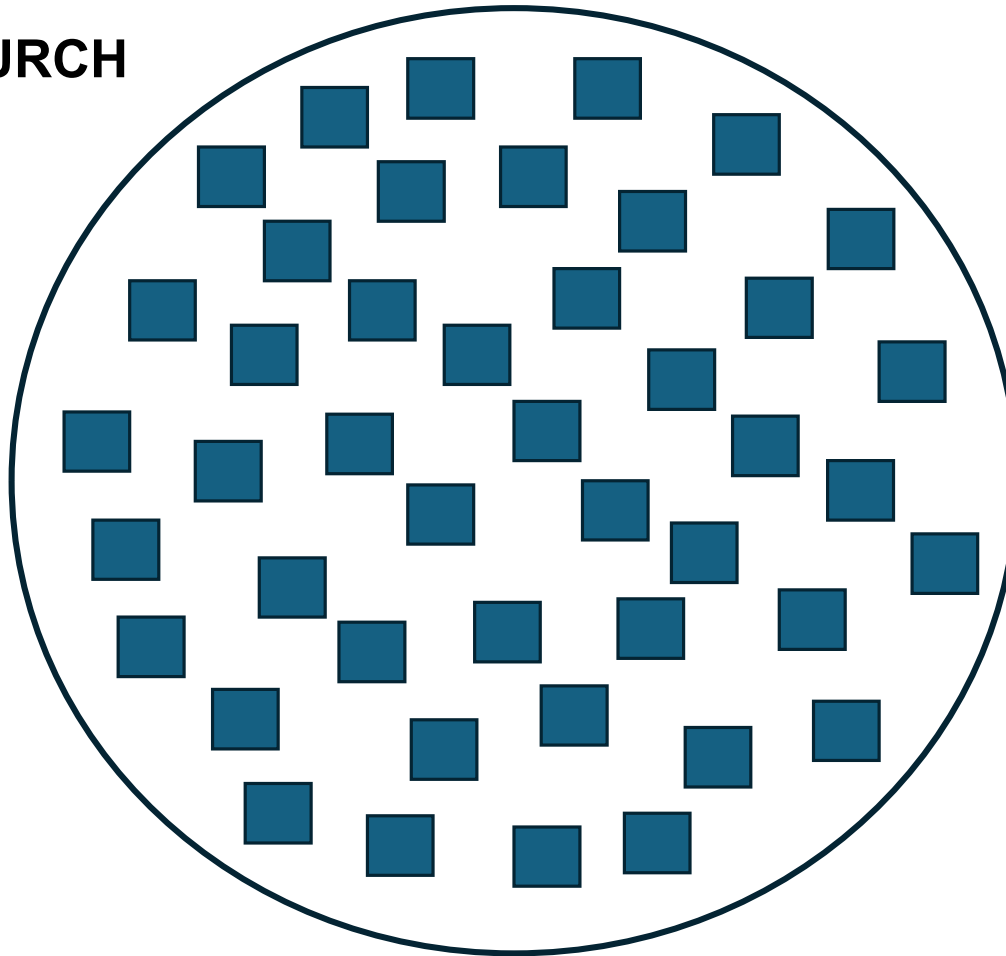
■ = LOCAL CHURCH



CHURCH OF CHRIST (UNIVERSAL)

