



CHARIOT TV TOGETHER WITH
CHURCHES OF CHRIST, ADANSI AREA
present...



Leadership WORKSHOP

THEME

**BUILDING BRIDGES IN THE
CHURCH - NEHEMIAH 2:18**



**Saturday, 21st
Sept 2024
9:00am**



**KNUST - OSC
AUDITORIUM,
OBUASI**




Chariot TV



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**BUILDING BRIDGES IN THE
CHURCH - NEHEMIAH 2:18**

- > Cooperation Among Congregations
George Asah
- > Working Relationship among Leaders
Ken Gyan Kesse
- > Arise and Rebuild (Planting, Watering
and Growing the churches) - *P. V. Agyare*
- > Building Bridges in the church
Shadrack Oppong

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2024
OBUASI SPORTS CLUB
9:00AM**



Chariot TV

Theme:
BUILDING BRIDGES IN THE CHURCH - NEH. 2:18

TOPIC:
COOPERATION AMONG CHURCHES- OBUASI

Introduction:

Definitions:

Cooperation:

The action or process of working together to the same end assistance, especially by complying readily with requests

Church:

The called out:-Universal (congregations)
Local congregation (church)

Unity:

The state of being united or joined as a whole

The need to be joined together

Our Lord was always ever interested in relationship to prove our authenticity in uniqueness.

John 17:21

The difference between cooperation and unity is clear without ambiguity

The need:

We all need some form of relationship.

God is himself in a relationship with The Son and The Holy Spirit. I John 5:7

And with us as His children. Eph.1

And we all need some form of acceptance too.

For prominence

Importance

The way we are. Rom. 15:7

The value is well stated. Eccl. 4: 9-12

It's better to have a partner than go it alone. Share the work, share the wealth.

And if one falls down, the other helps, But if there's no one to help, tough!

By yourself, you're unprotected. With a friend you can face the worst.

Can you round up a third? A three-stranded rope isn't easily snapped

Cooperation:

Examples of early congregations working together: 1 Cor. 16:3 1 Cor. 9:1-5

Biblical facts:

There are scriptural cooperation and unity

There are also unscriptural cooperation and unity

Unscriptural unity: The Tower of Babel - Gen. 11

Balak and Baalam - Num 22-24

Scriptural Unity:

In as much as unity is revered throughout scripture, God does not approve of every unity except that which He has authorised.

That which is authorised is found in Eph. 4:1-6
It must be according how we are called
To be joined together in a particular manner
With “all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love”
And to keep it as the Spirit supplies
Within this, the grace is given in different measures

Cooperation in practice is found in the The Family System:

With my new chosen path of helping people, and especially building and promoting relationships, imparting lives with God’s perspective, I believe it is better to present this subject in the family way:

The family system

Executive sub-system

Sibling sub-system

The is presented as a family

Words like the following as individual members:

Our Father

Brethren

Brothers and Sisters

Jesus being our big brother Rom. 8:29

We have our Father

Jesus being our big brother Rom. 8:29

The rest of us are brothers and sisters

The churches (congregations) are called sisters. Rev. 2-3

Siblings can have their own families under the bigger umbrella of the father

Each church is unique (Unique Angels)

Each church has strengths

Each church has weaknesses

They don’t have same assignment - Neh. Chapter 3

They don’t have same concerns

Each has its unique leadership

In my father’s family we are five male siblings

Each married

Each have children

Each manages its own family in a unique way

No one directs how much should be giving to the wife for house keeping

Examples of cooperation:

For naming ceremonies

Marriage ceremonies

Funerals

Support for each other family when in trouble; in all these, each is assigned to special role or responsibility.

Other cousins acknowledge our uniqueness in unity and oneness.

Yet we run our families autonomously (freedom to act independently)

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT UNITY:

In unity we must all do the same thing

We must share the same opinion
We must live together at one place
Everyone must accept to share with all
There shouldn't be any difference between us
Anyone having dissenting views is an enemy
Doing the similar thing or program at different place is competition or opposition
Unity in all things always is right

THE REAL CHALLENGE:

The problem is not the system that runs autonomously, when a family meeting is called on a particular issue that concerns all or anyone, the one who abstains consistently without tangible reason is the one who has a challenge (problem)
He may be suffering from the following maladies or attitudinal disorder:

- insecurity
- prejudice
- self-centredness
- behavioural ineptitude
- the bone cancer of jealousy
- palsies of pride, arrogance and rudeness

THE CURE:

The need for change of the following:

Perception - heart-hardness

Attitude

Behaviour towards each other

In order to have the right perception, you need to acquire knowledge on each subject, and speak to the issues

By keeping pure mind/heart - Matt. 5:8

The appreciation of others in honesty and transparency - 1 Cor. 1:11; Eph. 6:14

One's strength is in evangelism, another's is in visitation

One's is Benevolence, another's is mission works

One's is in leading in teaching, another's is in training

WHAT WAS JESUS' SITUATION?

How did Jesus manage his?

His disciples were given to him by the Father. John 17:6

Jesus knew the feeling of being stuck with someone.

He ran with the same crew for 3yrs.

