



**THE PIECES FIT  
TOGETHER**



# EVERY PUZZLE PIECE MATTERS

God has "placed" the various members of the body where He wants them (1 Corinthians 12:18). He has appointed some to specific offices, but **EVERYBODY** has a role and is a necessary part of the body (Ephesians 4:11-16).

This simple organization needs no updating or tinkering. What worked for one church was supposed to work for every other church (1 Thess. 1:6, 2:13-14, 2 Thess. 2:15, Titus 1:5, 1 Cor. 4:16-17).



# THE CHURCH IS A BODY THAT WORKS

- The church is made up of every saved individual. There is only one church (Eph. 4:4, 1 Cor. 12:13, Col. 1:18) and we are added to it when we put on Christ in baptism (Acts 2:47).
- The church operates, as the church, only on the local level. There is no world headquarters, and the only leader over the entire body of believers is Christ (Col. 1:18, Eph. 1:22-23). The only human leadership we see in the New Testament, aside from the apostles, is local, autonomous elderships (1 Pet. 5:1ff, Phil. 1:1, Acts 14:23). The only collective activity of the church is also local and autonomous.
- "Church" is just a term for a group of people, whether universal (the church; the totality of all saved people) or local (a church; a congregation of Christians in a particular community).



# CHRIST

**EACH INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN SHARES FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST**

**CHURCH A**



**CHURCH B**

**CHURCH C**



**INDIVIDUALS SHARE FELLOWSHIP WITH EACH OTHER LOCALLY**

**1 JOHN 1:3, ROMANS 12:4-5,  
HEBREWS 10:23-25**



# RESTRICTION OR SAFEGUARD?

- Local churches are only authorized to do their own work. Elders are to oversee their own flocks (1 Pet. 5:1ff). Church members are to submit to their own leaders (Heb. 13:17). Therefore, what "Church A" does only impacts its own members. "Church B" has no institutional connection to "Church A." It shares fellowship with Christ, but there is not a single word in the New Testament that authorizes two or more congregations to organize themselves into a confederation, denomination, synod, sponsoring church, or missionary society.
- Even within a congregation, each individual member stands or falls based on his own personal standing with God (2 Cor. 5:10). There is no "group" salvation or condemnation.
- All of this protects both the congregation and the individual (see the examples found in Revelation 2-3).

"But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another"

**1 THESSALONIANS 5:12-13**





**“WHAT IS AN ELDER?  
WHAT DO THEY DO?”**



# DEACONS

A deacon is a servant or minister. The term can be applied in a general sense to anybody who serves, but there is also a specific office with essential qualifications explained in 1 Timothy 3:8ff. This office is also mentioned in Philippians 1:1 as distinct from the elders and church members, in general.



# **“ARE YOU THE PASTOR?”**

- The one-man pastor system in many churches only leads to the consolidation of power and influence in the hands of an individual and his inner circle.
- This is not the Bible model, as even Paul recognized the need for elders (Titus 1:5), and honored their authority (Acts 20:28).
- The qualifications of an elder should be enough to prevent much of this confusion (Titus 1:5-9, 1 Timothy 3:1-7).



**THERE IS WORK FOR  
EVERYONE!**

