

4th & Stewart church of Christ

"...upon this rock I will build my church;
and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
~ Matthew 16:18



December 7, 2014

Contact Us:

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Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study9:45 AM
Worship10:40 AM
Care, Inc. Service 2:30 PM
Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday:

Ladies Bible Class.10:00 AM
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Elders:

Gene Bannister..... Billy Chism

Deacons:

Mike Bannister..... Don Smith

James Thomas

Preacher:

Johnny McCaghren

Works We Support:

Cherokee Home for Children
Gospel Broadcast Network
Heart of Texas Bible Camp (Bangs)
House to House, Heart to Heart
Mission Printing
Rohan Jones, Africa
The Truth in Love
World Bible School

Let us know if you want to study
the Bible to know more about
Christ and His Church.

Still the Most Critical Problem

The question is often asked, "What is the most critical problem facing the church today?" The answers are varied, and often given in keeping with that particular man's interest and concern, and for all the answers, all of them play a part in today's time of discontent, unrest, and turmoil. And, when we state that which to us is the MOST critical problem, we know that some may disagree. Still, the answer we would give is this: THE LACK OF QUALIFIED, SCRIPTURAL AND FUNCTIONING ELDERS! We know that this problem then aggravates some of the others; indeed, were it not for this problem, some of the others could not have been given birth, or would have been "nipped in the bud."

Where did we go wrong regarding the eldership? Certainly the Scriptures furnish us unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17), and the point is clear that the Scriptures furnish us completely unto the organization of the church and the functioning of those within that organization. The list of qualifications, set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, with other passages relating to the eldership, lets us know the spiritual qualities to be in the men thus to be appointed. And, there is no shortage of material in the New Testament regarding the work that is given the elders, with such words as "oversee...feed...take care of...watch for souls..." making it very clear. In looking over all that is said in the New Testament regarding the eldership, we see no lack, nor would we expect to find such, since the Scriptures completely furnish us! Looking at all that God has provided, is it not clear that men have chosen to ignore what the Word says, and have proceeded by their own devices?

It has been disappointing through the years, in seeing how some brethren have approached the matter of appointing elders, with thoughts of spirituality set aside while men are selected by some other rule. It has also been disappointing that, while there must be the desire of the man to serve (1 Tim. 3:1) before he can be appointed, some who have the desire and are most anxious to be appointed have again given little thought to the work as being spiritual in nature. One other disappointment has been in seeing men appointed, and then they have little concept of what an elder is to be and do, and other than having meetings to see to the finances of the church, do little else. Perhaps a sum statement here would be that too often money is the prime consideration, and souls are forgotten!

It must be admitted that in some instances we have a problem when we really have not appointed the wrong men. There is a problem because the men appointed have not grown. And, growth is expected...it must be! One newly appointed as an elder, for all spirituality and all wisdom, is still newly an elder, not having so served before. He will have to apply, to work, to study, to labor to continue to be what God expects him to be, and to function as an elder whom God can bless! It should be clear that one cannot so insulate himself with concern for a congregation of people, that he knows nothing of problems, errors, apostasies and threats to the faith that may be just beyond his doorstep. We live in a mobile time, and sin and Satan always have been. How could I be a guardian, shepherd and protector of the flock, and yet have no concern for the forest fires raging out of control all around me, and knowing that at any moment some of those sparks may land and ignite right where I am?

Ours is a most hurtful time. A perilous time, Paul would say (2 Tim. 3:1). Many things of spiritual import are hurting; many things are lacking; and many things are being perverted. Our need for QUALIFIED, SPIRITUAL AND FUNCTIONING elders, I think, heads the list of things we truly need, and which things we must have if we're to be the people of God. We speak of "adhering to the pattern," and we must, but shall we default in this aspect of the pattern?

Bill Jackson—October 1988 (via *Christian Worker*, Oct. 2014, pp. 1,11)

"But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

1 Timothy 6:11-12



Strong Churches

Everybody wants to be a part of one, but not many are willing to do what it takes to be a part of one. The Lord wants His congregations strong (cf. Eph. 6:10). He has given a pattern to help His children accomplish this. What, then, are some qualities making for strong churches, by divine standards?

INFORMATION

Congregations need to be informed of current avenues both scriptural and available for spreading the gospel. That may be technological advances, methods of evangelism, or media choices currently popular within the community.

