

The Establishment and Structure of Christ's Body of Believers, the Church



The Establishment

- ◆ Within the Old Covenant, God established a kingdom of followers consisting of the Nation of Israel. (Deuteronomy 26:16 – 19)
- ◆ However, with Christ's New Covenant with the world as a whole God built a new, everlasting kingdom, the Church.
 - ◆ Matthew 16:13 – 19 “Christ states his plan to establish his Church based on the confession of faith in Him.”
 - ◆ II Peter 1:11 “Christ's kingdom is everlasting.”
 - ◆ Galatians 3:26 – 29 “Within Christ's Church all races, nationalities, ethnicities, and genders would be equally in the eyes of God.”
 - ◆ Ephesians 4:4 – 6 “There is only one Church that was established by Jesus Christ.
 - ◆ Acts 2:37 – 47 “Individuals become a part of the Church through obedience, not birthright.”
 - ◆ John 4:1 – 21 “However, as a part of the necessary obedience, individuals must be reborn through water, which is baptism.”
 - ◆ Matthew 28:18 – 20 “The goal of the Christ's Church is to enlighten the world with His Message.” (Matthew 5:16)

The Structure

- ◆ The Head: Christ (Ephesians 1:22 – 23; 5:23)
 - ◆ Earthly Leaders: Elders
 - ◆ Other names for elders: pastors, shepherds, overseers, presbyters, and bishops
 - ◆ Acts 20:28 “Elders oversee and guard the church from attacks by Satan.”

The Structure cont.

Qualities every Elder should strive towards:
(I Tim. 3:1 – 7; Titus 1:5 – 9)

- ◆ Above Reproach
- ◆ Husband of one wife
- ◆ Temperate
- ◆ Prudent
- ◆ Respectable
- ◆ Hospitable
- ◆ Able to Teach
- ◆ Not Addicted to wine
- ◆ Not Pugnacious
- ◆ Gentle
- ◆ Uncontentious
- ◆ Not Greedy
- ◆ A Good Manager of his own household
- ◆ Obedient, Believing Children
- ◆ A Seasoned Follower of Christ
- ◆ A good reputation in the community

The Structure cont.

Servants of the Church:

Deacons

- ◆ Acts 6 “The first deacons are chosen to look after the needs of some of the widows.”
- ◆ Qualities every Deacon should strive towards: (I Timothy 3:8 – 13)
 - ◆ Honorable
 - ◆ Not double-tongued
 - ◆ Not addicted to wine
 - ◆ Not Greedy
 - ◆ Faithful with a clear conscience
 - ◆ Tested
 - ◆ Deacons’ wives are also to be honorable, and not gossips
 - ◆ Their wives must also be Temperate and Faithful
 - ◆ Husbands of only one wife
 - ◆ Good managers of their own families

The Structure cont.

- ◆ Evangelists, Ministers, & Preachers (Ephesians 4:11 – 13)
- ◆ Gender roles within Christ's Church
 - ◆ I Timothy 2
 - ◆ "...lifting up holy hands" is a reference to worship.
 - ◆ Paul commands that the men of the church are to be giving the public prayers of the church.
 - ◆ Women are to be of a quiet nature and are not to teach or exercise any authority over the men of the congregation.
 - ◆ A woman was to receive instruction with entire, or complete, submissiveness.
 - ◆ Was this just a culturally issue and not related to us today? If not, then why?
 - ◆ First, the command was related to the order of creation and not the culture of that day.
 - ◆ Secondly, it was Eve who was deceived and not Adam.

The Structure cont.

◆ I Corinthians 14

- ◆ Paul is giving the Corinthian church specific instruction on the order and the way in which they should worship.
- ◆ In verses 1 – 19, Paul is instructing them on how important it is to have understanding.
- ◆ In verses 20 – 25, Paul speaks on the importance of prophecy over tongues.
- ◆ In verses 26 – 33, Paul instructs them on the order of worship.
- ◆ In verses 34 – 35, commands are given as to the role of women in worship.
 - ◆ Women are to remain quiet and reserved. (I Timothy 2:11, 12)
 - ◆ Women are not to take the lead or authority away from men, but are to remain in submission to the men of the congregation.
 - ◆ If any of the women were to have any questions they were to ask their husbands outside of worship.
 - ◆ It was an improper thing for a woman to speak in the worship of the church.
 - ◆ Why is this not cultural?
 - ◆ The passage in I Timothy 2 relates the same information as this passage.
 - ◆ Therefore, this passage draws its power from the I Timothy 2 passage.

The Structure cont.

- ◆ As a result of women's submission and quietness, men must step up and take the lead in worship.
 - ◆ God asks and demands that men take the lead in the church.
 - ◆ Paul asked Timothy to always be ready to preach the gospel. (II Timothy 4: 1,2).