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Theme: The church of Christ.

Scripture: - Romans 12:1-8.

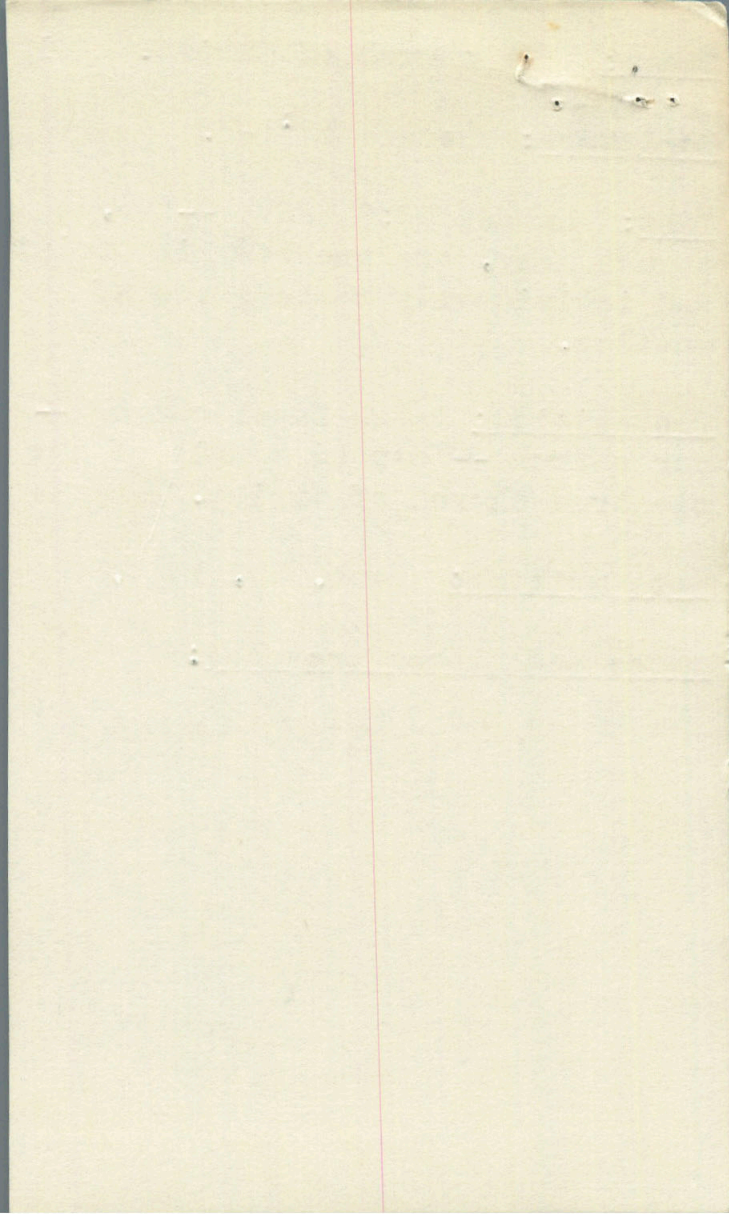
Text: Romans 12:5 (RSV) -- "We, though many, are one body in Christ and individually members one of another.

Proposition: each local church -- our church -- can be a unit of the one true church of Christ.

Date written: Sept. 24, 1955.

Dates and places preached:

Sept. 25, '55 - Mount View, Cheyenne Wyo.



Introduction:

1. In Sept. 15, 1955, Christian Advocate, Gerald Myles (Irish) article on "What Methodists Think About the Church," introduces our them, "The Church of Christ."

Minister picking coal from fire.

