

# The Church

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With Whom Should I Meet?

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# The Church

With Whom Should I Meet?



Daniel Bubenzer, Philipp Bubenzer, Jean-Denis Rossel



# INTRODUCTION

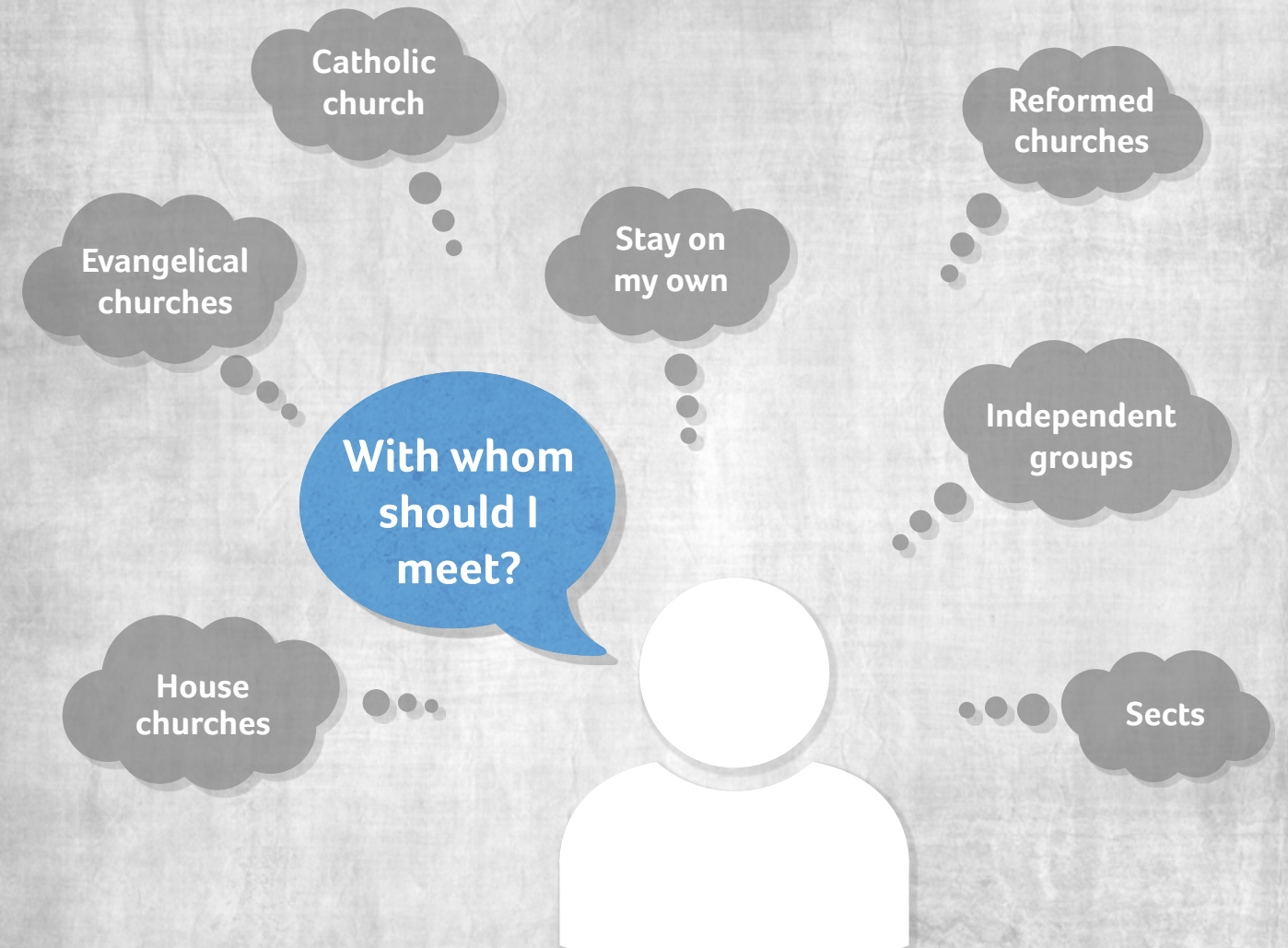
When looking at Christendom today, you may be asking yourself:

- Why are there so many different groups of Christians?
- How can I find Christians that meet according to God's Word?
- Is there a way to live out the unity of the Church according to God, a unity centered around the Lord Jesus?


The aim of this booklet is to examine the origin of the current divisions in Christendom and to show that there is a way to live out the unity of the Church according to God, a unity that is truly centered around the Lord Jesus. It is not connected to any particular Christian organization but intends to simply go back to the Word of God.

Despite their limitations, the aim of the illustrations is to help in better understanding the teaching found in the Word of God.

It is our desire that God may use His Word through this booklet to encourage us to respond to the love of the Lord who loved His Church (Ephesians 5:25).

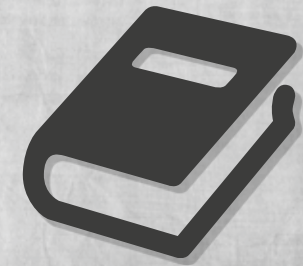




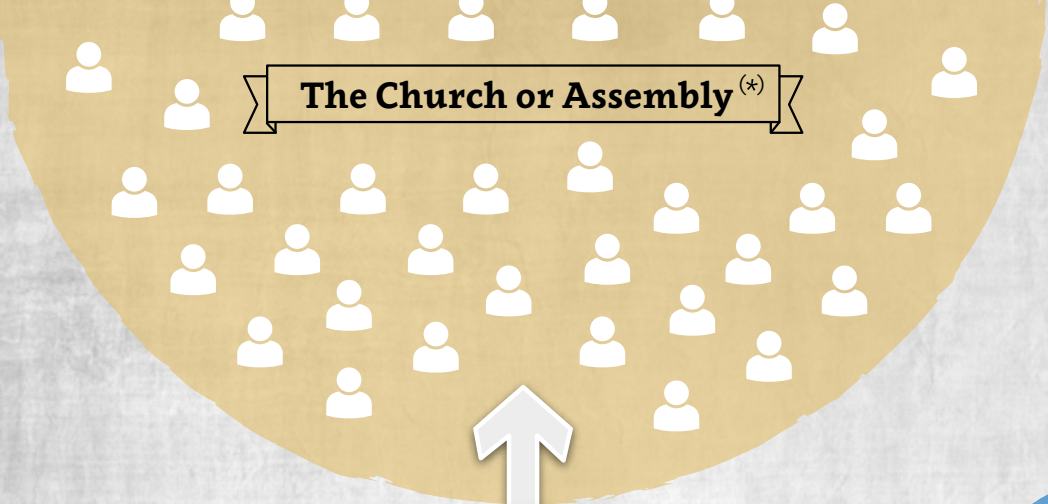


Which church is  
the right church  
according to God?

What does  
the Word of  
God say?








## The Church or Assembly<sup>(\*)</sup>

### What is the Church?



God speaks  
of only one  
Church!



out of Jews



out of the nations  
(everyone else)



THE  
BIBLE

\* The word "Church" is the English word used for the Greek word "Ekklesia" which literally translated means "called out ones." It is used to describe an "assembly." The Church or the Christian Assembly consists of all who have been saved by the Lord Jesus.

### The Word of God says:



"Even us whom He called, not of **the Jews** only, but also of **the Gentiles**." (*Romans 9:24*)



"Or is He the God of **the Jews** only? Is He not also the God of **the Gentiles**? Yes, of the Gentiles also, since there is one God who will justify." (*Romans 3:29-30*)



"He prophesied that Jesus would die ... **to gather together** in one the children of God who were scattered abroad." (*John 11:51-52*)

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**"The church of God, which He purchased with His own blood"** (*Acts 20:28*)

