

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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The Universal and “Local” Church

(Robert Turner)

Even a casual reading of the New Testament shows various applications of the word “church”. “I will build my church”---“the church, which is my body”---“Unto Him be glory in the church”---all, obviously, refer to the one universal church (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:23; Eph. 3:21).

But “tell it to the church”---“elders in every church”---and “let not the church be charged” as clearly refer to the local or organized congregation, of which there are many (Matt. 18:17; Act.14:23; I Tim. 5:16)

Apparently it is not so clear, however, that the differences in these is (sic) sometimes more than size and number. Study the differences listed below, and when you have grasped the significance (exemplified in some conclusions we have drawn) you will be able to add other “points” to the list.

UNIVERSAL CHURCH ---
A Relationship of Saints With
God

In both heaven and earth
Eph. 3:15

The Lord “adds” members
Acts 2:47

Entered by baptism *I Cor. 12:13*

All saints are here *Gal. 3:27*

None but the saved *2 Tim. 2:19*

One Shepherd only *Matt. 23:8*

Assembled figuratively *Heb. 12:23*

Satan can’t prevail against
Matt. 16:18

LOCAL CHURCH--- A
Relationship of Saints with
Saints

Earthly, limited *Phil. 1:1*

We “join” ourselves to it
Acts 9:26

By Agreement with fellow-
saints *3 Jn. 10*

Certain saints here *I Cor. 1:2*

Some “not of us” here *I Jn. 2:19*

Lesser Shepherds here *I Pet. 5:2*

Literally assemble *I Cor. 14:23*

Satan can and does prevail
Rev. 2:5

The Universal church is a relationship of individuals with God, that comes first, and exists regardless of what men do or say (3 Jn. 9-10) as long as the individuals walk in God’s truth. The Local church is an additional tie, of saints with saints, which God wishes us to take in order that we may function as an organized unit---function collectively---to carry out His divine purpose.

(*Plain Talk, Vol. 1, no. 10, p.5*
– *October, 1964*)