2. Congregational "gathered church" gives another idea.

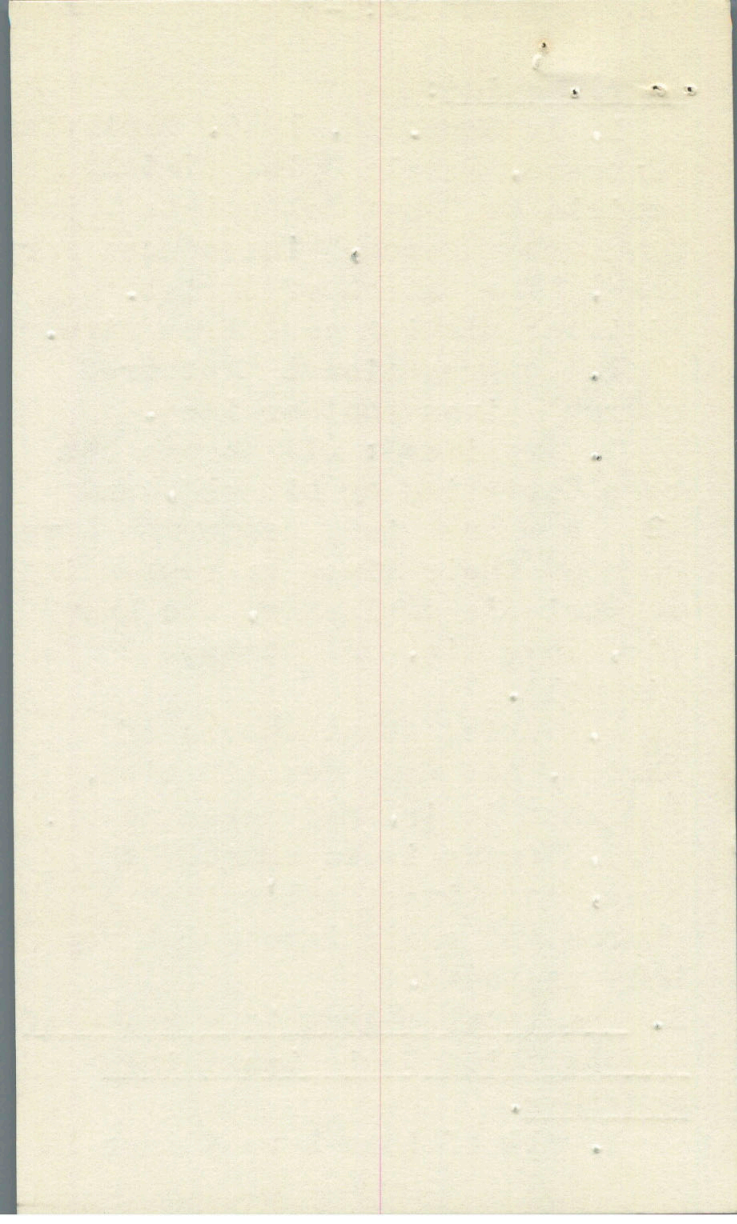
3. Two ideas: (1) No one can be a Christian by himself, and (2) a Church is a group who have changed their lives by responding to Christ's challenge, who know Him, love Him, and attempt to do His will.

