

# THE ORGANIZATION OF A CHURCH

Colossians 1:18 and Ephesians 1:22-23

By Berlin Hisel

## I. JESUS CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF EACH CHURCH.

- A. Each Church Is a Sovereignty, Recognizing No King and No Ruler, But Christ.
  - 1. All New Testament churches sustain the same relationship to Christ.
  - 2. As it is the duty of the human body to obey every impulse of the head, so it is in the church's relationship with Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-31).
- B. The New Testament Church Is Christ-Centered.
  - 1. Christ alone is the Head of the church (Colossians 1:18 and Ephesians 1:22-23).
  - 2. Christ alone is our Advocate with God (1 John 2:1).
  - 3. Christ alone is our Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5).
  - 4. Christ alone is our High Priest Intercessor (Hebrews 7:25)
  - 5. Christ alone is the church's Foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11)

## II. THE HOLY GHOST IS THE ADMINISTRATOR OR MANAGER OF EACH CHURCH.

- A. Each Church Settles All Matters Under the Direction of the Holy Ghost, Without Interference From Other Churches.
  - B. The New Testament Plainly Teaches the Work of the Holy Spirit.
    - 1. He directs and leads (Romans 8:14).
    - 2. He calls to special service (Acts 13:2-4).
    - 3. He guides in service (Acts 8:2.6-29).
    - 4. He equips for service.
      - a. He illuminates (1 Corinthians 2:12-14).
      - b. He instructs (John 16:13-14).
      - c. He empowers (1 Thessalonians 1:5).
- \* Note: All of the work of the Holy Ghost is in agreement with the Bible, the Word of God. No deviation from the Word of God is of God.

## III. THE PASTOR IS THE OVERSEER OR SUPERINTENDENT IN CHARGE OF THE WORK.

\* Note: Only four (4) general officers are mentioned in the structural organization of the church. These are found in Ephesians 4:11. They are: (1) Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Pastors who are teachers. (2) The work of the Apostles and Prophets has been completed. (3) Thus, today, we have only two actively in the church. The Evangelist is what we know as a "Missionary" who goes about extending the work of Jesus, either near or far building churches, and the Pastor-Teacher.

- A. Note the Pastor. In the New Testament, the office of Pastor was described by five words, each signifying a peculiar aspect of the office and a particular duty of the Pastor. These are:
  - 1. The Pastor is called "Elder" in 1 Timothy 5:17 and Acts 11:30 - This title refers to the position of the Pastor as leader in the aspect of conducting business.
  - 2. The Pastor is called "Bishop." This term is used five times in the New Testament.
    - a. This title comes from the word *episkopos* and it means "a superintendent; officer in charge of or the overseer of a working force" (Titus 1:7 and 1 Peter 2:25).
    - b. By comparing Scripture with Scripture, it is obvious that both Elder and Bishop designated the same office (1 Timothy 3:1-2, Titus 1:5-7 and Acts 20:28-29).

3. The Pastor is called the Shepherd of a flock in I Peter 5:2-4 because this title implies that the Pastor is to have the same relationship to his congregation as the Shepherd does to the flock.

4. The Pastor is called the "Preacher" in I Timothy 2:7, II Timothy 1:11 and II Peter 2:5 because the Pastor is to proclaim God's Word, through preaching.

5. The Pastor is called the "Teacher" in I Corinthians 12:2 and Ephesians 4:11 because the Pastor is to teach the whole counsel of God as the Spirit leads and according to the need He leads.

\*Note: The qualifications for Pastor are given in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-8.

\*Note: The duties of the Pastor are given in I Peter 5:2-3, Titus 1:9, Acts 6:4, II Timothy 4:2, James 5:14, and II Timothy 4:5, The duties of the Pastor are numerous and varied.

6. Note the church's duty to the Pastor:

- a. The church should love and pray for the Pastor,
- b. The church should support him (I Corinthians 9:7-14 and I Timothy 5:18).
- c. The church should respect him (I Timothy 5:19).
- d. The church should remember him (Hebrews 13:7).
- e. The church should obey him (Hebrews 13:17).

B. Note the Office of the Deacons. This is the only other office of ordination in the New Testament church.

1. The origin of Deacons (Acts 6:1-7). At first, the Pastors handled all the affairs in administering relief to the poor and other temporal duties. This became too much of a task, taking too much time from the more needful duties, They were no longer able to pray and study as they should. Seven men were appointed to care for the relief of the poor. These were the first Deacons.

2. The meaning of the word Deacon is from *Diakonos* meaning "an attendant or a table waiter, a servant."

3. The qualifications for a Deacon is not much different than that of the Pastor.

4. Note the duties of a Deacon (Acts 6:2-3).

- a. The only duties given in the Scriptures for Deacons is found here,
  - (1) They were appointed over the task of administering relief.
  - (2) They were to make the Pastor's work easier by relieving him.
- b. Other duties have been assumed or given by the various churches, but no other Scriptural duty is found.
- c. All New Testament Deacons were soul winners and great men of God.

5. Note what Deacons are not.

- a. They are not "church directors, nor a board of directors."
- b. They are not just a figurehead, but to be elected for service or we don't need them.
- c. The office of Deacon is not an honorary office.
- d. The Deacon is not a "church boss" or a "Pastor's boss."
- e. The Deacon is not to be chosen because of social or financial position. The Deacon should be the most trusted and spiritual man in the church.

\*Note: "There is not one example in Scripture in support of the 'Board of Deacons.' There is not one verse in Scripture in all the Word of God to indicate that the Deacons of the New Testament churches ever met as a body for anything. And it is absolutely certain that they never met to give instructions to the Pastor. They recognized that he should get his orders from the Lord and deliver them, whether they pleased the Deacons or anybody else. A church should have several men who would qualify for Deacon" (J. H. Melton).

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