

Is the Current Church Structure Biblical?

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See addendum

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I have believed for a long time that the current structure of the 'church' is quite unbiblical! Think about it. Most churches have a board of elders, who are supposed to be the overseers (see Titus 1:5 - 9 and Acts 20:17 - 38). In almost all cases, the elders and/or congregation 'hire and pay' a pastor to run the church! The pastor is then expected to give sermons every week, do almost all of the evangelizing, teaching, exhorting, and preaching. It basically becomes his ministry, his church, his congregation! I ask, is this at all biblical?

What kind of body can operate with just one of its parts working?

We claim we are not following a man, but the Lord. Really? Does your church change directions, and sometimes doctrines, every time you hire a new 'pastor'? I tell you true, they are very much following that person to a great degree.

Now the only other so-called offices that seem to be recognized are associate pastors, Sunday school teachers, and worship leaders. All of these designed to complement the 'pastorate'! Are any of these biblical according to the structure set forth in the New Testament?

Notice that NONE of the epistles written in the New Testament EVER greet or address a pastor! Strange? Wouldn't you think that when Paul, Peter, John, James, or Jude wrote an epistle admonishing the local churches that they would have addressed 'the Pastor' someplace in their writings?! Is not the pastor supposed to be the one in charge of the flock? Should not the pastor have been responsible for correcting false teaching and blatant sin in the local church? Also, notice that the Lord Jesus never addresses a pastor in His admonishments to the seven churches in the book of Revelations.

No, what we now seem to have is a priest / congregation structure. We are told by our Lord not to call any man 'father' (see Matt 23:9), but I submit to you that the term 'pastor' is used in the same spirit when we call a man by the title "Pastor". Not "brother George called to be a pastor". We actually are heard to call a man by the title alone, such as in the phrase "did you hear what Pastor said Sunday?" Sound familiar? Do you know of a man who you only greet by the term "Prophet"? Do you call him "my Prophet" like you do

"my Pastor"? Have you ever heard someone say, "Did you hear what Prophet said Sunday?" Sounds a little absurd, doesn't it? Do you have your own apostle, evangelist, and teacher too? Are you afraid to call a pastor by his first name? Do you exalt and reverence your pastor as many of the Roman Catholics do their priest, whom they call "Father"? And most Protestants believe they are so different.

Protestantism is, for the most part, just slightly reformed Roman Catholicism.

Remember how Paul started his greetings?

Romans 1:1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus; To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:

Read the introductions to all of the epistles. You'll see that Paul NEVER started a letter with a title, just "Paul". Notice also that throughout the New Testament the writers continually addressed the other disciples by only their first name, such as in the book of Acts, which was written by Luke. Was Luke being irreverent? I hardly think so.

I also submit to you that the 'assembling of the brethren' is for the edification of the Body, where the Holy Spirit can freely minister through whomever and as many as He wills to whomever He wills. That my friend is the 'assembling of the brethren'! Maybe that is why so many home meetings are more powerful than the Sunday spectator sport we call 'church'.

We are constantly being told "not to forsake the assembling of the brethren". But let's look at this so misused scripture in its true context:

Hebrews 10:24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Stimulate one another"? "But encouraging one another"? Do you see it? Is this what God meant by what we see in the typical Sunday service where a singular 'pastor' is the only one doing the encouraging? Where is the *encouraging one another*?

1 Corinthians 14:26 What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

"Each one"? Does it say anywhere that a 'pastor' should have control over this kind of assembly? Have we not all seen instances where the 'pastor' decides to ask someone to speak on a certain Sunday, and then even tells them what he desires them to speak on?! How absurd! Usurping the Holy Spirit in such a way. Even an evangelist, for example, when he is rarely asked to come and speak at a local church, is many times told what he is to speak on. How dare any man dictate to anyone how to operate in his/her calling and gifting. This is usurping the Holy Spirit's rightful place in our midst, but this is what is happening in most churches. Isn't this what the priest/congregation setup does? The priest takes the place of the Head, which is Christ.

1 Peter 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

Revelation 1:6 and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father -- to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

We are ALL called to be priest. So quit looking for a man to be your priest and king, as did the nation of Israel!

There is now only one high priest, the Lord Christ Jesus. No man should dare try and usurp the Lord of His rightful place!

Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession;

Is it too hard to get rid of a system where we have a 'hireling' (John 10) who is expected to do most of the work and ministering?

