





# **The Organization of The Church of Christ Ephesians 1:22-23**



# First and Foremost, Christ is the Head of the Church!

## Ephesians 1:19-23

*“.....and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.*”



***“And He put all things under his feet ,  
and gave a Him to be the head over  
all things to the church, which is His  
body. The fullness of Him who fills all  
in all.”***

**The church is not peripheral to the world, but  
the world is peripheral to the church and is  
made complete in Christ who fills all things  
with Himself**



# The Word Church (Ekklesia) or “Called Out” Has Two Uses in the New Testament

## #1 Universal

- ▶ This is the usage in a comprehensive sense, meaning all who are saved are “in the church,”

Matthew 16:18 - He promises to build the “called out” or the church

- ▶ Being Baptized into Christ means being Baptized into the His church,  
1 Corinthians 12:13

*“For by one spirit we were all baptized into one body.....”*



## #2 The Word Church Used In the Local Sense

- ▶ This refers to God's people in one community

1Corinthians 1:2 *"the church of God at Corinth"*

Romans 16:16 *"the Churches of Christ greet you."*

Acts 5:11, *"So great fear came upon all the church..."*

Acts 8:1 *"the church which was at Jerusalem"*

Acts 13:1 *"the church at Antioch"*



# Local Church Organization


## Each Church Was an Independent Self-Governing Unit

- Galatians 1:2 Paul refers to the *“To the churches of Galatia”*
- Galatians 1:22 Paul refers to the *“churches of Judea”*
- There were several independent churches in one area but **NO DISTRICT ORGANIZATION IN THE AREA WITH NO EARTHLY HEAD OVER SEVERAL CHURCHES**



# **Local Church Leadership Starts With Elders/Bishops/Pastors**

***Paul tells Titus: “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking , and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you.” Titus 1:5***



# Listen to the Scriptures Concerning Paul and Barnabas (ministers of the gospel)

*“So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.”*

*Acts 14:23*

- ➡ Elders were men of wisdom who would oversee affairs of the local church





# Some Scriptural Terms For Local Leaders

**Greek**

**English**

**Episkopos**

**Bishop, Supervisor,  
Overseer**

**Poimen**

**Pastor, Shepherd  
(herder of sheep)**

**Presbyteros**

**Elder**



# **Luke Uses All Three Terms To Refer To The Same Position In His Letter In Acts**


**Acts 20:17-18;28**

*“From Miletus he sent to Ephesus  
and called for the elders of the  
church. And when they had come to  
him, he said to them, “You know,  
from the first day that I came to Asia,  
in what manner I always lived  
among you.....”*



## Acts 20:28

*... Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (bishops), to shepherd (pastor) the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”*





**The Terms “Elder,” “Bishop,” and  
“Pastor,” Refer to the Same  
Office or Position in Scripture**

**Look at How Peter Uses These Terms  
in Passages Of Scripture**

**1Peter 5:1-2**

***“The elders who are among you I  
exhort, I who am a fellow elder and  
witness of the sufferings of Christ, and  
also a partaker of the glory that will  
be revealed.”***



***“Shepherd (pastor) the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers (bishops), not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.”***



# If The Elders Oversee the Local Church, Where Does the Preacher Fit ?

He sets the church in order (he organizes it):

**Titus 1:5**

*“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you.”*

**Acts 14:23**

*“So when they (Paul and Barnabas) had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.”*

# Notice in Both Texts, There is Mentioned a *Plurality* Of Elders at the Local Church (*Titus 1:5* and *Acts 14:23*)

- The “one man governing the church” in the Bible is not a church that has matured to its completeness
- *“For this cause I left you (preacher) in Crete that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I have commanded you.” Titus 1:5*

*“So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.” Acts 14:23*

- So the preacher was in charge until he ordained the local leadership (elders), then they assumed his role.

# Well, Where Does That Put The Preacher (Minister)?

That Puts Him In The Church Under the Elders of the Local Church

Acts 20:28

Paul tells the elders to, .... *“take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit had made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”*

Question: Is the preacher in or out of the church?

Well, if he is in the church (and he is), then he should be under the authority of its local eldership





# **But Doesn't the Preacher Have any Responsibilities?**

**Plenty!**

**Evangelist - "One who preaches the Gospel" - Not limited to new converts**

**Model Christianity - He has to emulate the qualities he is demanding of the leaders and members**

**Ordain Leadership**

**Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort - 2Timothy 4:1-5**

**Pastoral - Shepherding, Counseling God's children in the right directions of their lives**



# What About the Office of Deacon?

- In contrast to the Bishop, who oversees the local church, a Deacon is a helper and a servant of the church
- A deacon bears the same responsibilities as any other Christian, however he is one to whom special responsibilities have been given, working under the oversight of the elders
- He must have certain qualities to be ordained to that position  
1Timothy 3:8-13



# **The Church at Philippi Was a Church With Completely Organized Leadership!**

**Listen to Paul's Opening Line in His Letter to the Church at Philippi**

***“Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.”***

**Philippians 1:1**



# The Plan Of Salvation

<b>Hear the Gospel</b>	<b>1Corinthians 15:1-4, Acts 15:7</b>
<b>Believe the Gospel</b>	<b>Acts 15:7</b>
<b>Repent of Sins</b>	<b>Acts 17:30</b>
<b>Confess Christ</b>	<b>Acts 8:37</b>
<b>Be Baptized</b>	<b>Acts 8:38</b>