

## The Church v2

### Lesson 2

#### The Nature of The Universal Church

## The Church v2

1. What is the church?
2. The nature of the universal church
3. The nature of a local church
4. Unreliable sources of religious authority
5. The only source of Divine authority today
6. How to establish Divine authority
7. Things that are expedient

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## The Church v2

8. Respecting the silence of the Scriptures
9. The organization of a local church
10. The work of a local church
11. Independence autonomy and cooperation of local churches
12. Institutionalism
13. The social gospel
14. The unity of the church

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## What Is The Church?

1. Jesus promised to build His one church
2. What does church mean?
3. How is church used in the New Testament?
4. Some figures that describe the church
5. Rejecting misconceptions about the church

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## Introduction

- As we studied previously Jesus' church refers to the assembly of people that He saves
- When we think of His church, we must think people instead of anything else like an institution or a building
- The majority of times Jesus' church is mentioned in the New Testament it refers to either the universal church or a local church

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## Introduction

- It is critical that we understand the nature of His universal church so we do not pervert its organization and work
- Sadly, we see so many examples of believing and practicing errors that modify the organization and work of Jesus' universal church even among our brethren

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## What Is The Universal Church?

- The universal church is the assembly of people in the world, both living and dead, that Jesus saves
- Therefore, the universal church is composed of all individuals in the world that Jesus saves
- In contrast, a local church is an assembly of Christians who agree to worship and work together in a specific location
- The nature of each differs and must not be confused

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## Composed of All Individuals In The World That Jesus Saves

- Jesus' universal church is composed of all individuals in the world that He saves
- Also, it consists of those He saves who have departed from this life, from creation until He comes again, awaiting eternal life
- Again, His universal church is composed of individuals, not local churches or bodies of local churches (Denominations)

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## Composed of All Individuals In The World That Jesus Saves

1Co 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,

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## Composed of All Individuals In The World That Jesus Saves

Heb 12:23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,  
Heb 12:24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.  
Heb 9:27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,

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## There Is Only One Universal Church

- There is only one universal church
- Therefore, there are not many churches, bodies of local churches like Baptist, Methodist and so on

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## There Is Only One Universal Church

Eph 1:22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,

Eph 1:23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Eph 4:4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

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## Began On The Day of Pentecost In Jerusalem

- Jesus' universal church, body of His saved people, began in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost after the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus
- Any universal church that began on another day in another place is not Jesus' church
- This would include the Roman Catholic as well as many others

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## Began On The Day of Pentecost In Jerusalem

Act 2:1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

Act 2:2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Act 2:3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them.

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## Began On The Day of Pentecost In Jerusalem

Act 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

Act 2:5 Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven.

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## Began On The Day of Pentecost In Jerusalem

Act 2:6 And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language.

Act 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ--this Jesus whom you crucified."

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## Began On The Day of Pentecost In Jerusalem

Act 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

Act 2:38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

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## Began On The Day of Pentecost In Jerusalem

Act 2:41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

Act 2:47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

- We cannot voluntarily join Jesus' church
- But, we can choose to obey the gospel to be saved, forgiven of our sins
- We are saved by Jesus when we believe in Him enough to repent (change our minds) of our sins, confess Him as the Son of God and are baptized (immersed in water) for the forgiveness of our sins

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

- Each and every person that He saves, He then adds together in His one church, His body, those in relationship with Jesus by grace through obedient faith
- There is only one way to be saved
- We are not saved by infant baptism, direct operation of the Holy Spirit on our minds, the sinner's prayer or any other unscriptural way

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

Act 2:22 "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know--

Act 2:23 this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

Act 2:24 "But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

Act 2:29 "Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

Act 2:30 "And so, because he was a prophet and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE,  
Act 2:31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY.

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

Act 2:32 "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.

Act 2:33 "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

Act 2:34 "For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,

Act 2:35 UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.'"

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

Act 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ--this Jesus whom you crucified."