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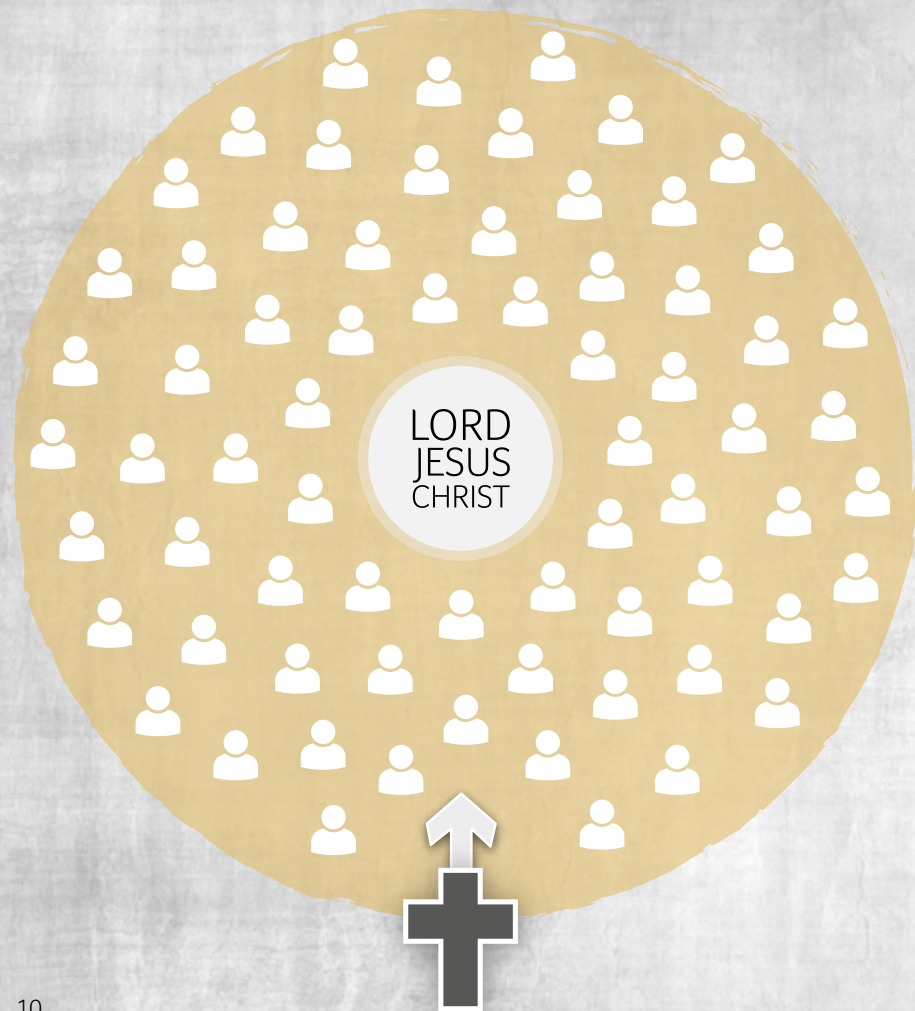


"The Lord added **to the church** daily those who were being saved." (*Acts 2:47*)



"So we, being many, are **one body in Christ**, and individually members of one another." (*Romans 12:5*)





## Who leads the Church?

The Lord Jesus saves, gathers and leads His Assembly!



## The Word of God says:



“He is **the head** of the body, the church, ... that in all things He may have **the preeminence.**”  
*(Colossians 1:18-20)*



“I will build **My church**, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” *(Matthew 16:18)*

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“**For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.**” *(Matthew 18:20)*

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“Now the multitude of those who believed were of **one heart and one soul**; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.” *(Acts 4:32)*



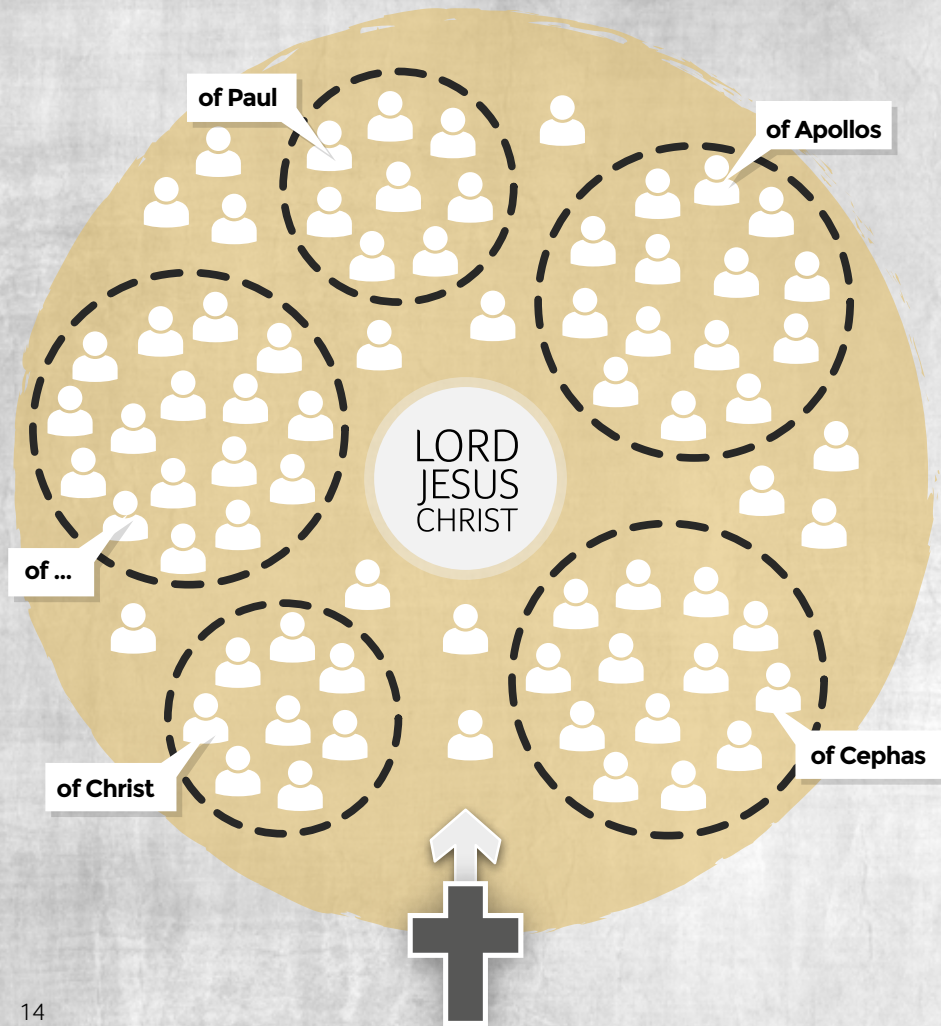


How did  
the divisions  
in the Church  
come about?

What does  
the Word of  
God say?










## The beginning of disagreements ...

Already early in the history of the Church there were believers that formed different parties!



"There are contentions among you!"  
(1 Corinthians 1:11)



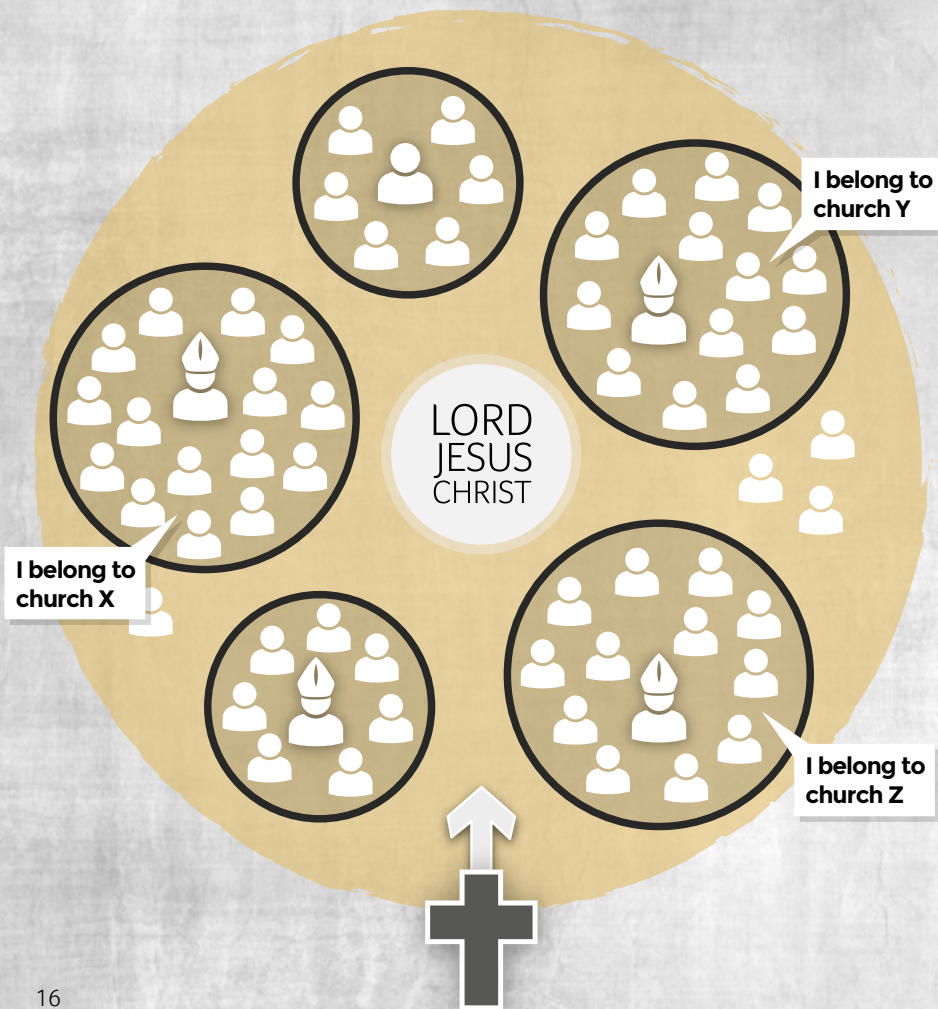
## The Word of God says:

-  "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be **no divisions among you**, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Corinthians 1:10)
-  "For it has been declared to me, concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that **there are contentions among you.**" (1 Corinthians 1:11)
-  "Now I say this, that **each of you say**, 'I am of Paul', or 'I am of Apollos', or 'I am of Cephas', or 'I am of Christ.'" (1 Corinthians 1:12)