By and large he saw the same dozen faces :

around the table

around the campfire

around the clock

rode in the same boat

walked the same roads

visited the same houses

HOW WAS JESUS SO DEVOTED?:

Not only did he have to put up with their visible oddities, he also had to endure their invisible foibles.
could hear their unspoken thoughts
knew their private and even future doubts

HOW DEVOTED CAN YOU BE?:

What if you knew every mistake others had ever made and would ever make against you?
every thought they would have about you
every irritation
every dislike
every betrayal
Was it hard for Jesus to love Peter?
tough to trust Thomas?
difficult to serve Judas?
John and James?
Jesus had a pure heart. Matt. 5:8
He knew someones deeds cannot defile Him. Matt. 15:11
And He loved them. John 13:34-35
Jesus knew what it means to be a Christian and Paul affirms that in the books of the Corinthians - despite all their weaknesses they were addressed as:
sanctified - 1 Cor. 1: 2
saints
called into fellowship - verse 9
Church of God - 2 Cor. 1:1
brethren - verse 10 in chapter 1 and 8 in chapter 2
brothers and sisters

CONCLUSION:

There're too much of competition amongst our preachers/leaderships these days
And like the soldiers under the cross, competing for used clothings while the Saviour hangs on the Cross. John 19:23-24
We compete for wealth
We compete for superiority
We compete for recognition
We are self-centred
We've become hypocrites.
While soul are being won by those who don't have the truth

Jesus was focused. John 5:17
He did the will and work of the One who sent Him. Jn 4:34

If truly salvation and heaven is our purpose, we will concern ourselves with heavenly things and the gospel.
Let's choose empathy over conflict



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PRATICAL CHRISTIANITY MANIFEST ITSELF IN LOVE

A minister was visiting with a new convert, he said to the preacher.

- You preachers talk about love, but when you get right down to it, it all comes down to “ BASIN THEOLOGY”
- The minister responded, “Basin theology” what is that?
- The new Christian replied;
“Do you remember what Pilate did when he had the chance to release Jesus?”
- He called for a basin and washed his hands of the whole thing.
- But Jesus, the evening before his death, took a basin and washed the feet of his disciples.
- Hence all comes down to basin theology; which will you choose?

CHOICE TO MAKE

- As a disciple of Jesus, we have a choice to make
 1. Will we, like Pilate, selfishly choose to excuse ourselves from the responsibilities we have towards others, or
 2. Will we, like Jesus selflessly love and serve one another.
- Hebrew writer wrote ; “let brotherly love continue” Heb. – 13:1
- Let us now turn our attention to how love must reign supreme in the church

WORD DIFINITION:

PRATICAL- PRACTICING- (NOT THEORY)

CHRISTIANITY – FOLLOWING CHRIST

DEMONSTRATE- SHOWN; EXORESS

LOVE- Defined as,

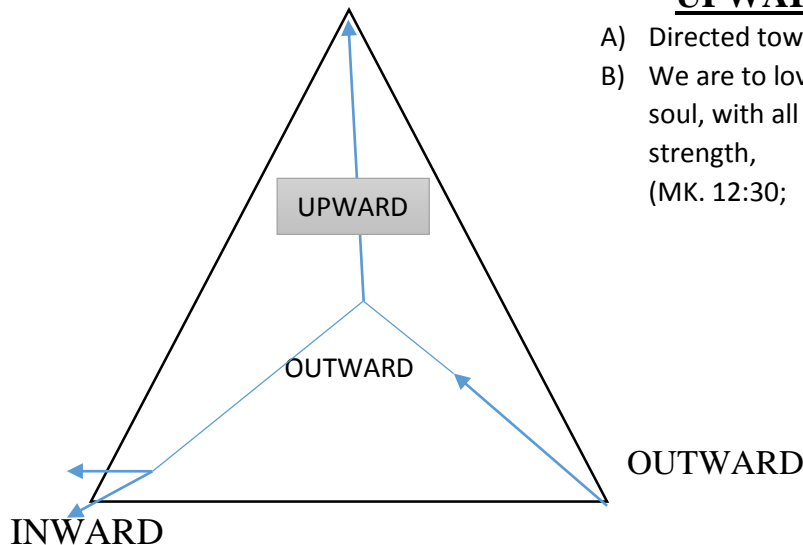
The Biblical word ‘LOVE’ (agape, or agape) describes a love that originates from an individual will

1. It consists of both the desire and decision to pursue those things that are best and beneficial for another person, friend ,or enemy (Mathew 5:43-48)
2. It involves actions void of any concerns as to what might be gained or lost by the giver, or any merit on the part of the receiver. John 3:16; Rom 5:8
3. The standard of this kind of love is rooted in and learners from;
 - (a) God and his gift of Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:1-8, john 4:7-11) and
 - (b) Jesus and his willing sacrifice of himself –john 10:17-18; 15:12 -17 1john 3:16

THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF BIBLICAL LOVE THAT CHRISTIANS ARE TO POSSESS AND EXERCISE.

- There are three dimensions of love outlined in the bible
- Each characterizes the kind of love christens must possess and manifest in their daily lives

THREE DIMENSIONS OF LOVE OUTLINED IN THE BIBLE



UPWARD

- A) Directed toward God.
- B) We are to love the Lord our all over soul, with all our mind and with all our strength,
(MK. 12:30; Matt. 22:3)

INTWARD

1. Directed toward all mankind
2. We are to “love “our neighbors as ourselves
MK.12:31; 1thess3:12
Matt 5:43-48; Luke10:25-37

“INWARD” DIMENSION.

1. Directed toward our Christian brethren
2. Consequently, we are instructed by Jesus to “love” one another as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

John 13:34-35

1 john 3:6-8

PRACTICING LOVE IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE DIRECT AND SPECIFIC COMMANDS FROM GOD AND JESUS CHRIST

1. John the apostle of love wrote
 - (A) “this is his commandment :
That we should _____ love one another as he gave us the commandment”-1john3:22-23; 1john 4:7.
 - (B) This commandment we have from him that he who loves God must love his brothers also, -1 john 4:21
2. Jesus during the last night with his apostles, challenged them saying,
 - (A) this is my commandment “that you love one another as I have loved you”. John 15:12-17; john 13:34-35
 - (B) Paul encouraged the Roman Christians “owe no one anything except to love one another for he who loves another has fulfilled the law” -Rom 13:8
 - (c) To the church at Thessalonica, Paul wrote, “for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.
 - (D) Peter also wrote; “Love one another fervently with a pure heart
1peter 1:22; 1peter 2:1 ; 3:8; 4:8
3. Practicing love is evidence that the Christian is truly a disciple of Christ
 - (A) “ in this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest ,In whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother” 1john 3:10-11