Congregations need to be informed of current events. Knowledge of the culture is indispensable to reaching it (cf. 1 Cor. 9:20-22). Did not Paul keep abreast of the Athenian culture (Acts 17:28) and Cretian culture (Titus 1:12)? However, the same inspired apostle warned that no Christian need partake in the sin of culture to know it (cf. 2 Cor. 6:14ff)!

Congregations need to be informed of current religious movements. This is true of the religious world in general and within the church. There are trends and beliefs which come into vogue and are blindly accepted by a large population of folks. As Christians fight the devil for their hearts and souls, we must know the enemy to defeat him (1 Pet. 3:15; 5:8). Unscriptural trends infiltrated the church, too (Jude 4; 2 Tim. 3:6; Matt. 7:15; et al). This can certainly be overdone and one can get consumed with “getting the goods” on false teachers, but strong congregations get information so as to be able to bear up against “every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14).

EDUCATION

Imagine a body without a backbone. This is the picture of a congregation without a solid Bible school program. Paul admonishes Christians to “give attention to read-

ing” (1 Tim. 4:13). “Handling aright” God’s Word is essential (2 Tim. 2:15). Congregations which give attention to providing a comprehensive study of the Bible aid in children’s and adults’ collective goal of “growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 3:18). Structure is important. Writing or finding a curriculum that is a fresh, non-repeating (how often are great portions of the Bible neglected while the story of Moses or Noah is told annually?), and practical helps put backbone in the congregation.

ORGANIZATION

When one thinks of church organization, two things come to mind—leadership and programs. In the area of programs, how organized is the congregation? How efficient is the congregation at preparing for and undertaking projects and activities? Poor record keeping and/or poor communication assassinate the good works in which a congregation must be involved (cf. 1 Tim. 6:18).

What about the leadership of the church? How strong is it? One defined a leader as an individual with two characteristics: “First, he is going somewhere; second, he is able to persuade other people to go with him.” Apply this to church organization. The church can be no stronger than its elders (1 Pet. 5:3). When they are godly and industrious, the flock will usually follow suit. The opposite is true, too. They must be good “delegators.” What about the deacons? Do they know their area of work? Is it clearly defined? Are they aided by a host of volunteers? Where a congregation is truly, scripturally organized, the Lord has a strong body of believers in that place.

INTEGRATION

Here is another concept having multiple meanings. First, is every individual integrated properly in the work of the church, their unique talents used to the greatest good?

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Television

The Truth In Love (Robert Dodson)

Sunday @ 7:00am on KTAB

In Search of the Lord’s Way (Phil Sanders)

Sunday @ 7:30am on KTAB

Life In The Light (Chris McCurley)

Sunday @ 10:30am on KTAB

Radio

Preaching the Word (Michael Light)

Sunday @ 9:00am on KOXE 101.3

Internet

TheGospelRadioNetwork.org

Gospel Broadcasting Network (Gbnv.org)

God’s Plan for Redeeming Man

Hear Learn the saving message of Christ’s sacrifice (1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 10:17).

Believe Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24)

Confess Jesus as your Lord, Lawgiver, and King (Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 10:32-33)

Repent of your sinful conduct (Luke 13:3,5)

Complete your initial obedience to the gospel by being **baptized** for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)

Live faithfully (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:7-8)

Bible Reading Schedule

Dec. 7 Acts 20:1-3; Romans 1-3

Dec. 8 Romans 4-7

Dec. 9 Romans 8-10

Dec. 10 Romans 11-13

Dec. 11 Romans 14-16

Dec. 12 Acts 20:4-23:35

Dec. 13 Acts 24-26

Dec. 14 Acts 27-28

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

(2 Timothy 2:15)



Visitation Meeting

- ◆ Each Sunday night immediately before the evening worship. Last week **25 contacts** were made.

Special Announcements

- ◆ **Fellowship lunch** after services this morning, followed by **Elders, Deacons and Preacher's Meeting**.

On the Calendar

- ◆ **Dec. 31—New Year's Eve Party** following Wednesday evening services.