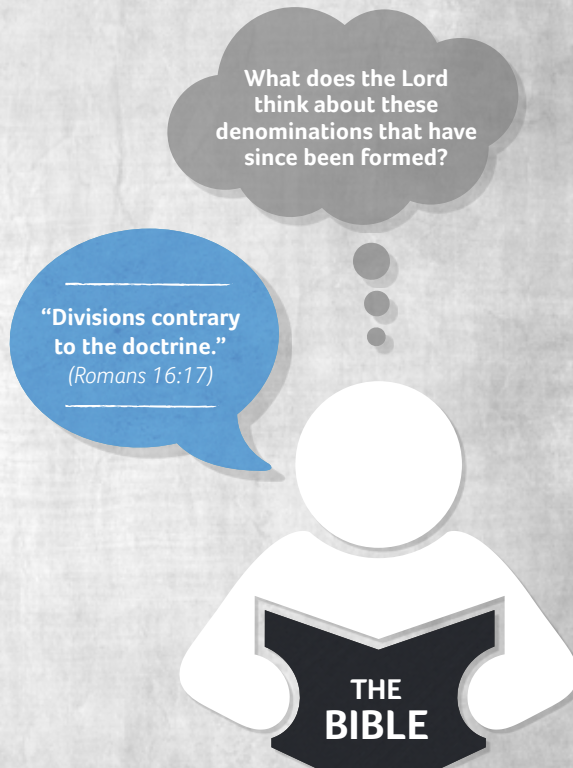
### "Is Christ divided?" (1 Corinthians 1:13)

-  "For when one says, 'I am of Paul' and another, 'I am of Apollos', are you not carnal?" (1 Corinthians 3:4)
-  "**Who** then is Paul, and **who** is Apollos? But **ministers.**" (1 Corinthians 3:5)







### Later on the disagreements led to divisions ...



### The Word of God says:

 "Now **the works of the flesh** are evident, which are ... contentions, jealousies, ... dissensions, heresies." (Galatians 5:19-20)

**"When you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you."** (1 Corinthians 11:18)

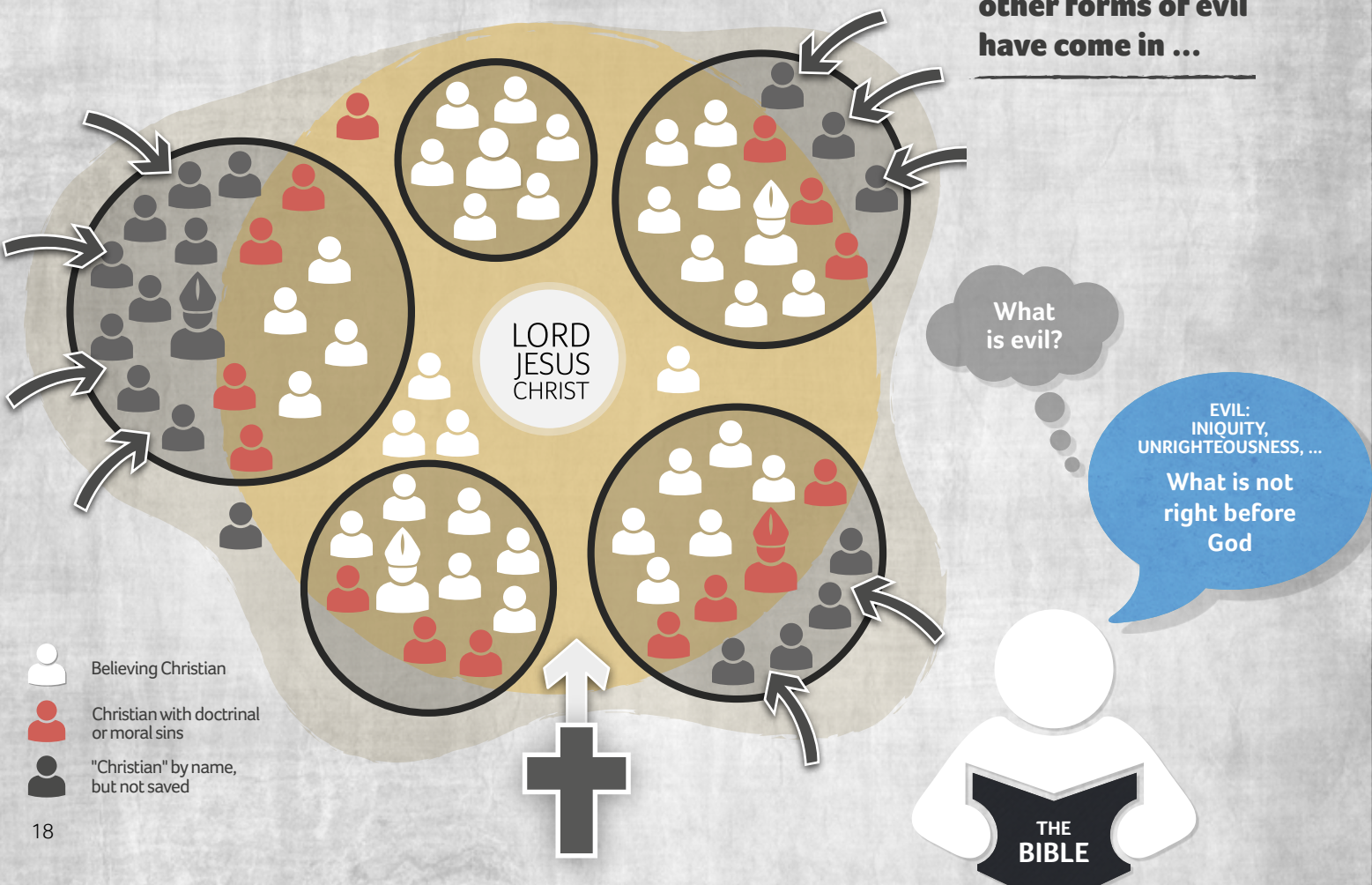
 "Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses **contrary to the doctrine** which you learned and avoid them." (Romans 16:17)




**NOTE:** With time things that are not doctrinally sound have come in and caused divisions:

- Clergy
- Denominations after various doctrines, rules, gifted and influential personalities, etc.




**At the same time,  
other forms of evil  
have come in ...**




-  Believing Christian
-  Christian with doctrinal or moral sins
-  "Christian" by name, but not saved


## The Word of God says:

### On doctrinal evil


 "There will be **false teachers among you**, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them ... and many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words." (2 Peter 2:1-3)

### On moral evil

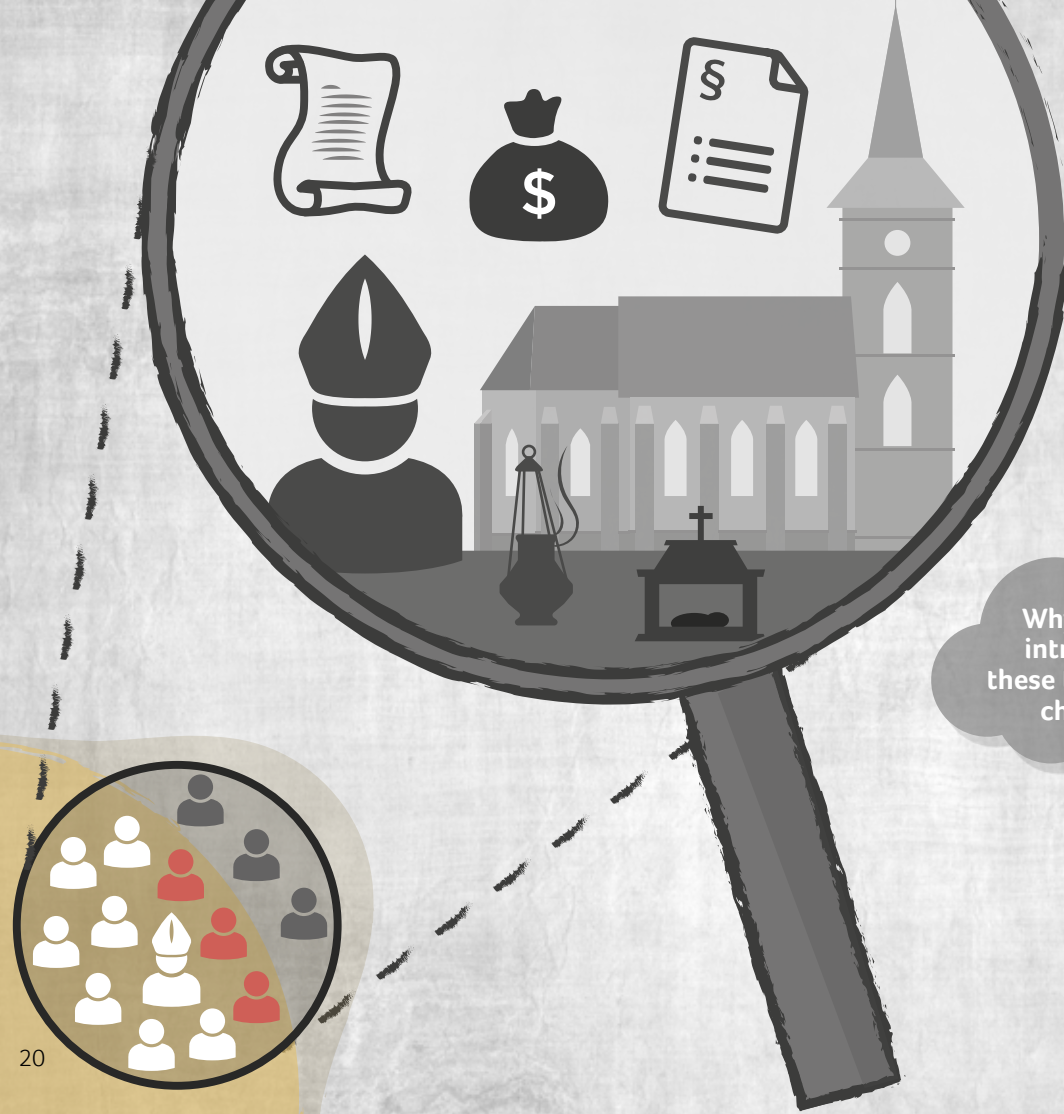
 "It is actually reported that **there is sexual immorality among you.**" (1 Corinthians 5:1)