4. Practicing love affords every Christian the assurance that we are heard when we pray (A)” ___ Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us whatever. We ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked Him “ 1 John 5:14-15; Matt 7:7-11; 1peter 3:12 (b) the conditions that God has set for this confidence to exist is :

- We must keep his commandments- 1john 3:11; 22:23;
- Persistently try to do those things that will please Him – 1john 3:22; 2 corinthians5:9; Eph. 5:11; col. 1:10

3. PRACTICING LOVE PROVIDES EVERY CHRISTIAN THE CONFIDENCE NEEDED CONCERNING THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

- The scriptures assures us of the day of judgment (Matt 25:31-46) Rom- 2:2-11
- Paul wrote “for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ” (2Cor. 5:10)
- John also wrote “If we love one another God abides in us and his love has been perfected in us Love has been perfected among us in this that we have boldness in the days of Judgment” (1st John 4: 12, 17) the word “BOLDNESS” conveys the absence of fears.
- John wrote “There is no fear in love, for perfect love casts out fear” (1stt John 4:18, 1st John 2: 28, 2nd Peter 1, 5-11)

CHARACTERISTICS OF LOVE
LOVE IS BEST EXPRESSED THROUGH OUR ACTION AND NOT
THROUGH EMPTY RHETORIC

- This is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another let us not love in the word or in tongue, but indeed and in truth”. 1st John 3:11, 18, 1stCor.13:1-8.
- This characteristics of love was demonstrated by:
 - a. God, when he gave his only begotten son”
John 3:16, Romans 5:8, Eph. 2: 1-5, 1st 4:7-11.
 - b. Jesus, when he willingly, “Laid down his life for us” 1st John 3: 16, John 10:17-18, Phil. 2:5-8.
As Christians we can manifest our love for one another through our “deeds” including
 - Being hospitable to one another 1 Pet. 4:9.
 - Praying for one another, Jas.5:16, 1st Sam; 12:23
 - Edifying one another – Rom.14:19, 1st Thess. 5:11, Heb. 3:13
 - Being kind to one another, Eph. 4:32. Col.3:12- Gal. 5:22-23, 1st Cor.13:4-8
 - Willingly forgiving one another – Eph.4:32, Col.3:12-14, Matt6.12-14, 18; 21 – 35.
 - Attempting to warn and restore one another. 1st Thess. 5:14, Gal.6:1, Jas5:19-20.
 - Bearing one another’s burden: Gal. 6:2, 1st Corinthians 12, 23-26. – Burden Bearer.
 - Serving and ministering to one another. Gal. 5:13
 - Being truthful with one another. Col. 3:9, Eph. 4:25.
 - Comforting one another in time of sorrow or difficulty – 1st Thess. 4: 18, 2nd Cor. 1, 3- 10
 - Refusing to speak evil against one another, Job 4: 11- 12, 5:9

LOVE WILL ALWAYS FLOW OUT OF A PURE HEART

- Peter wrote, “Love one another fervently with a pure heart” 1st Pet.1:22
(The word “Pure” conveys the idea of sincerity, genuineness, void of any pretense.
- SOLOMON Wrote: Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the hearts” Prov.21: 2
- As disciples of Jesus Christ, We demonstrate the purity of our love and heart through
- The impartial and unconditional nature of the love we possess and manifest towards others(Jas. 2:3 -8) Rom. 15:7, 5:6, Matt. 5: 43-48
- The unselfish nature and sacrificial expressions of the love we express towards others. John. 13:34 – 35, 15:12 -17, 1st John 3:16, Gal. 6: 9 -10, Phil. 2:3 – 8, 1 Thess. 3: 12

LOVE ALWAYS DESIRES WHAT IS BEST FOR ANOTHER PERSON

- a. John wrote : Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things, and be in health just as your soul prospers” 3rd John 2
- b. The Apostles attitude towards his brethren, was wanting only their best,
- c. His brother in Christ, Diotrefes, focused only on himself and how he could achieve the Preeminence”. Hurting anyone who would try to thwart his goal. – 3rd John 9 = 10
- d. Example: The Elder brother in Luke 15:25 – 32. Selfishness and self-centeredness are the very antithesis of Christians love – 1st John 4: 7 – 11.
- e. Paul wrote to the Church at Philippi “Let nothing be done in selfish ambition let each of you look out not only for the interest of others Phil. 2:3 – 4, 1st Cor. 10:24

- f. Paul illustrated this kind of selfless love by drawing their attention to the love and sacrifice of Christ – Phil 2 : 6- 11

8. **LOVE IS EVIDENCE BY AN UNTIRING EFFORT**

- Peter wrote “ Love one another fervently with a pure heart” 1st Peter 1: 22
- Fervently “Literally means, “To be stretched out or not to relax in one’s efforts”.
- Too, it suggests that one is to act in the right spirit and with proper attitude 1st Peter 4:8.
- Paul charged the Galatians churches through love, serve one another.
- Then he warned. “If you bite and devour one another, beware of you be consumed by one another”. (Gal.5: 13 – 15)
- Then he encouraged the Galatians Christians, “As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith (Gal. 6:10)
- Today, as in the first century we can possess and demonstrate our persistence
 - a. Efforts to show compassion towards others 1st Peter. 3: 8, Ps. 86: 15, Matt14: 14 – 21, Mk.1: 40 -41, Lk7: 11 – 15, 10: 25 – 37
 - b. Concern for the wellbeing of others, 1st Phil 2: 19 -21, 1st Cor. 10:24, 2nd Cor. 11: 28.