4. Thinking about Church of Christ, not as a denomination, but what it is, and means to us.

5. Romans is to church at Rome, and gives Paul's idea of church and christians which may help us today.

I. The local church is a group of people doing Christian things together.

1. All of them have things in

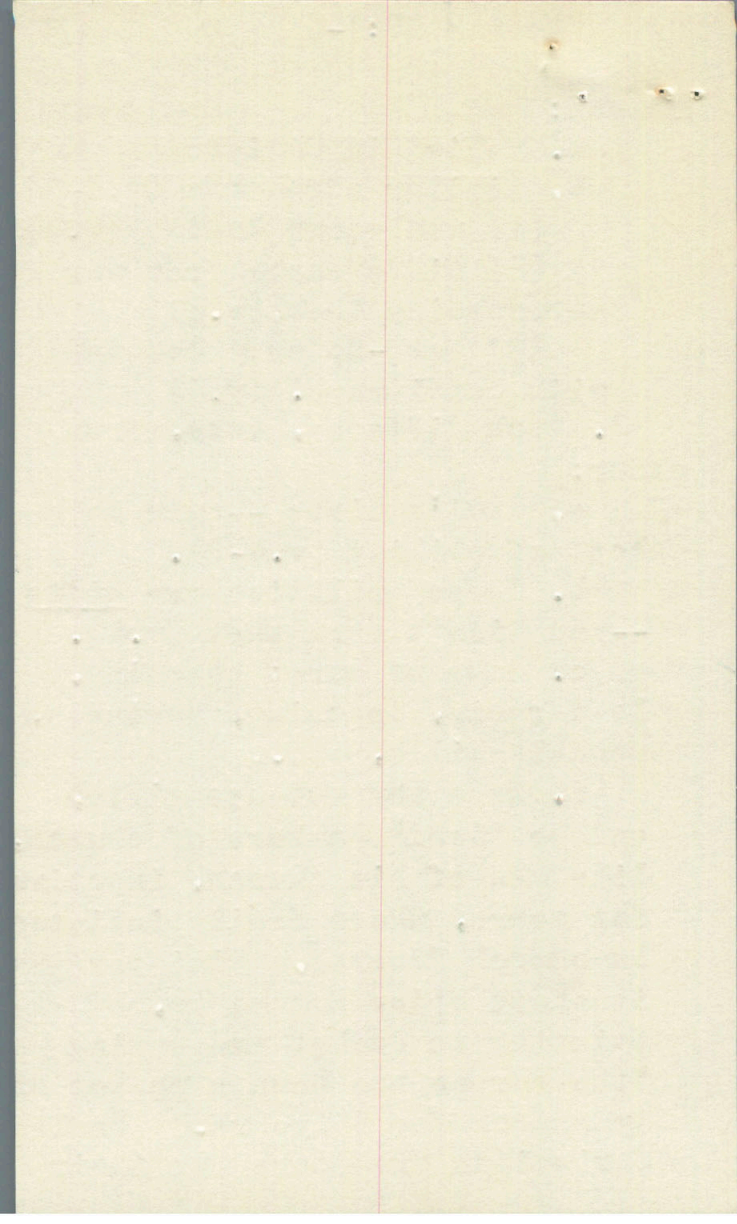


common:

- a. Belief in Christ.
 - b. Similar standards (v.1-3)
 - (1) wholesome bodies (v.1)
 - (2) Differences from world surrounding them. (v.2)
 - (3) Self-modesty coupled with confidence. (v.3)
2. Each differs, some, from

other:

- a. Paul's lists -- use to best of ability (v.4-8).
- b. These abilities are gifts --you didn't earn them (v.4).
- c. Some of ours: speaking, leadership, teaching, business, manual skills, etc..
- d. Some may not use gifts, and be "dead" members of church, like man ~~of~~ his church, inactive for years, whose family insisted on church funeral. Minister in short order summed up, by pointing to casket and saying "the corpse has been a member of my church for 25 years." Real Christians are doers for their



church and faith, or are dead to it, really living Christian corpses.

II. Local churches, too, have distinguishing characteristics.

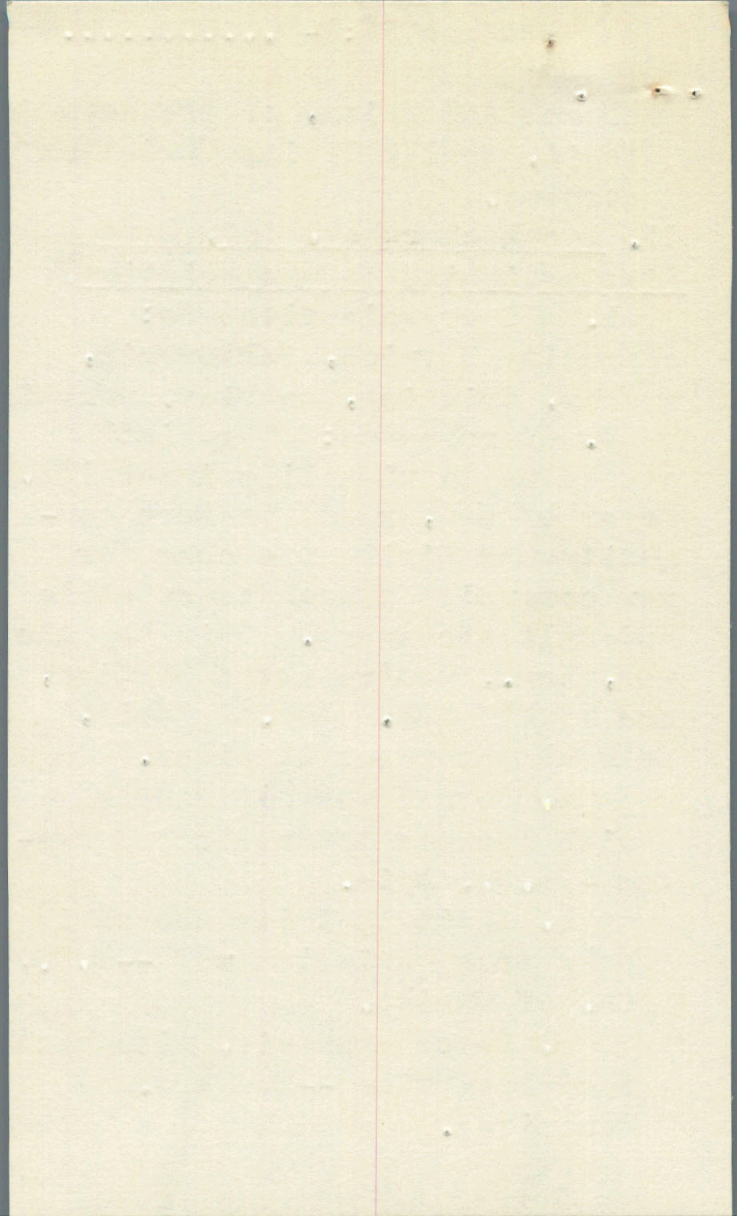
1. All organizations do: community service, fellowship, sports, drinking, hobbies, worship