(Continued from page 2)

Second, is everyone accepted equally regardless of age, race, economic status, education, or occupation? One brother was a member of a large congregation that was so cliquish that everyone sat in the part of the auditorium that reflected his or her own age and background. He said that nobody hardly ever "crossed the fence" to reach out in any way to those different from themselves. How tragic! Artificial barriers to fellowship will destroy a congregations influence and effectiveness

PARTICIPATION

Some churches may be dead and not even know it (cf Rev. 3:1-6, 14-22). Where a few try to do the work God requires of an entire congregation, they burn out and the church's "candle" burns low (cf. Matt. 5:16). Good, scriptural programs merit enthusiasm and support. None are exempted. Strong churches are active, involved churches. There is mass participation reflected in attendance, giving, evangelism, and other such gauges of great works.

VISITATION

Here is one watershed move churches make to become strong. When a visitation program is put into place, visitors get the notice they need. Contacts for Christ are thus made. House-to-house fellowship is enhanced (Acts 2:46). Newcomers are made to feel welcome. Non-Christians are made to feel cared for. Weak Christians are encouraged. The ones visiting are built up in the faith. Visitation is every Christian's responsibility (Matt. 25:34-40)! In turn, it is one sure way to build a strong church.

There are no magic potions or spells which will conjure up a strong church! Strong churches emphasize **information, education, organization, integration, participation, and visitation**. In all things, they glorify God and respect the authority of Jesus Christ (Col. 3:16-17). May more and more congregations cross the plain of mediocrity and settle upon the mountaintop of excellence (cf. 2 Cor. 8:7).

Neal Pollard—October 1999
(via Christian Worker, Oct. 2014, pp. 8-9)

Celebrate

"Rejoice with those who rejoice..." (Romans 12:15)

December Birthdays: Estelle Guthrie (7), Laverne Thomas (13), Veneta Nolen (17), Kaci Churchwell (18), Linda Griffith (20), Mia Stroope (22), Joyce Hill (24), John McCaghren (27).

December Anniversaries: Allen & Linda Griffith (20), Ken & Jo Maninger (25).

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	Nov. 23, 2014	Nov. 30, 2014
Bible Class	43	48
AM Worship	63	64
PM Worship	45	34
Wednesday PM	36	33
Contribution	\$2,101	\$1,970

Privileged To Serve

"...be ready to every good work" (Titus 3:1)

This Week: 12/7/14		Next Week: 12/14/14		December 2014	
Sunday AM:	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	Song Leader: Mike Bannister		Make Announcements: James Fuller	
Greeters	Mileen and Ashley Kahlich	John Barnum Family		Prepare Communion: John Barnum Family	
Opening Prayer	Don Smith	Gene Bannister		Clean Building: Cindy Fuller / Jessica Stultz	
Communion	James Thomas*, Allen Griffith Joe Dennis, Caleb Dennis	Hank Wheeler*, John Barnum Don Smith, Tom Wilcox		Keep Grounds: Jack Turner	
Closing Prayer	Billy Chism	Ken Maninger		January 2015	
Attendance Cards	Chase Churchwell	Chase Churchwell		Make Announcements: Don Smith	
Sunday PM:	Song Leader: Joe Dennis	Song Leader: John McCaghren		Prepare Communion: Billy & Peggy Chism	
Opening Prayer	Gene Bannister	Allen Griffith		Clean Building: McCaghren Family	
Scripture Reading	Hank Wheeler	James Fuller		Keep Grounds: James Fuller	
Communion	James Thomas	Hank Wheeler			
Closing Prayer	Tom Wilcox	Billy Chism			
Wednesday Devotionals:	December 10 Allen Griffith	December 17 Tom Wilcox	December 24 Don Smith	December 31 Joe Dennis	

Search the Scriptures

Be like the Bereans who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)