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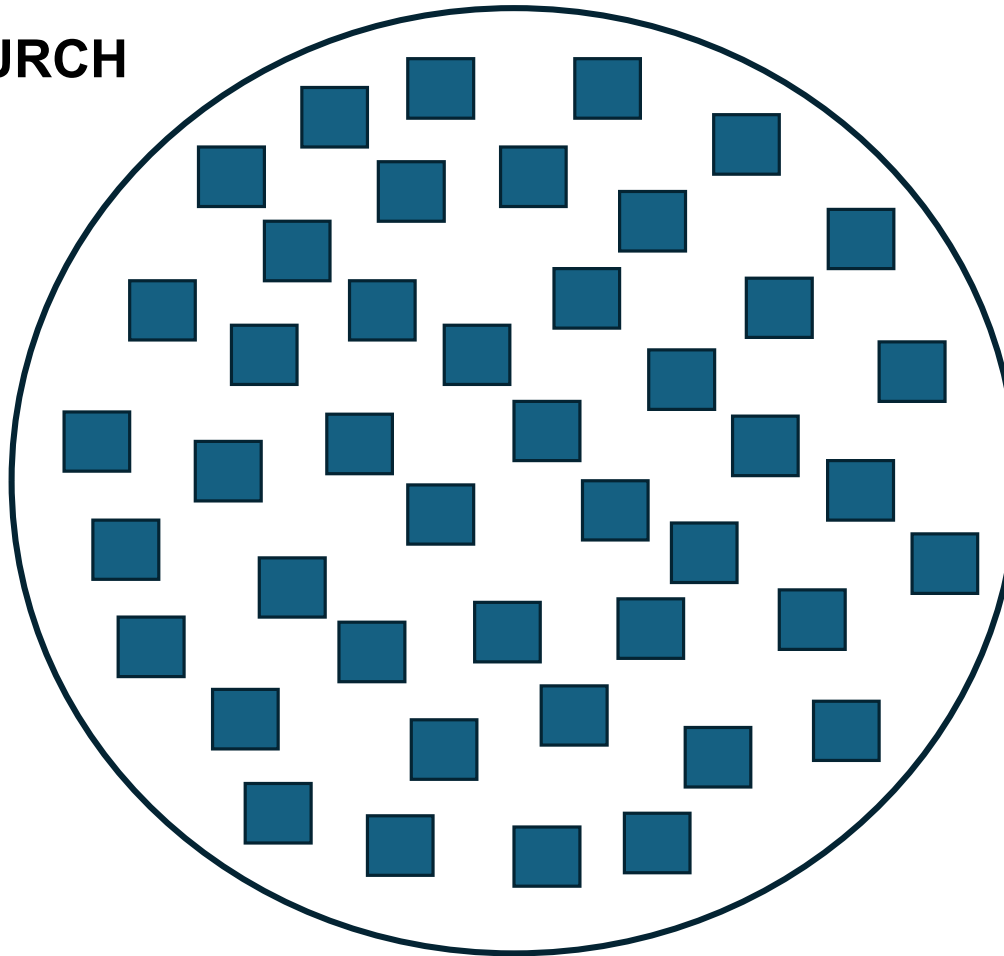
*Is This
Accurate?*



CHURCH OF CHRIST (UNIVERSAL)

■ = LOCAL CHURCH

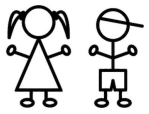
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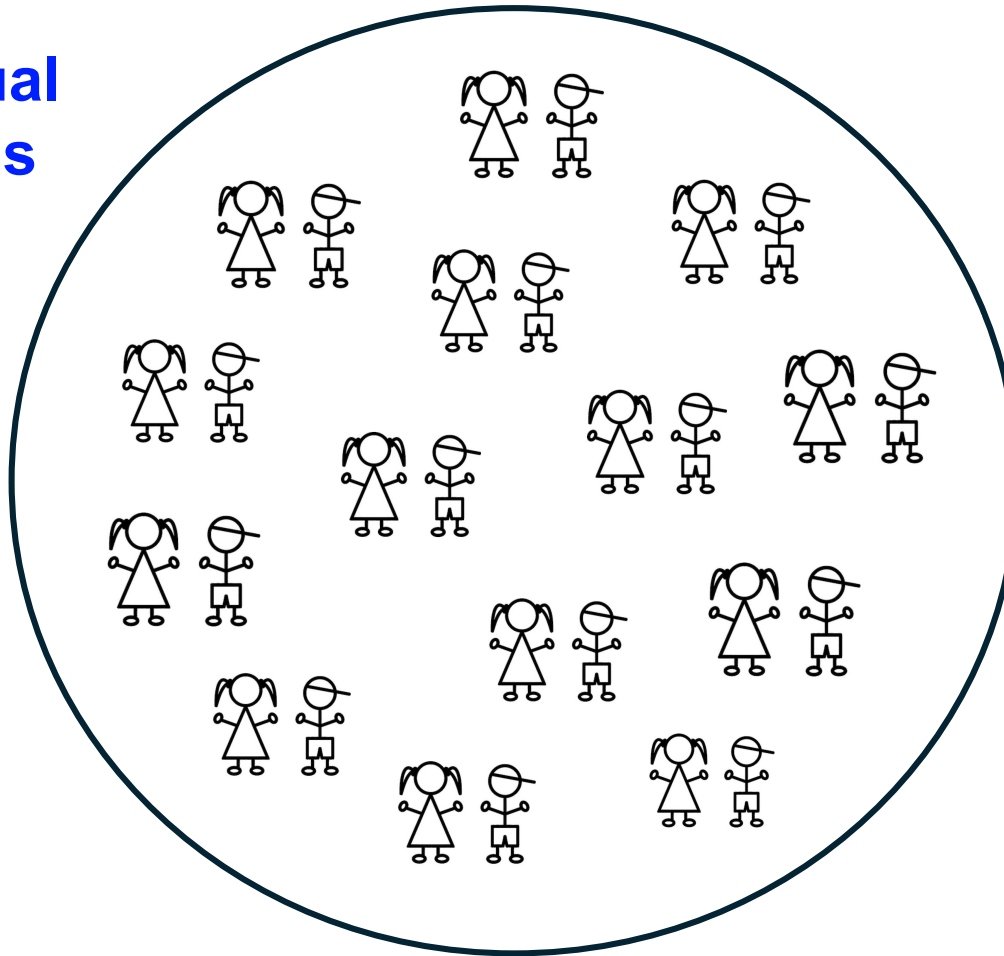
*No! This Is A
Denominational
Concept.*