2. Churches do: "Baptist" causes us to visualize immersion. Mayor of new, rough western community was hiring preacher for new community church town people had felt necessary. Said "by the way, Rev., you're not a Baptist, are you?" "No. Why." "Well, we haul our water 12 miles."

a. Formal worship coupled with laxness toward social custom --R.C., Epis.

b. Claim that its church is only true Christian way --R.C., Ch. of Christ.

c. Peace emphasis, with much social service --Quakers, Menonites.



d. Personal experience of Christ's saving power --Meth. and Bapt.

e. Ecstasy, enthusiasm, loudness -- "holiness," Assembly.

f. Upper Crust --Epis., Congr Presb.

g. Poorer people --Nazarene, holiness.

h. Middle class --Meth., Bapt Luth.

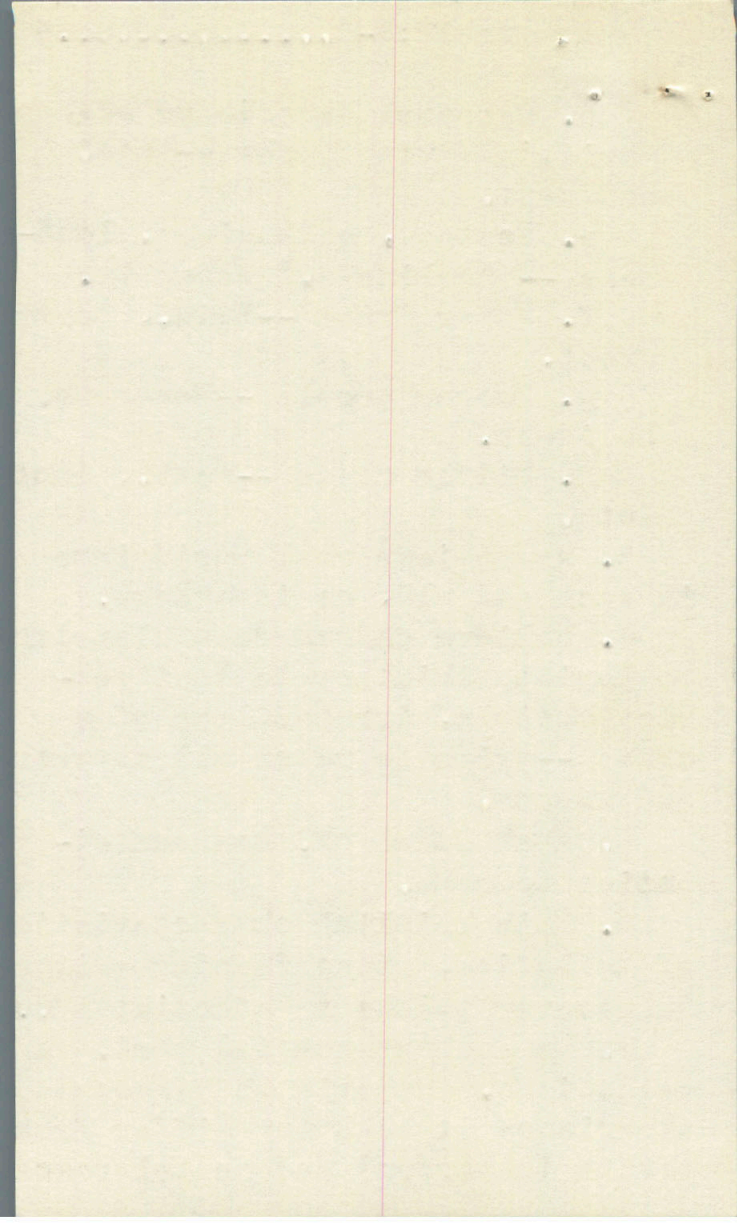
3. We believe real Christians in each and all, as in others.

