

The Oologah Informer

November 30th, 2014

Address

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Service Times

Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.

Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

Preacher:

Russ Earl

AM Sermon:

Road to Calvary – Lesson 2
“The One Who Kills the Prophets”
(Mt 23:37-39)

PM Sermon:

I am the Resurrection and the Life
(John 11:25)

Sunday AM Bible Class:

The book of Judges – D. Jackson

Wednesday Bible Class:

Swearingen

In SEARCH of the Lord's Way

Tulsa KWHB TV 47
Sunday mornings at 7:30am

The Organization of the Church

Wayne Brewer

Some two thousand years ago near the coasts of Caesarea Philippi Jesus said, “I will build my church...”(Matthew 16:18). The Lord’s church came into existence (Acts 2:27,38,41,47), and along with the church, Jesus provided a pattern of organization.

First, the divine pattern for the organization of the Lord’s church is that Jesus is the head of the church. “And he (Jesus) is head of the body, the church...”(Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23). As the head of the church, Jesus’ role is to instruct, direct, lead and guide which he does through the New Testament (John 14:26; 16:13). It is important to note the church is not the authority, but Jesus as the head of the church is the authority. There is only one head of the church and that one is Jesus.

Second, the Lord’s church is organized into autonomous congregations. The pattern in the New Testament is that there is no hierarchy of congregations, but each congregation is self-governing under the authority of the Scriptures. Paul wrote, “unto the church of God which at Corinth...”(1 Corinthians 1:2), “...unto the churches of Galatia” (Galatians 1:2), “unto the church of the Thessalonians...” (1 Thessalonians 1:1), all of which indicates that the Lord’s church is made up of autonomous congregations under the headship of Christ. Every congregation of the Lord’s church answers only to Christ himself (Acts 20:17,28).

Third, the Lord’s church is organized with each congregation having elders, deacons, preachers, teachers, and other members serving in a variety of other capacities. The Lord’s will is that every congregation has a plurality of qualified elders (Acts 14:27, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9). Other biblical terms for elders are pastors, bishops, shepherds, overseers, and presbyters (Acts 20:17,28, Philippians 1:1, Ephesians 4:11, 1 Peter 5:1-4). Serving under the oversight of the elders are qualified deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-10,12-13), evangelists or preachers, and teachers, all who work under the oversight of the local elders carrying out their God-given charge to “preach the word...”(2 Timothy 4:2). All members of the congregation are to work and worship under the oversight and authority of the biblically qualified elders.

The New Testament pattern is often quite different from what is found in denominations. The denominational patterns often have one person ruling the denomination or congregation, a hierarchy whereby a congregation answers to regional, national, or international headquarters. How different it is in that the Lord’s church answers first to the Lord, according to the New Testament, and is overseen by qualified elders within the congregation. May we ever seek to follow the divine pattern.