Because it draws
From the strengths
Of Local Churches
To empower the
Larger Denomination

CHURCH OF CHRIST (UNIVERSAL)



**= Individual
Christians**

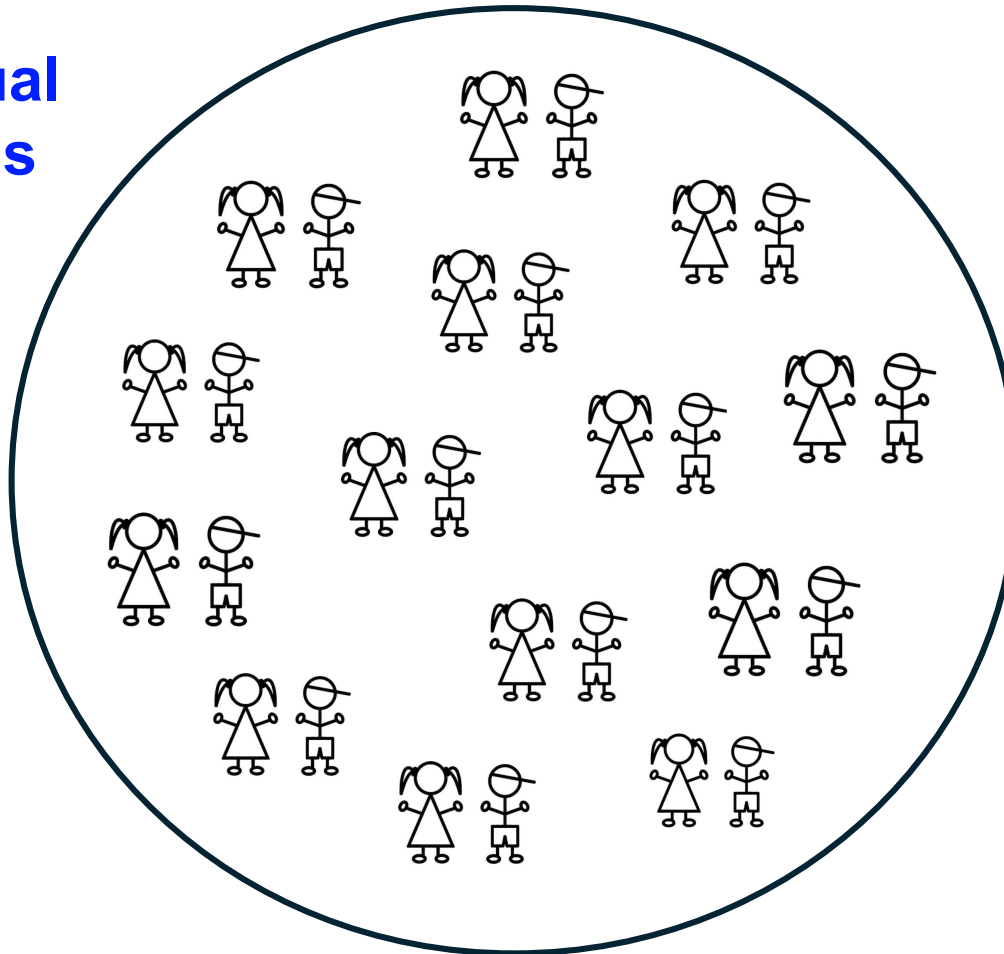




CHURCH OF CHRIST (LOCAL)