 "I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yes I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with **anyone named a brother**, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner - not even to eat with such a person." (1 Corinthians 5:9-11)

### On unbelievers

 "**Certain men have crept in** unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turned the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." (Jude 4)






**In addition, religious practices have been introduced ...**

Why did men introduce all these things in the churches?



**The Word of God says:**

-  "Why ... do you subject yourselves to regulations ... - according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion ... but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh." (*Colossians 2:20-23*)
-  "And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, **that they might bring us into bondage**)." (*Galatians 2:4*)
-  "Stand fast therefore in the **liberty by which Christ has made us free**, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage." (*Galatians 5:1*)

**NOTE:** Example of such added religious principles and practices:

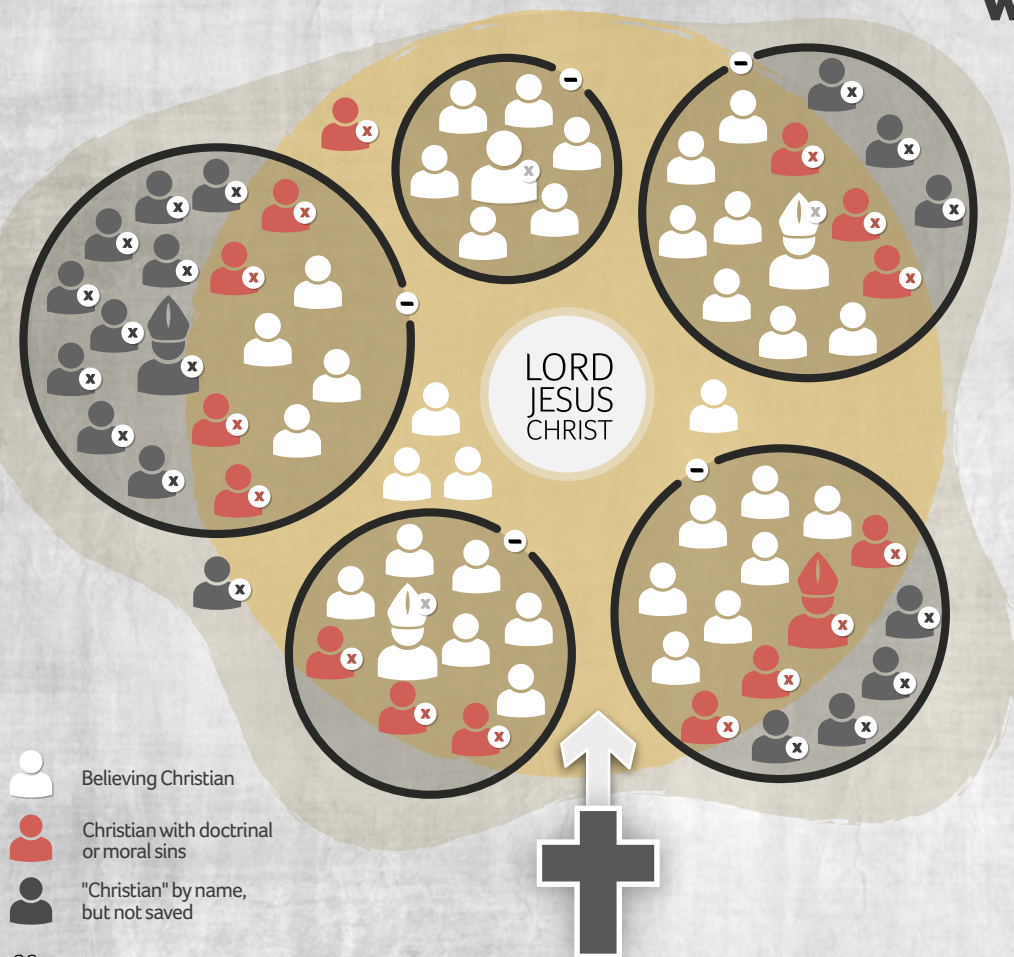
**Follow regulations:**

**Follow Christ in liberty:**

1. Material church building	Believers are the house of God. (Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:5)
2. List of membership	Every believer is a member of the body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:27)
3. Priests (appointed)	Christ has made all believers priests (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6)
4. Human ordination	Christ sends out. (compare Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 4:11-12; Acts 13:1-4)
5. Liturgy/set program	Christ directs by His Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 14:26)
6. Robes	Christ is the robe/dress of the believer. (Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:12)
7. Tithing	Everything belongs to the Lord. (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8:9-14)
8. Special days	Living with Christ every day. (Galatians 4:10; Colossians 2:16-17; Acts 2:46)
9. Altars	Christ is the altar. (Hebrews 13:10-13)
10. Human mediator	Christ is the mediator. (1 Timothy 2:5)



## What does God say about this confusion?



-  Believing Christian
-  Christian with doctrinal or moral sins
-  "Christian" by name, but not saved



## The Word of God says:

“Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His’, and, ‘let everyone who names the name of Christ **depart from iniquity.**’



But in a **great house**, there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, **some** for honour and **some** for dishonour.

Therefore if anyone **cleanses himself from the latter**, he will be a vessel for honour, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.” (2 Timothy 2:19-21)

**NOTE:** Indifference towards evil is also a sin: It is indifference to the Lord and our brothers and sisters. A believing Christian cannot remain indifferent regarding evil (iniquity) in the Church.



“You have not rather mourned that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you.” (1 Corinthians 5:2)

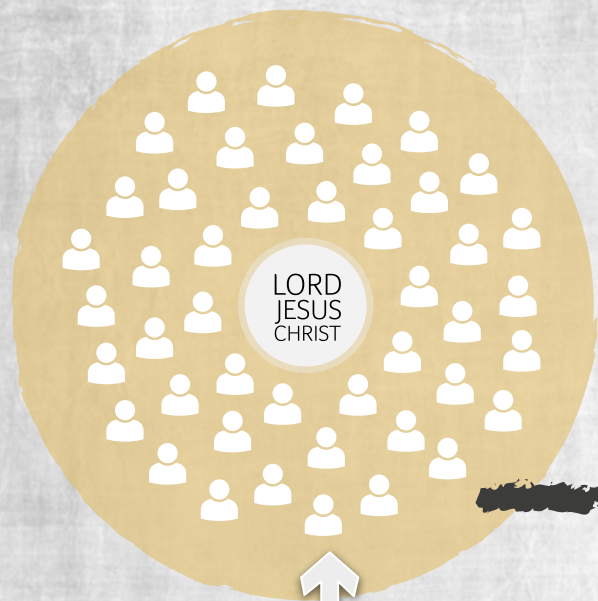


“If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him, for he who greets him, shares in his evil deeds.” (2 John 10-11)

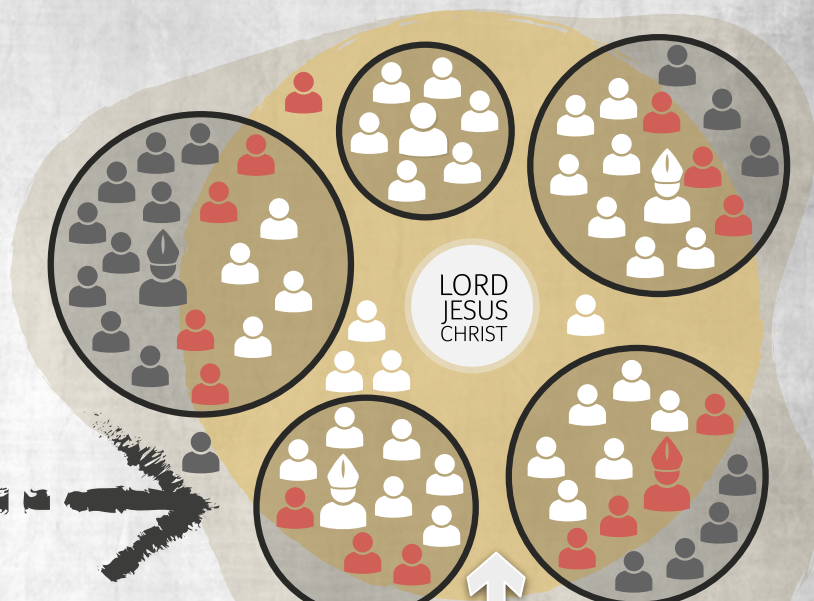


# Summary:




## In the beginning of the Church "House of God"



## Today "Great House"



**Development  
over time**

-  Believing Christian
-  Christian with doctrinal or moral sins
-  "Christian" by name, but not saved