CONCLUSION

Remember it is all about “Basin theology”

- The question we must answers:
- Will we follow the example of Pilate and selfishly try to excuse ourselves from our personal responsibility towards others? Or
- Will we follow the example of Jesus, and show our love for others.
- When we choose to imitate the example of Jesus, Manifesting our love for others through our
 1. Attitude – and
 2. Actions
 3. We are following God’s blue print for a growing church.

Materials consulted.

1. God’s “Blue Print” for a growing church
Mike Winkler
The Holy Bible

WORKING RELATIONSHIP AMONG LEADERS IN THE CHURCH.
BY KEN KESSE

- i. As we study the working relationship among leaders in the church.
 - We need to understand what the church is
 - The mission of the church
 - The Destiny of the church
 - Who are the leaders of the church?

- ii. After healing a demon – possess blind and mute man, the multitude was amazed and said “ Could not this be son of David”
 - The Pharisees, out of envy accused Jesus of casting out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of demon.

 - Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them “Every Kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand” Matthew 12:12 – 25

WHAT IS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. A called out people to belong to Christ have been immerse, wearing the name “Christian”.

THE CHURCH

- i. 700 years before Christ, the Prophet Isiah had said in: Isaiah 2:2 – 4
 1. Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Living God, Lord’s house shall be established on the top of the mountain, and shall be exalted above the hills and all nations shall flow into it.

 2. Many people shall come and say come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord.

To the house of the God of Jacob, He will teach us his ways, and we shall walk in his paths
For out of Zion shall go forth his law and the word of the from Jerusalem

- ii. a. I Timothy 3:15 The house of the Lord identifies as the church of the living God.
 - b. God will teach us his ways, - (Thru the New Testament Jeremiah 36:36ff)
 - c. We shall walk in his paths.

God's part in this

- a. Build his house – The church
- b. Teach us his way – His laws to guide us
- c. It is not in man who walk to direct his path Jeremiah 10:23

MAN'S PART:

- We shall walk in his paths –
- Man's responsibility – to obey God's command.

III. Mathew 16:18 – 19

Christ made this bold declaration.

“..... Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it..... I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven”

1v. Acts 2 -1 – 47

- Peter led the Apostles to preach the first gospel sermon, on that day of Pentecost
- About 3000 believe and were baptize and added to the church.
- Acts 2:47. “..... and the Lord added to the church daily as they were being saved.

Ephesians 4: 11

“And He Himself gave some to be Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers.

For the equipping of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

TEAM WORK

“THE NICE THING ABOUT TEAM WORK IS THAT YOU ALWAYS HAVE OTHERS ON YOUR SIDE”

- No footballer became a superstar without ten other guys on the field to make him one
- The critical factor in generating team work is to **Get Everyone Involved.**
- We are all in together **playing to win.**

IN THE CHURCH

Team work is very important in the church

Paul addressed the Elders to work together in **OVERSEEING THE FLOCK OF GOD.** Acts20:17, 28 – 30

ILLUSTRATION: Three set of mulls – two each were tied to an end of a rope with a pile of grass to be eaten in front of them.

- The mules were set in the middle of the pile of grass the rope was not long enough for each mule to pull and reach its pile of grass.
- The first set of the mules each trying to reach the grass before it pulled each other unsuccessfully, they left the pile and walked away, if I don't get, you don't get it
- The second set of mules, pulled each other till to get its pile of grass.

- They pulled and pulled each other till they were choked by the rope and died.
- The third set of mules, seeing the each end of the rope could not reach the pile of grass before it decided between them: “Let us go to your side eat your pile then go to my side and eat the pile..
- They enjoyed each other’s company eating together.

LESSION LEARNED

1. All the three were together:
2. The first two could not work as a team
3. The second set of mules could not agree to work as a team, they pulled each other till they all choked on the rope around their neck.
4. The third set worked as a team
5. Being together does not necessary means team work.

BIBLE EXAMPLES OF TEAMWORK

1. LUKE 5:10, 11 – James, John and Simon were partners in fishing-business required teamwork.
2. John 17:20, 21 Lord prayed for unity.
3. Mark2:1-5 Friends of the paralytic man. Four men required teamwork
4. Nehemiah 4:6 – The people had a mind to work.
 - Building the walls of Jerusalem
 - (Teamwork-Completed in 52days)
5. I Cor. 3:9 – Laborers together..... Paul planted, Appolo watered, God gave the increase.
6. The fall of the walls of Jericho – worked together as team
7. Eph.4:11-16: God’s team for the building up of the Church.

IN LOCAL CHURCHES: men who are responsible for growth in the body.

- There is power in numbers: Need at least two for a team. (Avoids dictatorship)
- Jesus chose twelve men – matt 10:1-5
- Sent disciples out in pairs – Mark 6:7
- Elders in the church – Titus 1:5, I Tim. 3:1-7, plurality of elders – Acts 14:23.
- Paul had helpers – (Silas, John, Mark, Bernabas)

III. APPOINTING ELDERS.

Acts 14:23 after establishing churches, the apostle Paul and Bernabas ensured the Christians (the flock of Christ) is well taken care of.

- They appointed elders in every church
- The elders had the oversight of the local churches.

TITUS 1:5-9. Paul instructed Titus to set things in order appointing elders in every city at Crete.

- Crete is the 5th largest Island in the mediterranean and the largest of the Island for famous part of GREECE.

I Tim. 3:1-7: Here again Paul sets up the qualification for one who can be appointed as an elder in the Lord's Church.

- Elders appointed in the local congregation has his authority limited to that particular church.
- Elders ensure that the laws of Christ are obeyed by the congregation.
- Elders have no capacity to make laws for the church.

II Pet. 1:3. “.....all things that pertains to life and Godliness has been given to us”

- Elders should know the difference between matters of FAITH and matters of Opinion
- Elders should also understand the silence of the scriptures.