Act 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

Act 2:38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Act 2:41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

Act 2:42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Act 2:47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

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Act 2:47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

Act 8:37 [*And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."*]

Act 8:38 And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

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## Enter When Jesus Adds Us To His Church

Gal 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

1Co 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

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## The Nature of The Universal Church

1. Composed of all individuals in the world that Jesus saves
2. There is only one universal church
3. Began on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem
4. Enter when Jesus adds us to his church

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## The Lord Keeps Track of Members

- God knows all members of His church
- There is no human error about who is saved by Jesus

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## The Lord Keeps Track of Members

2Ti 2:19 Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness."

34

## The Lord Keeps Track of Members

Heb 12:23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,  
Heb 12:24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.

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## Consists of All Those Who Are Saved

- Unlike a local church that is composed of both saved and those who need to be restored back to the Lord, the universal church is only composed of all those in the world who Jesus has saved
- No one in His universal church is not saved

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## Consists of All Those Who Are Saved

Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.

Eph 5:24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

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## Consists of All Those Who Are Saved

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

Eph 5:26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,

Eph 5:27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

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## Cannot Be Saved Without Being In His Church

- Jesus died to save all but only saves His church, people who are forgiven when they obey the gospel, become Christians
- Then, He adds each person who is saved to His one church, one assembly of people, one body

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## Cannot Be Saved Without Being In His Church

- Again, we obey the gospel when we believe in Jesus enough to repent (change our mind) of our sins, confess Him to be the Son of God and are baptized (immersed in water) for the forgiveness of our sins
- We cannot be saved without obeying the gospel
- And, we cannot be added by Jesus to His one church unless we are saved by Him <sup>40</sup>

## Cannot Be Saved Without Being In His Church

Mat 26:28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

Mat 26:32 "But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee."

41

## Cannot Be Saved Without Being In His Church

Act 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ--this Jesus whom you crucified."

Act 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

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## Cannot Be Saved Without Being In His Church

Act 2:38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Act 2:41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

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## Cannot Be Saved Without Being In His Church

Act 2:47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

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## Has No Earthly Organization

- Jesus' universal church has no earthly organization or headquarters
- Jesus in Heaven is head of His church and rules all individual members by the apostles' teaching

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## Has No Earthly Organization

Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.

Eph 5:24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

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## Has No Earthly Organization

Act 2:42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

2Pe 1:12 Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you.

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## Has No Earthly Organization

2Pe 1:13 I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder,

2Pe 1:14 knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.

2Pe 1:15 And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind.

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## Has No Treasury

- Christians are to collect money together each first day of the week (Sunday) for the work of the local church to which they are joined
- There is no centralized headquarters above a local church to send money to be placed into a universal treasury

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## Has No Treasury

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

1Co 16:2 On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

1Co 16:3 When I arrive, whomever you may approve, I will send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem;

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## Has No Collective Work

- Jesus universal church has no collective work to be done as one body together
- The work is done as all Christians in the world submit to the apostles' teaching in all areas of life including working with a local church
- The only collective work is done through each local church as they independently oversee and fund their own work

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## Has No Collective Work

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Col 3:17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

Col 3:18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

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## Has No Collective Work

Col 3:19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.

Col 3:20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.

Col 3:21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.

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## Has No Collective Work

1Pe 5:2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;

1Co 16:2 On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

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## Cannot Be Divided

- Although men have wrongly divided what they see as Jesus' universal church into organizations of bodies of local churches, His one universal church cannot be divided
- This is true because there is no earthly organization governing it
- As individuals remain loyal to the Lord by obeying His Word, they are united with Him as head

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## Cannot Be Divided

Eph 4:4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

1Co 1:12 Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ."

1Co 1:13 Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

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## Membership Is Not Affected By Death

- Since the universal church is the body of the saved, death does not affect our relationship with Christ if we are faithful to Him
- When we die, we are still with Christ looking forward to eternal life in heaven

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## Membership Is Not Affected By Death

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

Php 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

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## Membership Is Not Affected By Death

Php 1:22 But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose.

Php 1:23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better;

Php 1:24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.

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## The Nature of The Universal Church

1. Composed of all individuals in the world that Jesus saves
2. There is only one universal church
3. Began on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem
4. Enter when Jesus adds us to his church
5. The Lord keeps track of members
6. Consists of all those who are saved

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## The Nature of The Universal Church

7. Cannot be saved without being in His church
8. Has no earthly organization
9. Has no treasury
10. Has no collective work
11. Cannot be divided
12. Membership is not affected by death