## The Word of God says:

In the beginning of the church:  
The "house of God"  
(1 Timothy 3:15)  
today:  
a "great house!"  
(2 Timothy 2:20)

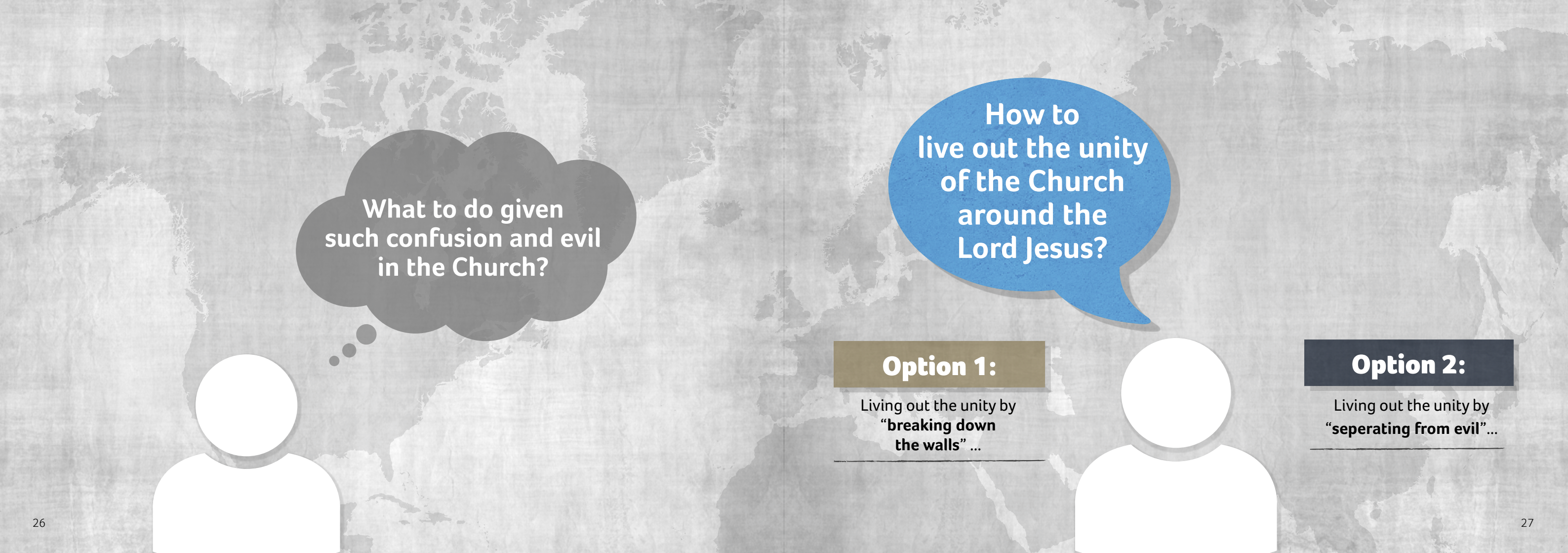
If the first epistle to Timothy presents the "house of God" (1 Timothy 3:15), the second epistle speaks of a "great house". It consists of all those that "call on the name of the Lord" (2 Timothy 2:19), all those that call themselves Christian - be they true believers or not, and whether they live to the Lord's honor or not.

The teaching about the vessels of this "great house" gives us further details:

- In the vessels of gold and of silver, we can see believers who show the characteristics of divine justice and glory (gold) and of redemption (silver).
- In the vessels of wood and earth, we can see unbelievers, characterized only by their earthly nature.
- Apart from their material the vessels are distinguished by the honor they bring to the Master of the house: certain vessels are to honor, others to the dishonor of their Master.
- Thus, in the "great house", Christendom, there are sadly strange elements that have come in and that are not "of God", but to His dishonor.







What to do given  
such confusion and evil  
in the Church?

How to  
live out the unity  
of the Church  
around the  
Lord Jesus?

**Option 1:**

Living out the unity by  
“**breaking down  
the walls**” ...

**Option 2:**

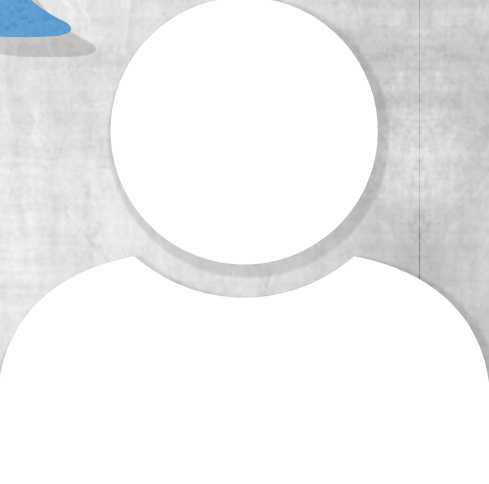
Living out the unity by  
“**seperating from evil**” ...



Let's have a look at this **option 1** in the following pages ...

# Option 1:

Living out the unity by "breaking down the walls" ...



Let's show the love between us!

Let's show a tolerant attitude!

Our differences are our strengths!

Let's be one!

Each group is a flower and together we are a beautiful bouquet!

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**Some say:**

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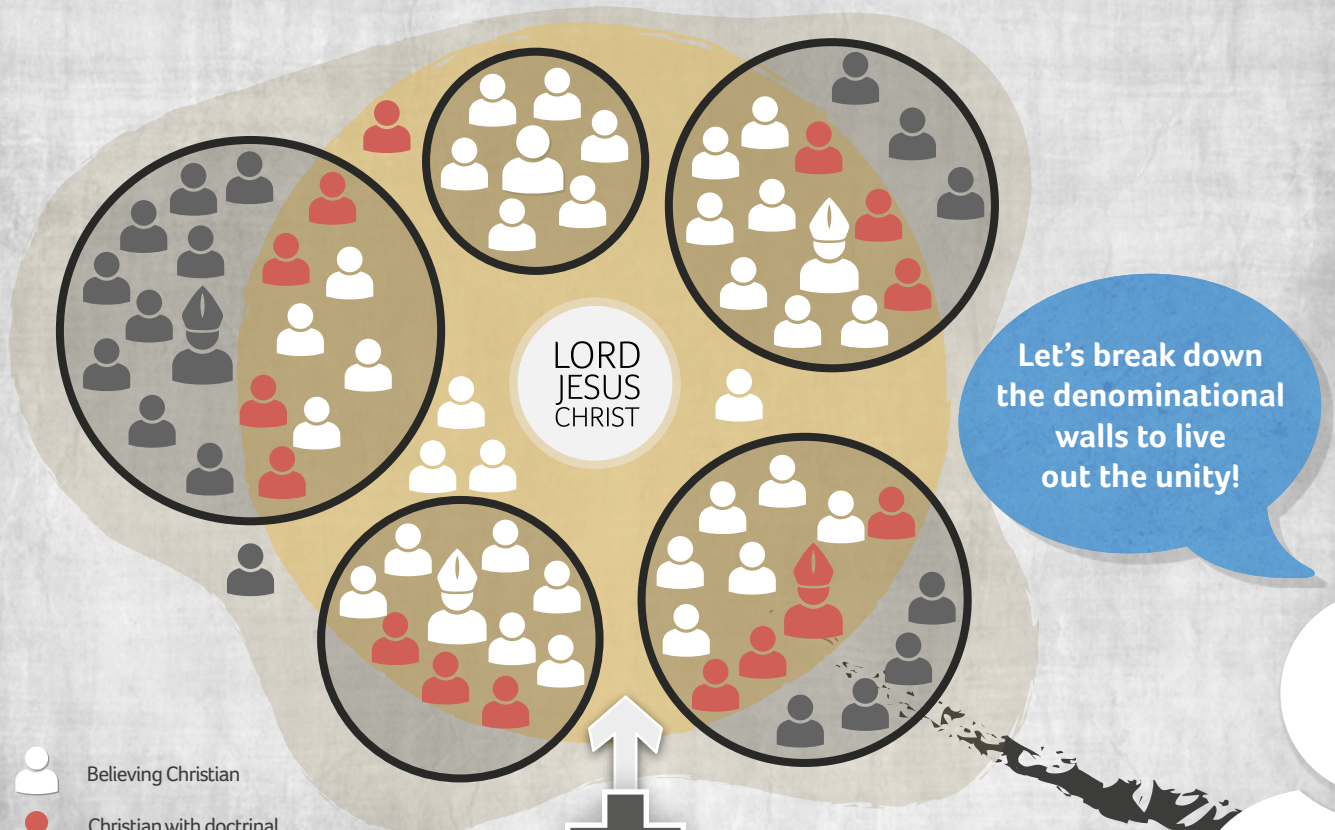
Focus on what we have in common and forget what separates us!