Studies for the week of December 7, 2014

Sunday Class Acts 2:9ff
Wednesday Class Personal Evangelism

Church Leadership: Spiritual / Men of Prayer	
I. Elders Must Be Spiritual Men.	
A. Spiritual leaders must love God's Word.	
1. They must go to God's word daily for spiritual knowledge.	
2. They must continue to grow in Christ and be the example of Christ.	
B. Elders must watch for the spiritual welfare of those in their care.	
1. The church being a spiritual house (1 Pet. 2:5) must have spiritual elders.	
2. Spiritual elders will also lead their families in prayer and Bible study.	
C. Jesus called Himself a Shepherd (Jn. 10:11; 1 Pet. 5:4).	
1. There is not better personal relationship on earth than Shepherds and sheep.	
a. The first priority of elders is shepherding the sheep.	
b. Leadership is being approached far too often as a business and not from a spiritual standpoint as authorized by God's Word.	
2. Five reasons elders should see shepherding as their primary work.	
a. It is commanded.	
b. It is wise.	
c. It leads to greater respect.	
d. It helps to raise future leaders.	
e. It helps the church to grow.	
D. Church members have needs that only spiritual men can help with.	
E. Qualities a spiritual leader should possess in his lifestyle and his attitude.	
1. A spiritual leader seeks first the kingdom of God (Mt. 6:33).	
2. He seeks to be Christ-like in everything he does (Phil. 2:5-8).	
3. A spiritual leader is a doer of the word (Jas. 1:22).	
4. He knows God and the will of God by daily Bible study (Jn. 17:3).	
5. He has a gentle and humble spirit (Mt. 5:2-8) that shows his love.	
6. He prays for wisdom to be the leader God would have him to be (Jas. 1:5).	
7. He serves the Lord with his mind and his actions (Rom. 7:25; 1 Pet. 4:11).	
8. He will "seek and save the lost" and strive to "keep the saved, saved".	
F. Elders are shepherds with Jesus as the Chief Shepherd.	
1. They are to be Christ-like in rendering their duties and responsibilities.	
2. The spiritual shepherd cares for the sheep:	
II. Elders Should Be Men of Prayer	
A. "To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul" (Ps. 25:1).	
1. There are some 650 different prayers in the Bible. Important?!	
2. God's greatest people in the bible were men of prayer:	
3. Jesus Christ is our perfect example of a man of prayer.	
B. Elders who do not pray, fail to give God an opportunity to answer their needs.	
C. Elders should spend time in "closet" prayer.	
D. In elder's meetings – each meeting must begin with prayer and end with prayer.	
E. Pray with people when visiting someone who is in the hospital or nursing home.	
F. Elders must be firm believers in "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17).	
We should ever be thankful for godly elders – past, present and future!	

1 John 2:7-17	
I. God is Light	1:5-2:9
E. Commandments Old And New	2:7-11
7. Beloved [Brethren – KJV, NKJV] – another term of endearment.	
<u>No new commandment.</u> New with respect to quality, not time.	
<u>But an old commandment that you had from the beginning.</u>	
"From the beginning" – refers to the beginning of this Christian age.	
8. <u>It is a new commandment.</u> If new, compared to what?	
Not time – the Old Testament commands love.	
Jn 13:34 gives the answer - "As I have loved you." (Quality)	
<u>True light is already shining.</u> True, genuine.	
<u>Darkness is passing away.</u> The process has already begun and continues as a result of evangelism.	
9. <u>is still in darkness.</u>	
10. <u>In him there is no cause for stumbling.</u> There are two possible meanings:	
a. There is nothing in us which causes others to stumble, or	
b. There is nothing in us which causes us to stumble.	
11. <u>Whoever hates his brother</u>	
His existence - is in the darkness.	
His activity - walks in the darkness.	
His state - does not know where he is going (blind).	
F. Little Children, Fathers, Young Men Addressed	2:12-14
12. <u>For His name's sake.</u>	
a. On the basis of His name.	
b. Doing something consistent with the character and council of that person.	
13. <u>Fathers...you know.</u> "You came to know and now know."	
<u>Young men...you have overcome the evil one.</u> They had already overcome, and the results of that victory are still present.	
<u>Children...you know the Father.</u> They had come to know the Father and still know Him.	
14. <u>I write to you.</u> This is from the viewpoint of the reader.	
<u>Fathers</u> – a repeated assurance of spiritual security.	
<u>Young men</u> – Their strength came from the study of God's word.	
G. Love Of The World Forbidden	2:15-17
15. <u>Do not love the world.</u> Love mankind – do not love the evil order of mankind.	
<u>Or the things in the world.</u>	
<u>The love of the Father is not in him.</u>	
16. <u>The desires [lust] of the flesh.</u>	
<u>The desires [lust] of the eyes.</u>	
<u>Pride of life.</u>	
17. <u>The world is passing away.</u> Is in the process of passing away.	
<u>But whoever does the will of God abides forever.</u>	
The man of the world is doomed to disappointment; the man of God is certain of everlasting joy!	