And what about 'missionaries'? Where is that term in the Bible? Why do we not recognize these people by their actual callings and giftings? Is it because then their callings and giftings would have to be recognized by the local church, and the 'pastor' would have to give up some of his control? No, by calling them 'missionaries', then we can claim that their calling and work is 'out there' someplace, instead of seeing and recognizing their callings and giftings working within the local church.

Matthew 23:8 "But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you

are all brothers.

Even though we have teachers in the Body of Christ (see Eph 4:11), we are not to call any man "Rabbi". We are "all brothers".

Matthew 23:10 "Do not be called leaders; for One is your Leader, that is, Christ. 11 "But the greatest among you shall be your servant.

1 Peter 5:1 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.

"Exercising oversight" and "nor yet as lording it over". Oversight means to watch over, and when you see something wrong, THEN you correct the problem according to the leading of the Lord. We do not lord it over God's flock as a boss does his employees at work, nor as an officer commands his troops in the military. If it looks like the world, then I tell you true, we are probably doing it all wrong.

Matthew 20:25 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. 26 "It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, 27 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

1 Peter 4:10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

"As each one has received a special gift"? Each one!

No, we probably won't see any kind of true unity in the Body of Christ while it is divided up into little groups with every pastor taking a chunk and calling it "my congregation." Especially with all the different doctrines of men and demons among the over 30,000 denominations!

Let us look at a few more scriptures that Paul gave to the elders who are supposed to be the overseers:

Acts 20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church.

Acts 20:28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which

the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29 "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

"Men will arise...to draw away disciples after them". Intentional or not, is this not what we see? Now I'm not in any way claiming that all so-called 'pastors' are savage wolves. But I would seriously consider all that Paul is saying here. Read Acts 20:17 - 38 a few times for yourself. My point is how unbiblical the current church structure/man-made institution is, this article is not meant to be a direct personal attack on those 'hired priests' trying to do more than they are called to do, even though many of them are fully aware that what they are doing is unbiblical. I know, for several of them have confessed to me that they are not ignorant on this subject.

Acts 20:33 "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes. 34 "You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me. 35 "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, `It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Ouch! I could write a small book on those scriptures. Are overseers following these instructions today?

But you might say, "isn't a worker worthy of his wages?" Well, we need to look at all the scriptures on this issue in their full context

Matthew 10:7 "And as you go, preach, saying, `The kingdom of heaven is at hand. 8 "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give. 9 "Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, 10 or a bag for your journey, or even two coats, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is worthy of his support. 11 "And whatever city or village you enter, inquire who is worthy in it, and stay at his house until you leave that city."

Is the Lord talking about full time salaries here? "Freely you received, freely give"? Where is this today? How many ministers of all different types are selling their gifts? When the Lord returns, will there be plenty of Christian activity, but very little faith?

Luke 18:8 "I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?"

Does it state anywhere in the New Testament that every local church should hire a pastor and pay him a full time salary? We have so many brothers and

sisters whose needs are not being met by the local church. We should support the weak. Again, look at what Paul says on this matter:

Acts 20:34 "You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me. 35 "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, `It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Many traveling ministers (mis-called missionaries) do need our support. Each person should be led by the Holy Spirit in what they do with the resources God has given them.

3 John 1:5 Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially when they are strangers; 6 and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. 7 For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. 8 Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth.

Ezekiel 34:10 `Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand My sheep from them and make them cease from feeding sheep. So the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore, but I will deliver My flock from their mouth, so that they will not be food for them." 11 For thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 12 "As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day."

Woe to the prosperity preachers! And all those who get fat off the sheep.

Ezekiel 34:23 "Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd."

Ezekiel chapter 34 is a great chapter about shepherding. Please take the time to read it. Also notice that we now have "one shepherd". It is the same as calling a man "Teacher". We have teachers in the body of Christ, and we also have those who shepherd. But are we to call them by the title "my Shepherd"?

John 10:16 "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd."

Let us now take a look at a few scriptures regarding different giftings or

callings:

Romans 12:6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; 7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Notice here the separation of teaching, exhorting, and leading?

1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.

Notice that neither pastor or evangelist are even mentioned in this verse. If the pastor is so all out important, then why is he not even mentioned here?

Ephesians 4:11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,

Are the callings and giftings listed in the above verses in operation in your local church? Would it be even possible for these callings to operate in your church as it is currently structured?

Mark 7:13 thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that."