In heaven there will be no doctrinal walls! Let's bring them down now!

Let's bring our churches together!

If we are united, we will also be more convincing!

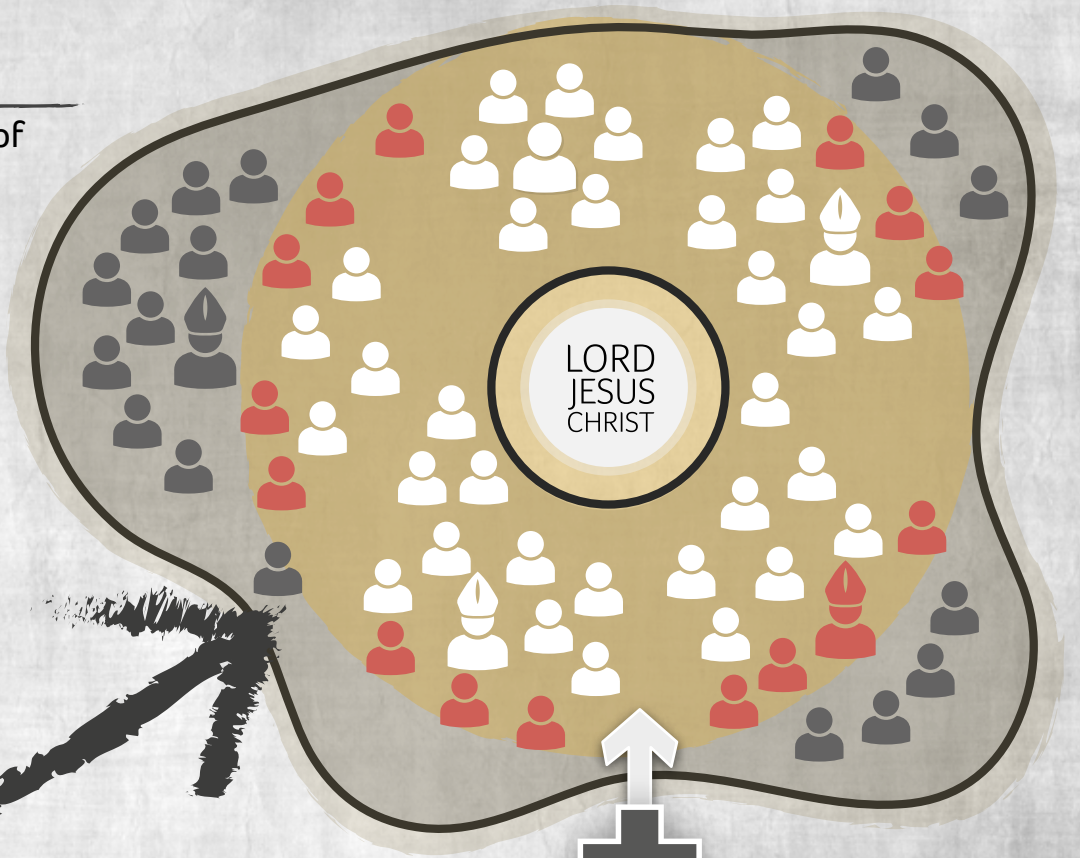
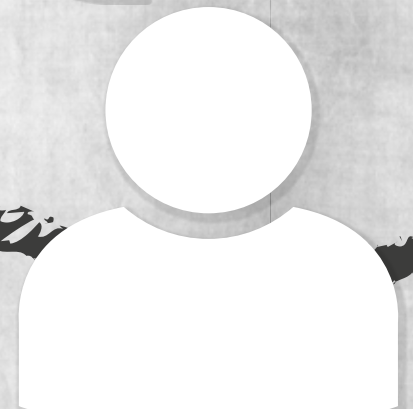




-  Believing Christian
-  Christian with doctrinal or moral sins
-  "Christian" by name, but not saved

### Option 1:

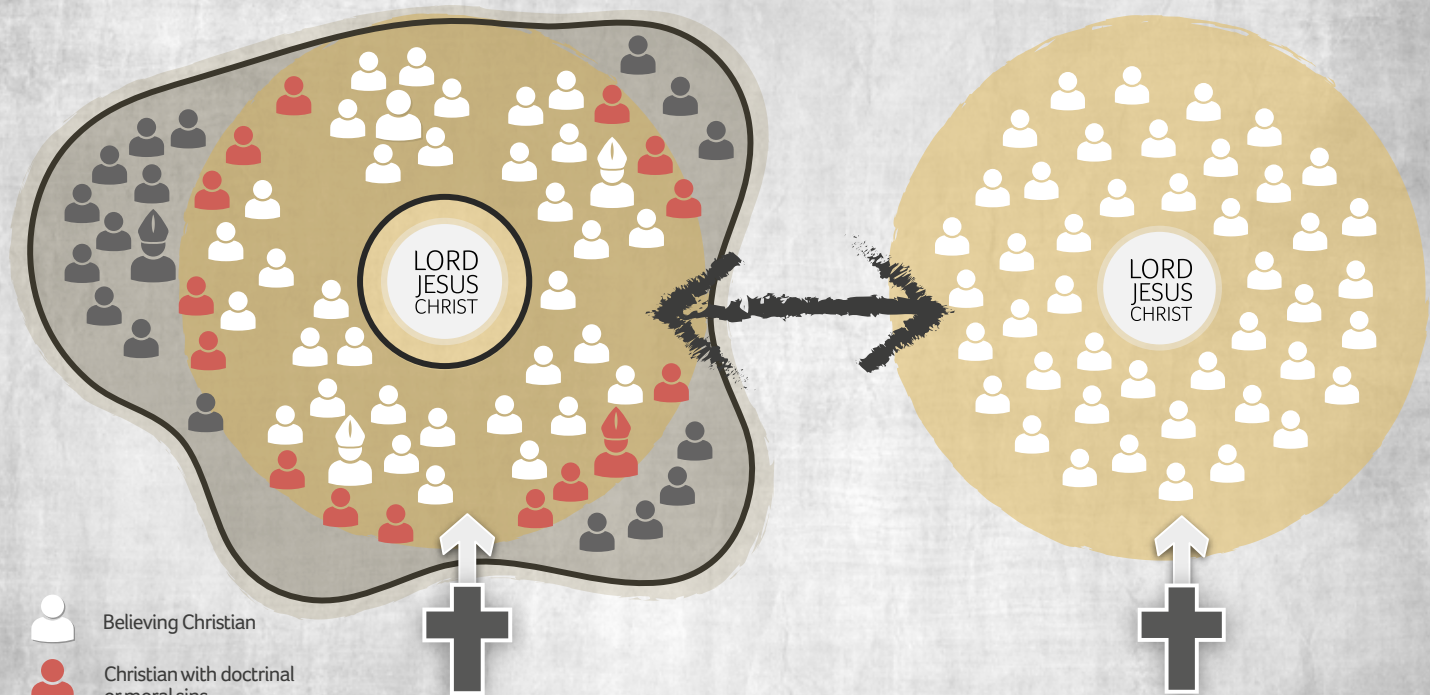
Living out the unity of the Church by "breaking down the walls" ...



## Result



# Comparison with the beginning



-  Believing Christian
-  Christian with doctrinal or moral sins
-  "Christian" by name, but not saved

Outwardly this seems to provide a certain unity...but this "unity" is fabricated through an indifference towards evil.

"For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? ... And what part has a believer with an unbeliever?"  
*(2 Corinthians 6:14-15)*

## Option 1:

Living out the unity of the Church by "breaking down the walls..."

**CONSEQUENTLY IT IS NOT A UNITY ACCORDING TO GOD, AROUND THE LORD JESUS**




Let's  
have a look at  
this **option 2** in  
the following  
pages ...

## Option 2:

Living out the unity by  
“**separating from evil**” ...