4. Believe church most pleasing to Christ ministers to most people possible, irregardless of class --tries to reach all classes and groups.

5. Each local ch. has contribution to make.

6. This thinking characteristic of Methodism, whose founder said "whoever thinks a Methodist is..

7. We do have special part, as Methodists, emphasis on personal experience (though may differ from person to person) and on tolerance



III. Within the great framework of Christianity there is a place for our particular emphasis.

1. Neither liberal nor fundamentalist, but both, and shades in between, within us. One of personal experience and of toleran

2. Believe as Paul: keep bodies clean, stand out from surrounding world, modest but confident, doing best with ones abilities, for Chris and church.

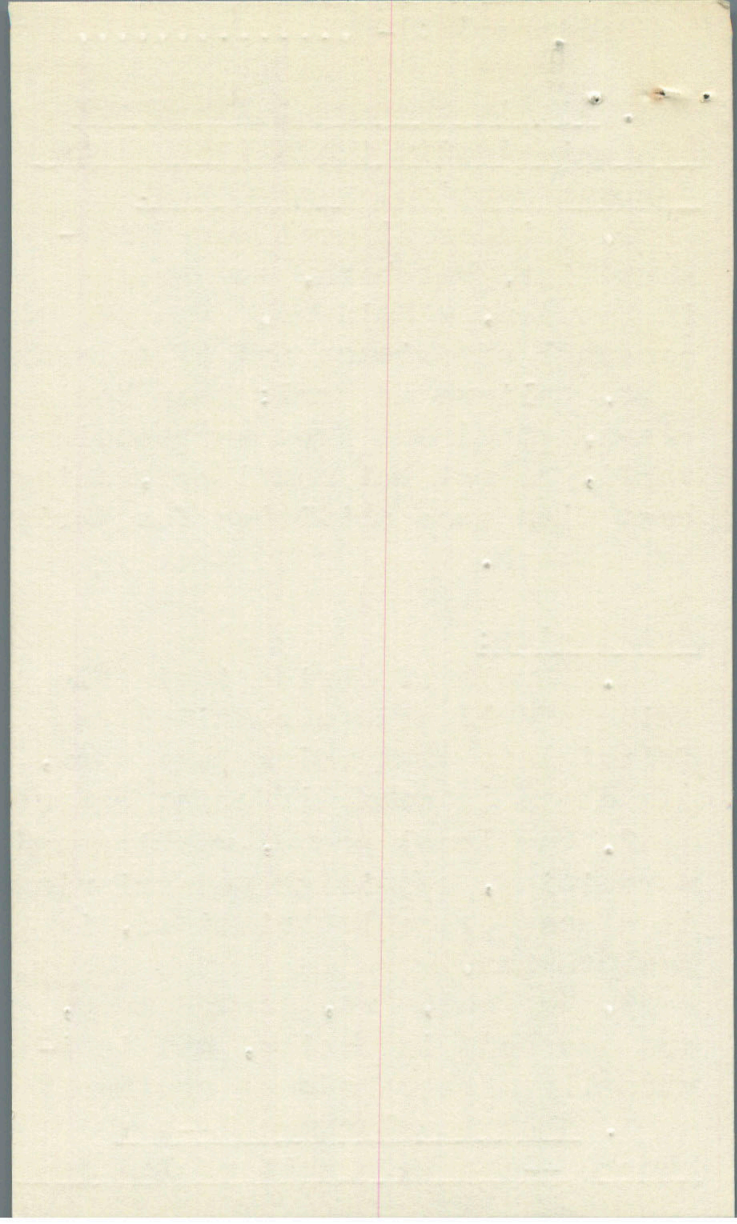
Conclusion:

1. Church of Christ invisible thing of all true christians as faithful to that which they know, and these in many different church

2. Our local group, working and worshiping, rejoicing and grieving is place for real Christians, is real church.

3. As Paul, "we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."

4. Each local church --our church --can be a unit of the one



true Church of Christ.

5. May God use us that we may be a church which exists for our own spiritual profit and for the introduction of more and more people to the joys of Christ.