WHERE THERE ARE NO ELDERS.

- Congregations tend to use:
 1. The Congregational meeting.
 2. Committee system of church administration they become leaders by default.
 3. All these are transitional should not remain permanent.

WORKING RELATION AMONG ELDERS AND THE TRANSITIONAL SYSTEM.

WORKING RELATIONSHIP AMONG ELDERS AND PREACHERS.

- Presently, some preachers are hung on the teachings that preachers supervise the work of elders in the local congregation.
- In some congregation the “Secretary” has more power than the preachers and other members of the church.
- The secretary only writes minutes of the meetings.

III. COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL.

- The ability to communicate affectively is one of the most useful skills a leader can possess

SUGGESTIONS FOR GOOD COMMUNICATION OF A CHRISTIAN LEADER.

- The Lord’s Church continue to suffer from brethren with foul mouth.
- They lack the decorum of good speech.
- Eph. 4:29 The scripture advice: Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to use in edifying that it may minister grace unto the hearers.
- Col. 4:6 “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man”
- Our words should be tasty and delightful to people who may hear them.
- Live and speak in a manner that will encourage your brethren that will invite others to Christ.
- Christ tells us – “you are the salt of the earth.....” Should express.
- **Tolerance, thankfulness and kindness leaders, Elders and members should know Col. 3:23-24 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord not for human masters since you know you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.**
- WE HAVE COMMON PURPOSE
- WE HAVE COMMON DIRECTION – UNITY OF DIRECTION COMMITTEES.
- The church may decide to appoint some of the MEN TO VARIOUS committees to do

SPECIFIC WORK FOR IT.

- known committees are:
 - Finance – To look after the churches finances
 - Evangelism -
 - Edification -
 - Building -
 - Benevolence –
- These Committees meet on matters presented to them and make recommendation to the church, it may be accepted, modified or rejected.
- The members have equal responsibility.
- They cannot make laws in regard to matters of faith.
- Must have mutual respect.
- Must be able to work together as a team
- “Espirit the corp” – group spirit.
- Strong sense of unity and enthusiasm among the group.
- Special team spirit that makes everyone feel connected and committed to the same goal.
- Unity of Direction – United goal and motive, make the work easier and achieve the goal.
- Subordination of individual interest – work unitedly towards the interest of the church rather than personal interest.
- WE HAVE COMMON PURPOSE UNITY OF PURPOSE
- UNITY OF DIRECTION.
- Christ have shown us the way to heaven through the church.

WHO MANAGES THE AFFAIRS OF THE CHURCH ELDERS OR PREACHER

Introduction:

- The question before us as to who manages the affairs of the church, elders or preachers? re
- reminds me of what happened in the time of Christ and the apostles
- As recorded in Matthew 18 vrs 1
Matthew 18:1; at the same time came the disciples into Jesus saying, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

vrs 4: Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven”.

- Let us appeal to the scripture for answer to this question.
- The bible is the final authority in all religious matters.
- For an effective running of any business there should be a proper set up of structure, and the church is no exception.
- The church is a divine institution set-up by the God of heaven. Isa. 2:2-4, Dan. 2:44.

Pattern

- God has never left man to do whatever he like, when he the God of heaven give a job to be done by man.
- JEREMIAH 10:23
O Lord I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man in man that walk to direct his steps.
- Psalm 37:33: The steps of man are established by the Lord, when he delight in his ways.
- Prov. 16:9: The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord has established his steps.
- God has always had a pattern to guide man in doing his (God) work

PATTERNS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- Noah and the ARK. Gen. 6:14 – 16
- The Tabernacle and all the furnishing. Exodus 25:9-40
- Make all things according to the pattern Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5
- Arrangements of the lamp. Numbers 8:4
- Burning of license fire from the altar. Lev. 16:12, Numb. 16:46
- The fire never want out. Lev. 6:12,13
- The fire on altar came from God. Lev. 9:24
- Garments for the priest sewed according to pattern. Exod. 28

- The carrying of the ark of Covenant
 - a) To be carried by the Levites, Deut. 10:8; 1 Chron. 15:2; Exod. 25:13-15
 - b) To be carried on their shoulders on a staff. Exo. 25:13-15; 1 Chron. 15:14-15

PATTERN FOR THE TEMPLE – DAVID AND SOLOMON (1CHRON. 11:13, 19)

PUNISHMENT

- God always punished those who infringed on the pattern
 - a) Nadab and Abihu- they offered strange fire. Lev. 10:1-3; Numb. 3:4
 - b) David and Uzza – infringed on the carrying of the ark of covenant.
David Modernized the way to carry the Ark OF Covenant – he built a court. 1 Chron. 13:7
- David learned the hard way at the expense of the death of UZZA. 1Chron.13:8ff
- God is not interested in praises and Adoration IF NOT done according to his pattern. 1 Chron. 15:13
- God delights in obedience to this word more than anything else. 1 Sam. 15:22-23

PATTERN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- There are several scripture references in the New Testament that shows that the Lord's church is patterned after a Divine Plan and that no one or Group of persons has any authority to alter or change God's plan.
- Romans 15:4. Here we are reminded that the Old Testament scripture is for our learning.
- What we learn from the Old Testament relevant to our subject of study is that.
 - 1) When one refuses, alter, or change God's divine pattern, God punished him.
 - 2) When one is obedient, and faithfully execute his task by the PATTERN, be it in worship or in the work and practice, he is accepted by God and he is blessed

PATTERN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. 700 years before Christ, Isaiah had predicted.
"In the last days the mounting of the Lord's House will be established as the highest of the mountains, it will be exalted above the hills and ALL NATIONS will flow into it.