**= Individual
Christians**



Elders

Deacons

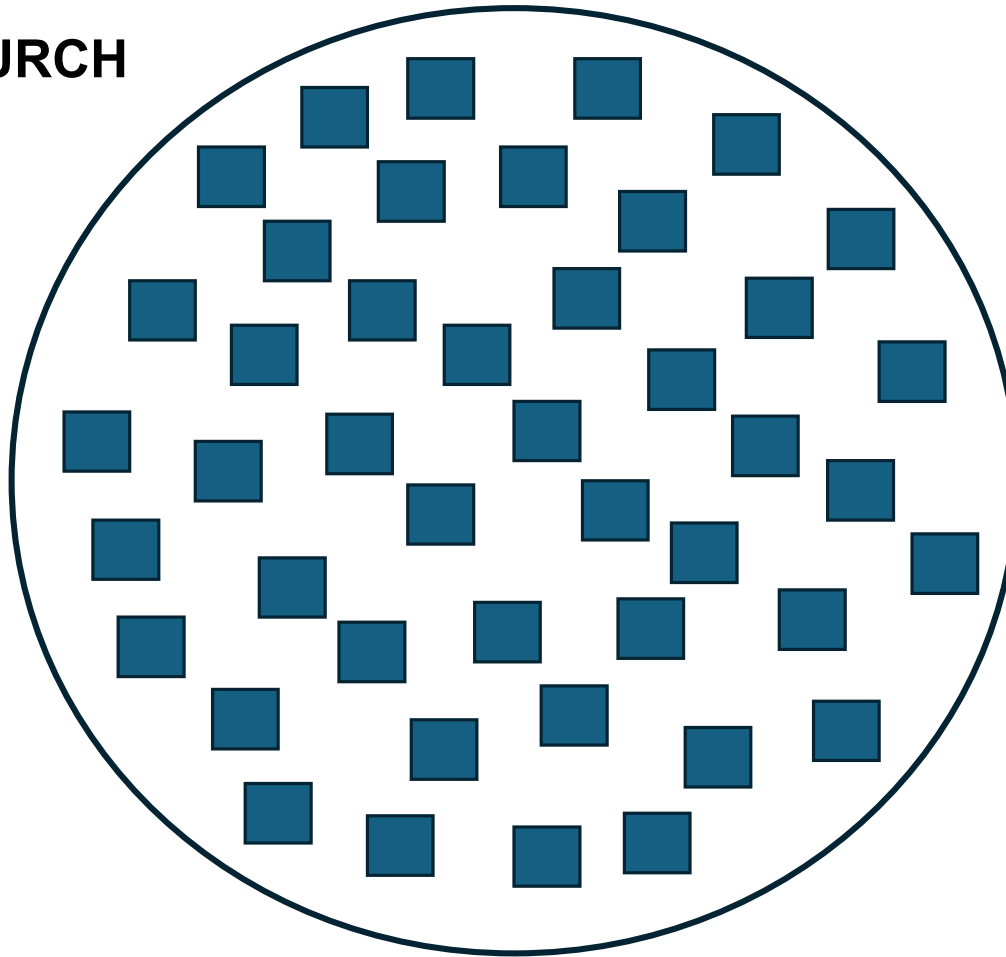
Saints

***Each One
Different...***

***Together We
Make Up A
Local Church***

CHURCH OF CHRIST - meeting in localities

■ = LOCAL CHURCH



A group of Christians who meet together

- Paul addressed a letter to “the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons” (Phil. 1:1), later calling them a “church” (Phil. 4:15).
- We can read of “the church of God . . . **at** Corinth” (1 Cor. 1:2), and “the church **of the** Thessalonians” (1 Thess. 1:1).
- It should have as members only those who are Christians (Ac. 9:26-28), and reject those who persist in sin (Mt. 18:17).

A group of Christians who meet together

- *Fallible people* make these decisions, and determine those added or rejected.
- Their knowledge of God's word and of the hearts of the people is subject to error.
- They may retain some whom God would "put away" (1 Cor. 5:1,2), or "cast out" some whom God would receive (3 Jn. 10). Diotrophes
- *We must not conclude that all whom men recognize as "church members" are truly in Christ and are, therefore, **people of God**.*



All will be judged individually by Christ

- “The church” cannot worship for me or you. “But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup” (1 Cor. 11:28).
- Christians constitute a holy and royal priesthood, with individual access through Christ (our High Priest) to the throne of grace in heaven - Hb. 4:14-16.
- Jesus Christ, as revealed in His word, is the final authority - Ac. 10:42; 17:31. God will judge all of us individually through His resurrected Son

- What a blessing that God has given us to be a part of a local church with its...
- Overseers (elders, shepherds) who watch for our souls and lead us to follow Jesus
- Deacons (who serve the congregation in special ways)
- Teachers (who prepare and present lessons from God's Word)
- And Every Member of this body who is committed first to the Lord and then to one another that we will continue with one accord serving the Lord with gladness.