Some more reasons why this current structure is so harmful:

1. You usually have one 'hireling' operating in his limited gifting. The local church depending almost totally on his level of spirituality at any given moment, and his limited perception of the truth. How can an elbow function for the whole body?
2. The body is being robbed of all the other needed parts that it requires to mature as God intended it to grow.
3. Therefore, God is also being robbed of His deserved glory that is to be manifested in His body!
4. The so-called 'pastor' is expected to fill giftings and callings which are not his. This leads to burnout, frustration, and a lack of power in everything that he is expected to do that he is not called to.

5. With all the giftings and callings operating as they are supposed to, there is balance in doctrine and spiritual maturity. This leads to unity in the body of Christ. No wonder there is denominations. All the local churches following a different man's teachings.

After ten or even twenty years in your average local church, how many individuals have really changed and reached some level of maturity? No, for the most part they are still babes, being tossed around by the waves and every wind of doctrine! How can they mature with only one of the many callings in operation? And the one in operation is not even biblical!

Acts 7:51 "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did.

Acts chapter 7 contains a great sermon given by Stephen just before he was stoned to death. Remember, these were very religious people who stoned Stephen. They went to church services all the time, thought they were saved, considered themselves righteous, and worshippers of the only true God. They probably thought they were defending God's honor when they killed Stephen, but actually they were God's adversaries!

I feel I should say something about the church offering here, since I believe it is directly tied into the current church structure, with the 'hired man' and all.

This verse is used quite often to justify the collection taken on Sunday:

1 Corinthians 16:2 On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

But what does scripture say this 'collection' is for? Let us look at the verse right before the one above:

1 Corinthians 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also.

"Collection for the saints"! Really? The collection is for the saints? Did you know that around 95 % of the money collected by the average local church stays within the local church, used mostly for the building and staff? Only about 1/2% goes out to the over one billion people who have NEVER heard the gospel. The saints are not being taken care of, nor are the poor and needy within the community. Shame, shame, shame!

You want more verses describing what the collection is for? Then please read 2Cor chapters 8 and 9. These go into great detail about what Paul meant in

1Cor 16:1 - 2 above. Here is a taste from the two chapters in 2Cor:

2 Corinthians 8:13 For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but by way of equality -- 14 at this present time your abundance being a supply for their need, so that their abundance also may become a supply for your need, that there may be equality; 15 as it is written, "HE WHO gathered MUCH DID NOT HAVE TOO MUCH, AND HE WHO gathered LITTLE HAD NO LACK."

The collection is for equality among ALL the saints! In fact, the churches mentioned in these chapters were taking collections and giving them to other churches! Where is that today? This confirms what we see in Acts chapters 2 and 4, where the saints had all things in common, and claimed nothing as their own

Sadly, most of the money collected is supporting these 'hired man' ministries.

Equality among the saints? We have hundreds of millions of brothers and sisters throughout the world who do not even have Bibles! What a disgrace! Over 60% of the church is under severe persecution. What are we doing to take care of our brethren in these conditions? No wonder that many of our brothers and sisters in China PRAY that we suffer persecution! They know we need to wake up!

It's time to start doing it God's way!

Matthew 23:6 "They love the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues, 7 and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called Rabbi by men. 8 "But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. 9 "Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. 10 "Do not be called leaders; for One is your Leader, that is, Christ. 11 "But the greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

The only place 'pastor' is mentioned? Some versions of the Bible don't mention the word 'pastor' at all. Please read and study it carefully and prayerfully:

Ephesians 4:10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things. 11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

"To a mature man", "no longer to be children", "to grow up". Look again closely at the above verses, these callings and giftings are only tools for building up the Body of Christ to maturity, not for standing between the Body and the Head which is Christ. These callings and giftings are mostly for the immature, those that are young and still need guidance until they reach maturity.

"Being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part". It's time we started seeing these callings and giftings as being what they are, needed joints in the body for building it up to maturity. Again, they are not to be placed between the head and the body, usurping the rightful place of the Lord Jesus

It is time we put an end to this non-biblical structure which is prevalent everywhere. It has been Satan's plan for keeping the Lord's body at a severely low level of maturity, robbing the church of its power and holiness. And even much worse, robbing God of His much deserved glory!

Addendum added October 1st, 2011

After several years, I have believed it necessary to clarify some points in this article, and to make it quite clear that no such thing as what the so-called church currently calls a pastor exists anywhere in the New Testament of the Bible, and therefore has no place in the Lord's ecclesia.