Vrs 3: Many people will come and say,

“Come let us go to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways and we shall walk in his paths. “For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

WE LEARN FROM THIS PASSAGE

1. The LORD’S House (The church of Christ) 1Tim. 3:15) will be established in the last days. (Acts 2)
 2. This will embrace “ALL NATIONS”
 3. God will Teach us his ways, and
 4. We shall walk in his path.
-
- a) God speaks to us in these lay days through Jesus Christ His son. Hebrews 1:1,2
 - b) Christ also chose the Apostles through whom the word of the LORD be proclaimed – Jno. 16;12 -14, 23
 - c) The early Christians continued steadfastly in the Apostles DOCTRINE – Acts 2:42

THE APOSTLES GAVE US A PATTERN TO FOLLOW

1. PATTEN FOR SALVATION
2. PATTERN FOR THE CHURCH

Worship:

- | | | |
|------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| a) Singing | c) The Lord’s Supper | e) Teaching, Bible studying |
| b) Prayers | d) Giving | |

PATTERN FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

Ephesians 4:11

“And He himself gave some to be APOSTLES, some PROPHETs, some EVANGELIST, and some PASTORS and TEACHERS”

- Vr. 12 For the Equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ,
- Vr. 15 But speaking the TRUTH IN LOVE, may grow up in all things into him who is the Head – Christ.
- Vr. 16 From whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, According to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body, for the edifying of itself in love.

THE NEW TESTAMENT APOSTLES AND PROPHETS HAD NO SUCCESSORS

1. The Apostles of Christ were the first teachers and rulers of Christians had no successors.
2. In the strict New Testament sense there have been no Apostle. Since the death of those whom Jesus chose and a few others in the first century.
3. The “PROPHETS” referred to those in the New Testament as living after receiving special revelations or spiritual guidance BEFORE THE NEW TESTAMENT was written.
4. There have been no known Prophet in this sense since the completion of the New Testament.
5. Today, and for 21 centuries, believers have had the teachings of the Apostles and the prophets in the New Testaments records
6. In these records speak to the whole church, in every generation, even to the end of the world.
7. But in God’s organization, the living “body of Christ” his ecclesia, or church, at least THREE Groups of workers are to be continued from generation to generation.
8. These are:
 - a) The “EVANGELISTS” – the proclaimers of the “good news”, of the gospel, hence the makers of discipline.
 - b) There are the “PASTORS”, (the elders”, or “shepherd”)
9. c) Teachers of the flock.

Elders in the New Testaments times were not only pastors and overseers but teachers also.

One of the qualification of elders in the first century was that they be “Apt to teach” (1Tim. 3:2).

CHRIST’S TEACHINGS COME TO US THROUGH THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

- In the beginning, also now, and to the end of the world, Christ is “head over all things to the church,” which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:22-23).
- Every Christian is under Christ, because the head of every man is Christ” (1Cor. 11:3)
- Christ speaks to all his people through the recorded teachings of the Apostles and prophets
- Evangelists, pastors, and teachers are to adhere faithfully what the Apostles and prophets taught; not going beyond the recorded will of God or leaving any teachings out. 1 Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22:18-19.
- Their teachings is AUTHORITATIVE and CHANGELESS and they have no successor.

PATTERN FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

1. Of the work of these three groups, evangelist, pastors and teachers, whose is, in practical sense as well as in doctrinal sense, central to congregational activities, that the whole purpose of God may be accomplished?

A LOOK AT DEFINITIONS

- | | | |
|---------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. PREBUTEROS | : | Elder, Presbyter. 1 Peter 5:1-4 |
| 2. POIMAM | : | Shepherd, Pastor |
| 3. EPISKOPOS | : | Overseer, Guardian, Bishop |

Distinction in meaning
Not distinction in office

LOOKING THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES

IN ACTS 20:17, 28

1. From Miletus Paul sent to Ephesus and called for the elders (**Presbuteros**)
2. Vrs. 28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flocks among which the Holy Spirit has made you Overseer (**Episkopos**) to sphered (**Poiman**) the church of God which he purchased with his own blood

1Peter 5:1-4

Vr.1 The elders (**Presbuteros**) who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder (Presbuteros).....

Vr.2 Shepherd (**Poiman**) the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers (**Episkopos**)

- Not by compulsion but willingly,
- Not for dishonest gain but eagerly,
- Nor as Lords over those entrusted to you.
- But being example to the flock;
- And when the chief shepherded appears you will receive the crown of glory that was not fade away.

Titus 1:5 – 9

Vr.5 For this reason I left you in crate, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders (**Presbuteros**) in every city as commanded you

Vr.7 For a bishop (**episkopos**) must be blameless.....

QUALIFICATION AND FUNCTIONS OF AN ELDER

1. In a practical as well as in doctrinal sense, elders are **“KEY” Men** in the church of which Jesus Christ is head, the church which he wants to be a “glorious churchholy and without blemish” – Eph. 5:27
2. By reason of their scriptural duties, elders are related to the church’s activities in more ways than any other class of members.
3. In line with their scriptural functions, they face more questions and make more decisions than do evangelist, deacons and teachers all together.

A. QUALIFICATIONS OF A BISHOP

- 1) For one to become an elder in a congregation, the bible provides guidance, and set as the qualification for such Christian.
 - The Bishop must be without reproach
 - the husband of one wife
 - temperate
 - Sober minded
 - Orderly
 - Given to hospitality
 - Apt to teach
 - No brawler,
 - No Striker
 - gentle
 - Not contentious
 - No lover of money
 - **One who rule well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.**
 - **But if a man knows not how to rule his own house, how can he take care of the church of God.**
 - Not a noise, lest being puffed up, he falls into condemnation of the devil.
 - Moreover, he must have good testimony from them that are without
 - Having children that believe
 - Not self-willed,
 - Not soon angry,
 - Lover of God
 - Just
 - Holy
 - 1Tim. 3:2-7
 - Self-controlled
 - Holding to the faithful word, according to the teaching – Titus 1:5-9

UNQUALIFIED PERSON

- Too frequently the work of a bishop is given to men who have not the qualification.
- They assume this responsibility with little realization of their duties.