### The Word of God says:

“But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and clay, **some** for honor and **some** for dishonor.  Therefore if anyone **cleanses himself from the latter**, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.” (2 Timothy 2:20-21)

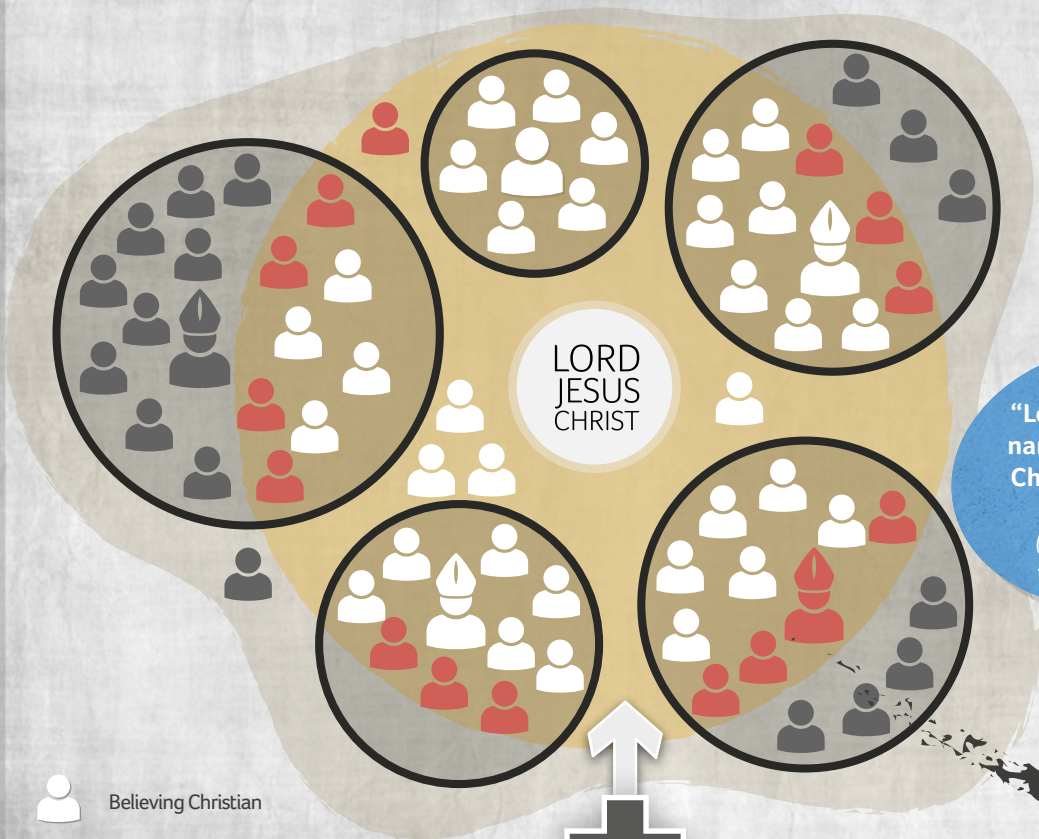
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The Greek word for “cleanses himself” in 2 Timothy 2:21 is the same as “purge out” (remove) in 1 Corinthians 5:7

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- In 1 Corinthians 5:7, it is an individual believer living in sin. In order that the Corinthians could be a “new lump” there was no other way but to separate from him, to discontinue the fellowship with this person (compare also v.13).
- In 2 Timothy 2:21, we have the opposite case: given that it is no longer possible to remove the evil around me, I have sadly to separate myself from the vessels of dishonor, and can no longer have fellowship with them. Only in this way will I be “a vessel to honor, sanctified, useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.”





LORD JESUS CHRIST

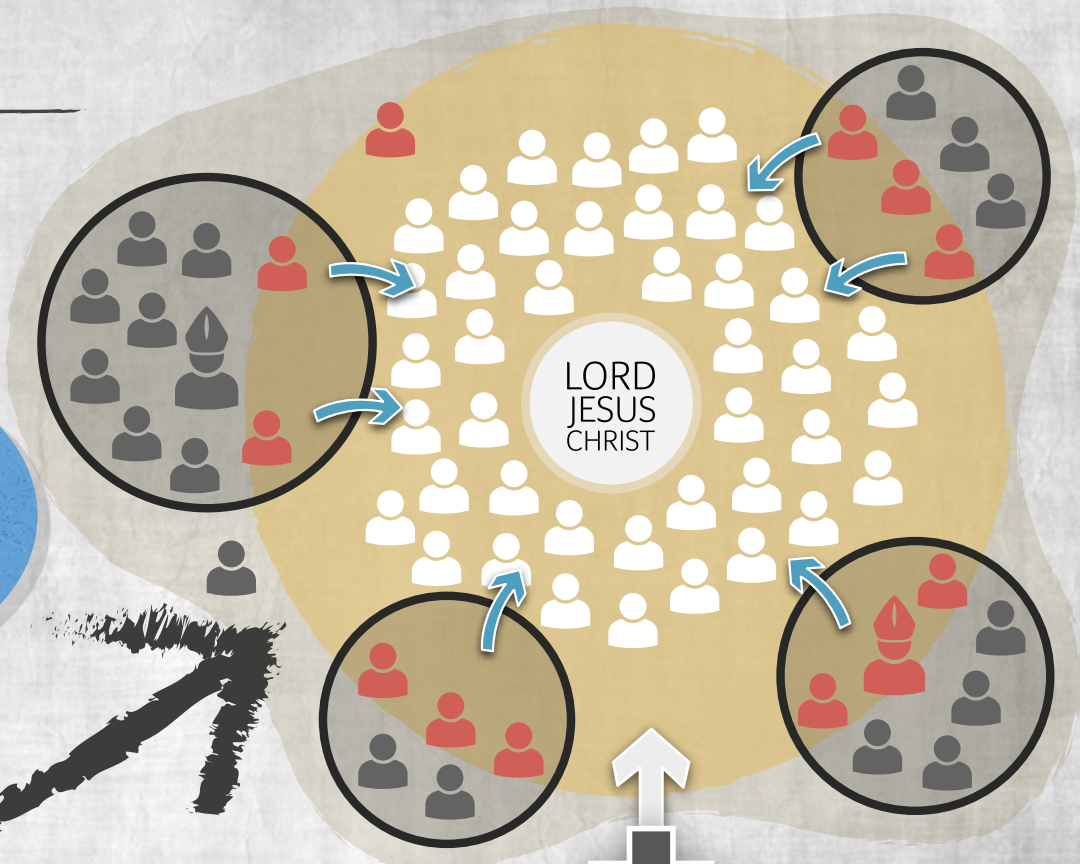
"Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."  
*(2 Timothy 2:19)*



### Option 2:




Living out the unity of the Church by "separating from evil"

"Pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord with a pure heart."  
*(2 Timothy 2:22)*



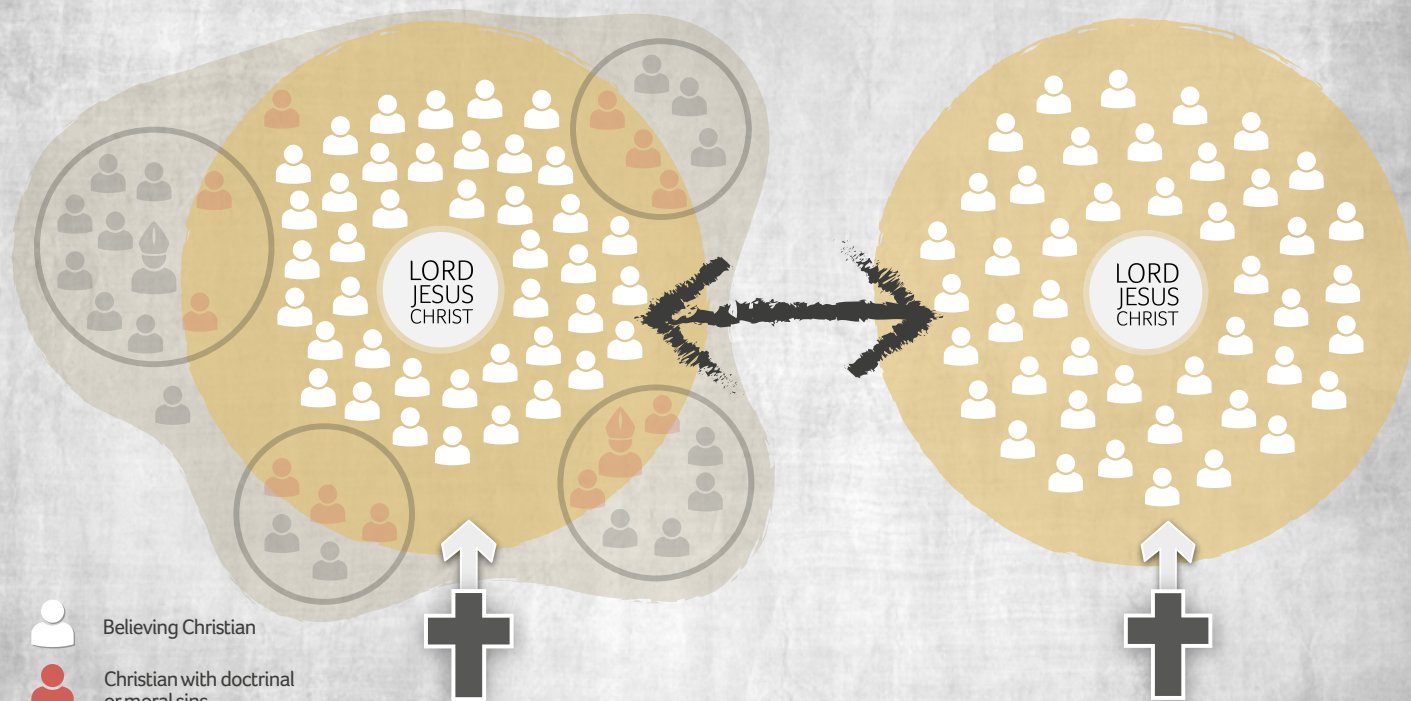
LORD JESUS CHRIST



## Result

-  Believing Christian
-  Christian with doctrinal or moral sins
-  "Christian" by name, but not saved



# Comparison with the beginning



-  Believing Christian
-  Christian with doctrinal or moral sins
-  "Christian" by name, but not saved

ONE around the Lord Jesus!