Let's start by taking another look at the only place the word pastor appears in the New Testament in most English translations of the Bible. Some Bibles do not use the word pastor at all.

Ephesians 4:11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,

The word that has been translated as 'pastors' here is from the Greek word 'poimen' (G4166). Ephesians 4:11 is the ONLY place the Greek word poimen is translated as the word pastor in the New Testament! Every other place the word poimen appears, it is translated as the word shepherd. Many versions of the Bible do not use the word pastor at all. Here are a few examples.

Ephesians 4:11 and he has given some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some shepherds and teachers, (The Darby version)

Ephesians 4:11 And the very same, made some Apostles, some prophets, some Evangelists, some Shepherds, some Teachers: (New Testament by W. Tyndale 1526)

Ephesians 4:11 and He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as proclaimers of good news, and some as shepherds and teachers, (Young's Literal Translation)

Here now are a few examples of how the Greek word poimen is used as shepherd elsewhere in the New Testament.

Luke 2:8 In the same region there were some shepherds [poimen] staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night.

John 10:12 "He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd [poimen], who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.

John 10:16 "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd [poimen].

1 Peter 2:25 For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd [poimen] and Guardian of your souls.

So how come the word pastor started being used in the KJV and other English versions of the Bible in Ephesians 4:11? Why did William Tyndale not use the word pastor in his version in 1526? Could it be that the position of pastor, as we now know it, actually originated from the position of priest, as found in the Roman Catholic church? Therefore, to justify the position of pastor, men intentionally mistranslated the Greek word poimen as the English word pastor, in Ephesians 4:11, with the purpose of trying to bring validity to this man-made (not God-made) position that they had created?

I submit to you that this is exactly what happened. You will find similar problems with the words that were translated as church, bishop (KJV), obey, hell, deacon, and several others also. Anyone who reads the Bible should have a Greek Interlinear Bible too. That way one can see how the same Greek word has been translated throughout the whole Bible, and therefore can obtain a good understanding of what the word actually means. A person will also be able to see where a word has been mistranslated, quite often intentionally. Remember, well over 2000 years ago, the Old Testament had been translated into Greek, and was commonly used by the Jewish and other

people groups in the age when Jesus was here in the flesh. It is called The Greek Septuagint. Did you know that William Tyndale used each of the two words church, and churches, only once in his New Testament of 1526. Both times he used these words to refer to pagan temples! No wonder the so-called church leaders of his day murdered him by strangling him to death, and then burning his body at the stake. Does that sound like the love of Jesus or true Christianity to you? If I had written this article a few hundred years ago, I could have easily found myself in the same position as Tyndale. In fact, in many parts of the world today, Christians are still being martyred by other so-called Christians.

Now, I again desire to clarify that the elders are to shepherd the flock of God, not a man created hireling (read John chapter 10), that is called a pastor. After Paul called the elders of Ephesus to himself, he said this to them:

Acts 20:28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

The word shepherd here is translated from the Greek word poimaino (G4165), which has its origins from the Greek word poimen, (shepherd) that we already looked at. Poimaino is the act of shepherding, tending sheep, being a shepherd. Paul is telling the elders to be in the act of shepherding God's sheep. Let's look at what Peter said to the elders:

1 Peter 5:1 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2 shepherd [poimaino] the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd [poimen] appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Could it be any clearer that the elders are to shepherd the flock of God, not a hireling that man created, which they call a pastor?

Let me make it very clear. The idea of going to a temple, many times with stained glass windows and high pitched ceilings, where the people sit facing forward towards an elevated platform with a hired priest, who is sometimes wearing special garments, such as robes, standing behind a pulpit of some kind, where he is expected to mediate and intercede for the people and bring forth the words of their god(s), is an unbiblical man-made design where a temple priest takes the place of the only true mediator between man and God, who is Christ Jesus! The followers go into their temple of worship and receive a euphoric feeling from the stain glass and high ceilings, etc, and

look up to their priest, which in turn is to elevate them closer to their god.

There is no mediator between God and man, other than Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

There is also another false teaching in much of the so-called church that is quite prevalent. It claims that the letters written to Timothy and Titus in the New Testament are what they like to call 'pastoral letters', and that Timothy and Titus were pastors.