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH

- A. Christ is the Head of the Church. Ephesians 1:22-23
- He has “all” authority – Matt. 28:1—20
 - Prophet (Jesus) Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22-24
 - Priest (Jesus) Heb. 7:17; 21:28
 - King (Jesus) Rev. 17:14
- B. Elders – to expedite Christ’s work, to oversee, to shepherd
- Number of Elders
 - Plurality – Acts 14:23; Acts 15:2, 4, 6.
 - Each congregation govern itself. 1Cor. 4:17
 - Elder Outreach – their flock. Acts 20:28; Acts 20:17, 28
- C. Their Work
- Watchman. Heb. 13:17; Ezek. 3:16-21
 - Mature the congregation (Eph. 4:11-16)
 - Discipline the congregation (1Thess. 5:12-15)
 - Shepherd (1Pet. 5:1-4, 13; Acts 20:18)
 - Pray for the sick

TENDING THE FLOCK

- One of the basic essentials to an elder’s best work is being SINCERE with admirable PERSONAL examples of Christian living
- He exercise his leadership **in the right ways for right goals and right motives.**
- The New Testament qualifications for an elder as given by **Paul to Timothy and Titus stress Good Character.**
- The New Testament teaches that Elders must be above reproach.
- They must be
 - a. Blameless
 - b. Without defect in individual character and ethical conduct.
 - c. Elders family life must measure up to the New Testament standards of righteousness
 - d. An elder must have a good report from those outside the church.
- Sometimes a man who was level-headed, reasonable and considerate before becoming an elder undergoes a change afterwards

- Some seen to become **authority conscious, they become “bossy” dictatorial.**
- Some men **yield to a spirit of contention** and **stern legalism**, which destroys their major usefulness as an elders
- An elder whose conduct is known to be inconsistent with the morals of the Bible, loses human respect.
- Nobody trust the “medicine” a chronically ill physician,
- There are some who have tried to make up for unchristian conduct by saying “Do as I say not as I do”. But such counsel never have any good effect.
- Peter urged elders to make **themselves “Examples” to the flock.** 1Peter 5:3
- Either directly or indirectly, the faithfulness of all believers is influenced by the zeal, or apathy, of the elders.
- Both by what they do, and do not do, elders affect the eternal destinies of those under their charge.
- A strong and faithful eldership in every congregation is the surest hope of a Triumphant New Testament church.
- **In those churches of Christ, following the pattern of New Testament organization elders are the only organized group in position to deal with the problems of change.**
- **The imperative need is for strong, spiritually-minded, blameless, faithful, unselfish elders, to preside devotedly over the congregation.**
- **The elders see to the need and bring people back to the realization that, THE CHURCH WHICH JESUS PURCHASED WITH HIS OWN BLOOD IS UNCHANGING IN TRUTH AND OVERALL PURPOSE.**

DISTINCTIVE FUNCTIONS FOR EVANGELISM

I. PREACHER- EVANGELIST – MINISTER

- A. 1) GREEK – KERUX, - a herald of the king (1Tim. 2:7)
Paul – A preacher and Apostle
- 2) GREEK – EVANGELIST - bringer of good tidings

B. The preachers work

1. The evangelist preach the “good news”, the gospel, to lost humanity and cause people to become Christians, baptizing them into the name of the father, of the son, and of the Holy Spirit
2. Making “disciples” is their main task
3. Edifying the local church. Eph. 4:11-16
4. Defend the faith. 1Tim. 1:3, Titus 1:10-13
5. Train preachers and Teachers. 2 Tim. 2:2
6. Prayer – Acts 6:1-6

- C. Preachers are NOT pastors, unless they also serve as one of the elders of the local church

DEACONS – SERVANTS OF THE CONGREGATIONS

- A. Appointed to take care of some business to be accomplished in the local church.
- B. Qualifications were set forth (Acts 6:3; 1Tim. 3:8-13)
- C. Appointed to Task – Acts 6:3; 5-6

DISTINCTIVE WORK OF THE EVANGELIST AND THE ELDERS

- Making “disciples” is the main task of the Evangelist
- On the other hand, elders and teachers deal mostly with those who have accepted Christ as savior and Lord.
- It is one of the functions of elders, God’s pastors and overseers to nurture and train those whom the Lord, has added to his church
- Christ wants those who the Lord adds to his church to grow in grace and become “strong in the Lord”.....able to stand against all the pressures and “wiles” of Satan – Eph. 6:10, 13.
- This spiritual nurture which is commanded of God for all who become Christians, is part of the awesome responsibility of elders.
- New born “babies in Christ” youthful converts and those older in years but still novice in the gospel, must be gently and spiritually taught and led.
- This nurturing of the mature must be wisely and skillfully done and lovingly control.
- The whole plan of teaching and developing church members, the whole complex task of causing them to become strong and fruitful in the knowledge of God, rightly comes under the oversight of the elders.
- The church on earth here had no human head nor headquarters. Christ is the head of the church (Colossians 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23)
- Local churches are under the oversight of scripturally qualified elders. Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5-9.
- Elders must be men advanced in age and scripturally qualified to lead the Lord’s church – 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9
- Elders have oversight of the church who appointed them, their authority is not extended beyond the church that appointed them