"For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20)

"Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love for the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart."  
(1 Peter 1:22)



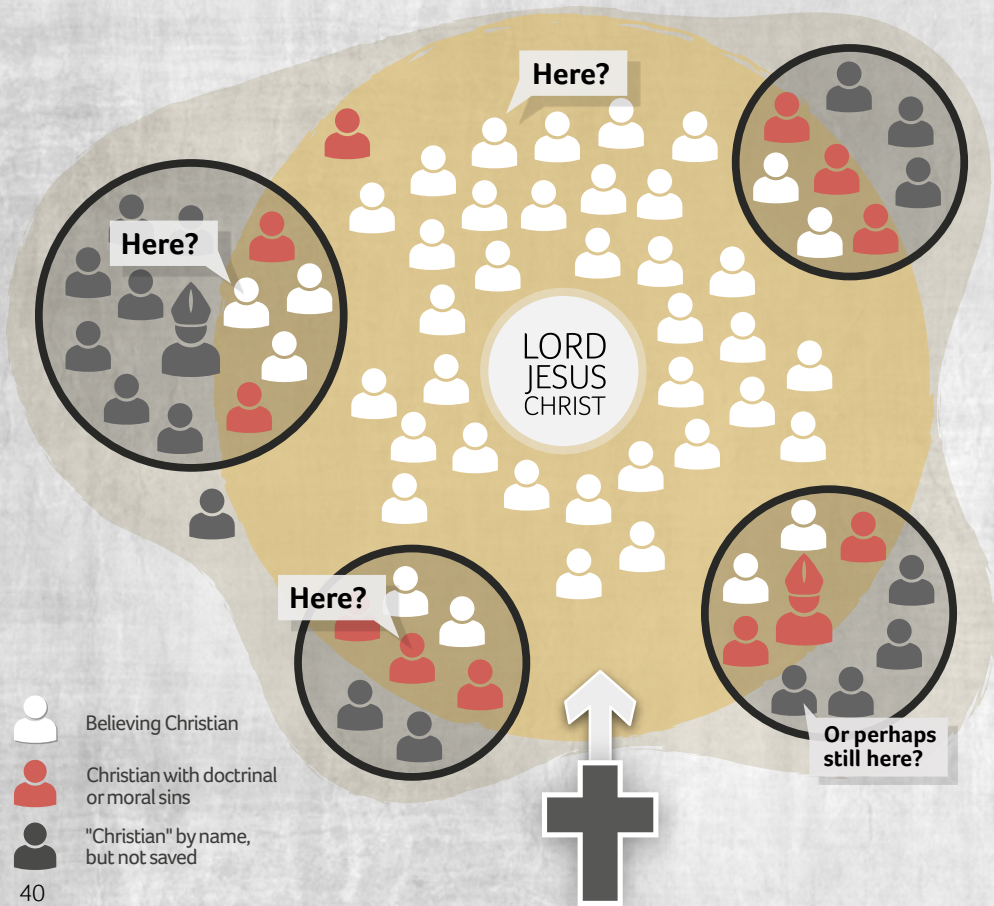
## Option 2:

**IT IS POSSIBLE EVEN TODAY TO LIVE OUT THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH AROUND THE LORD JESUS**

*Living out the unity of the Church by "separating from evil"*



## And now ...



Believing Christian



Christian with doctrinal or moral sins



"Christian" by name, but not saved

Where am I?!

---

**"For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."**

---

(Matthew 18:20)



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**"Pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."**

---

(2 Timothy 2:22)







## What to do to live out the unity of the Church?

“And above all things, have fervent love for one another, for love will cover a multitude of sins.”  
*(1 Peter 4:8)*


## The Word of God says:


1. Separate from evil by confessing my own sins.

 “If **we** confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” *(1 John 1:9)*


 “**First** remove the plank **from your own eye**, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.” *(Matthew 7:5)*


2. Speak with my brother or sister alone to help them to separate from evil.

 “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one **in the spirit of gentleness**, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.” *(Galatians 6:1)*

 “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault **between you and him alone**. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.” *(Matthew 18:15)*

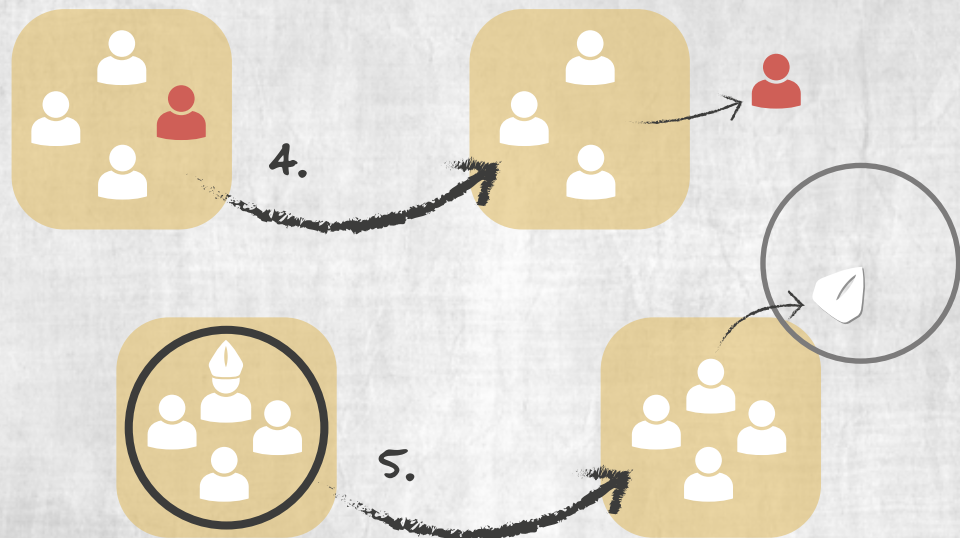
3. If my brother or my sister doesn’t want to listen, speak to them with two or three to help them separate from evil.

 “But if he will not hear, take **with you one or two more**, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.” *(Matthew 18:16)*

 “If we walk in the light as He is in the light, **we have fellowship with one another** and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” *(1 John 1:7)*



## What to do to live out the unity of the Church? (continued)



### The Word of God says:

4. If they don't listen but remain in their sinful life, the assembly has no choice but to discontinue the fellowship.

📖 “And if he **refuses** to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he **refuses** even to hear the church, let him be to you as a heathen or a tax collector.” (*Matthew 18:17*)

📖 “Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore **purge out** the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened.” (*1 Corinthians 5:6-7*)

📖 “Do you not judge those who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore **put away** from yourself the evil person.” (*1 Corinthians 5:12b-13*)

📖 “In all things, you proved yourselves **to be clear** in this matter.” (*2 Corinthians 7:11*)

5. If a group/church sets itself apart from other Christians by over emphasizing certain “truths” or the introduction of religious practices, in this way creating their own “church” (example: clericalism, member list), the way of recovery is to turn collectively from this evil and to return to the word of God and to gather simply around the Lord Jesus.

📖 “Now I say this, that each of you says, ‘I am of Paul,’ or ‘I am of Apollos’, or ‘I am of Cephas’, or ‘I am of Christ.’” (*1 Corinthians 1:12*)

📖 “Is Christ divided?” (*1 Corinthians 1:12*)

📖 “Why ... do you **subject yourselves to regulations** ... according to the commandments and doctrines of men?” (*Colossians 2:20-22*)

📖 “For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.” (*Matthew 18:20*)





### What to do to live out the unity of the Church? (continued)




### The Word of God says:

6. If a group of Christians does not want to separate from evil collectively (together), I have no other choice but to separate from them and to seek fellowship with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart to live out the unity of the Church around the Lord Jesus.

 “Let everyone that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity ... but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2 Timothy 2:19, 22)

 “For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? ... Therefore, come out from among them and be separate says the Lord ... I will be a Father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” (2 Corinthians 6:14, 16-18)

 “Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1)

**Each step requires a spirit of grace, gentleness, patience, and humility.**



LORD  
JESUS  
CHRIST



“Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”

*(Ephesians 5:25-27)*

And how  
will it be in  
heaven ... ?





## Next step

Perhaps you have read this booklet being:

- A member of a “church”?
- A Pastor, an Elder or a Deacon?
- A believer that remains alone because you have been disappointed by the “churches” that you know?
- Someone who desires simply to meet other believers that really gather around the Lord?

What should you do if you have found that there is really only one Church and that you can live out the unity of that one Church today?

- Review prayerfully and with the study of His word what is your responsibility before God in your given circumstances.
- Consider the doctrines and practices of the place where you meet, and obey God’s thoughts rather than men’s.
- Seek fellowship with all those that desire also to meet around the Lord Jesus.
- Share what the Lord shows you with your brothers and sisters so that they can also live in unity!



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“For there the Lord commanded the blessing - life forevermore.” *(Psalm 133:3)*

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“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; **that they all may be one**, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent me.”

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*(John 17:20-21)*

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“Our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us,  
that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify  
for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works”

————— *(Titus 2:13-14)* —————

## Contact

If you would like to contact me,  
I would be happy to receive your phone call or email:



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