The first thing we should notice is that there are absolutely no scriptures claiming that either Timothy or Titus were pastors. Let's take a close look at Timothy. He was consistently moving from place to place, many times as Paul's companion, as is shown in the following verses:

Acts 17:13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Berea also, they came there as well, agitating and stirring up the crowds. 14 Then immediately the brethren sent Paul out to go as far as the sea; and Silas and Timothy remained there.

Acts 17:15 Now those who escorted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they left.

Acts 19:22 And having sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

Romans 16:21 Timothy my fellow worker greets you, and so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

1 Corinthians 4:17 For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.

2 Corinthians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God which is at Corinth with all the saints who are throughout Achaia:

Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:

Philippians 2:19 But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition.

Colossians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

1 Thessalonians 3:2 and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith,

1 Thessalonians 3:6 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always think kindly of us, longing to see us just as we also long to see you,

Philemon 1:1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our beloved brother and fellow worker,

Was Timothy staying near a church somewhere, being their pastor, collecting a salary, and living in a parsonage? Apparently not! So where did they get the idea of Timothy being a pastor? Mostly from these two verses, which they try and fit into their false teaching and definition of a pastor:

1 Timothy 1:3 As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, 4 nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.

They derive that Timothy fits the modern definition of pastor from these two verses? Quite a weak argument, is it not? In fact, Paul was hoping to come to Timothy as soon as he could:

1 Timothy 3:14 I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long;

1 Timothy 4:13 Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching.

So exactly what was Timothy? We have clearly shown that Timothy was one of Paul's companions, and that he sent Timothy to different places to do the Lord's work. But let's look at what scripture states Timothy was, not the doctrines of man.

2 Timothy 4:5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

We see that Timothy was an evangelist, but did you also know he was an apostle? Many miss this proof in scripture. Look at 1 Thessalonians very

carefully from the beginning of the epistle through to verse 2:6.

1 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace. 2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers; 3 constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father, 4 knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you; 5 for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. 6 You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, 7 so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. 8 For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything. 9 For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, 10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 2:1 For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain, 2 but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition. 3 For our exhortation does not come from error or impurity or by way of deceit; 4 but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts. 5 For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed -- God is witness 6 nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority.

It should be clear that when this epistle uses the word 'we', it is referring to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy. Thus, all three are declared apostles in verse 2:6. If that doesn't line up with certain doctrine, then it is time to change that doctrine.

Now, let us look at Titus. Scripture clearly shows that he also was many times a companion of Paul.

2 Corinthians 2:13 I had no rest for my spirit, not finding Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went on to Macedonia.

2 Corinthians 7:6 But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

2 Corinthians 8:23 As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brethren, they are messengers of the churches, a glory to Christ.

2 Corinthians 12:18 I urged Titus to go, and I sent the brother with him. Titus did not take any advantage of you, did he? Did we not conduct ourselves in the same spirit and walk in the same steps?

Galatians 2:1 Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also.

2 Timothy 4:10 for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

So where do they come up with the false doctrine that Titus fits into the modern definition of a pastor? Mostly from this one verse:

Titus 1:5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,

Notice that Titus was suppose to appoint elders in EVERY city while he was in Crete? Again, where does scripture state he was a pastor, where is his parsonage, full time salary, etc, as we see in most of the modern so-called church?

A very important point to ponder. If Titus was suppose to appoint elders in every city, then where were the pastors of these cities? And why wasn't Titus appointing any pastors, only elders? Where were the pastors? There were no pastors!

Another interesting verse from Titus:

Titus 3:12 When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there.

Paul was going to eventually send someone else to Crete, and afterwards have Titus come back to him? Does this sound like the modern definition of a pastor?

If the elders are to shepherd the Lord's ecclesia, then what happens to the modern doctrine of the five-fold ministry? The five-fold ministry does not exist! It is another doctrine of man. Another verse to ponder:

1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps,

administrations, various kinds of tongues.

Is this eight-fold ministry? Watch out for the doctrines of men, by which they exalt themselves.

I hope and pray that this article clearly shows that the current idea of a pastor did not originate from God, nor the scriptures. There is no such thing as a pastor, appointing and ruling over elders, dominating over the local church, etc. Most of what we see in the so-called church today is not found in the New Testament. . Be the priest God has called all of us to be, and stop looking to a man to be your priest. Isn't God worthy and deserving of this?

(End of addendum posted 10-1-2011)

In His service,
Curtis Lee Hall