CONGREGATION DUTY TOWARDS ELDERS

1. To know them that labour among you and are over you in the Lord, and admonish them.
2. And to esteem them exceeding, highly in love, for their work's sake. 1Thess. 5:12
3. Let the Elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and teaching. 1Tim. 5:17
4. **Obey them that have rule over you.**
5. **And submit to them. Heb. 13:7**
6. Against an elder receive no accusation except at the mouth of two or three witness. 1 Tim. 5:19

The church of Christ seeks to restore **the New Testament church. It is committed to following the biblical pattern in all things: doctrine, worship, work, organization, zeal and life. Its faithful preachers fill the God-ordained role of public proclaimers of the gospel. They heed the principles stated here.**

PREACH THE GOSPEL

“Preach the word” (2 Timothy 4:20)

- The gospel must be preached!. It is God's power to save sinners and the world's hope.
- It is spiritual light that scatters darkness; divine power that breaks down bulwarks of sin.
- Since Christ built his church there has been perpetual need for men, faithful and able, to declare the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27).
- This urgent need exists now; it always will.
- The church goes the way the pulpit goes. Soft, compromising preaching produces weak, wavering congregation.
- Every generation needs to hear the “Old Jerusalem” gospel. When blood-atonement is eliminated the pulpit is powerless; the pew is impoverished. The pulpit will be despised in an age when gospel truth is no longer honored.

PASTORS ARE SHEPHERDS – EVANGELISTS ARE PREACHERS

According to the Bible,

1. **Pastors (elders) are to pastor (shepherd) the flock (Acts 20:28). Preachers (evangelists) are to preach (2 Tim. 4:1-4).**
2. **Preachers who preach and pastors who pastor is the right way; it is God's divine plan.**

Here denominations have stumbled. When the //evangelist is doing the pastoring, God's way is being ignored or rejected. Elders are to discharge their duty as '

caretakers of souls and should not appoint the preacher as their deputy to care for sick straying sheep. Shepherds do not nurse ill lambs by proxy.

1. Preachers are to **labor in the word, preaching, teaching, exhorting** (Colossians 1:24-29; 2 Tim. 4:1-5).
2. Many preachers have played "pastor" so long it will take a while ^ for them to become evangelists again.
3. Elevating the "Reverend Pastor" to a level above the "average" member in the Lord's body is a result of superficial thinking. Men who preach may be placed on a lofty pedestal by those whose minds are clouded, and conclusions are conditioned by a denominational thought-pattern. In God's sight the greatest person is the most faithful servant, not one who has assumed an elevated position. Seemingly it is a basic paradox of Christianity that the way up is *down* (Matthew 20:25-28). One does not earn a high place before God by appropriating an impressive religious title.

PREACH THE WORD

- Assuming religious titles corrupt the religion that is pure and undefiled even as false teachers are a disgrace , to Christ and a hindrance to his church (Acts 20:29-30).
- Their "mouths must be stopped" (Titus 1:11)
- Paul warns against teaching traditions of men and vain philosophy (Colossians 2:8).
- When the whole counsel of God is preached, believed and obeyed, all spiritual needs are satisfied (James 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- All that men need to believe, be, know, do or teach to please God is written in the Bible. God provides the effective tool; his eternal word.
- Preachers carry a heavy burden in a sin-sick world. t
- they lead the fight against sin by calling Christians to take up the whole armor of God, fight the devil; withstand his wiles and quench his fiery darts (Eph. 6:10-18).
- **In the Lord's church, conscientious preachers refuse to join the search for something new and different, Preachers Association (Fellowship)**
- Nor do they make a blundering reach for "relevancy" – Rise to prominence.
- They are not ashamed of centuries old fundamentalism. Don't preach the church.
- Knowing that the doctrine of redemption in Christ will always be relevant.
- They preach *The Old Jerusalem* Gospel and exhort sinners to obey it.
- to become servants of God;
- Saved, with sins forgiven and souls set free (Rom. 6:17- 18).
- They do not neglect duty while sinners perish in darkness.

- Their preaching promotes **unity, truth and righteousness** while **opposing division, error** and sin (**Proverbs 14:34; John 8:32; 1 Cor. 1:10- 13**).
- They warn of the fatal danger in being ashamed of Christ and his words for by them we will be judged (Mark 8:38; John 12:48).
- They teach that we are saved by grace through faith; not by grace alone nor faith alone but by God’s grace and man's obedient faith (Eph. 2:8-10; Rom. 1:5; Gal. 5:6).
- They do not try to galvanize sin into respectability, nor do they “soft-pedal” sin by shading terminology.
- They call transgression of God’s law sin, not “deviant behavior” (1 John 3:4; James 4:17).
- They are careful to distinguish between matters of **faith and matters of opinion, then deal with each for what it is**. Matters of faith are established in the scriptures, cannot be changed. In matters of opinion – charity – Expediency to accept.

PREACH THE GOSPEL – HOW?

Faithful evangelist preach the gospel in this manner: Fully – “From Jerusalem and roundabout.....I have fully preached the gospel of Christ” (Rom. 15:19). A man who will not preach the gospel fully should not preach at all.

- **Forcefully** — Paul “*powerfully* confuted (proved them wrong) the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ” (Acts 18:28). “I am set for the defense of the gospel” (Philippians 1:16). Paul’s preaching was powerful; it demanded a decision. Most of his sermons caused a revival or a riot. Need for strong preaching is constant.
- **Simply** — “I fear lest . . . your minds should be corrupted from the *simplicity* and the *purity* that is toward Christ” (2 Cor. 11:3). The average word in the Bible contains fewer than five letters. Inspired preachers had no mania for big words.
- **Urgently** — “Necessity is laid upon me: for woe is unto, if I preach not the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:16).
- **Boldly** — when the council in Jerusalem beheld the boldness of Peter and John they marvelled (Acts 4:13, 29, 31). Paul urged brethren at Ephesus to pray that he might “make known with boldness the... gospel,... and that I may speak *boldly, as I ought to speak*” (Eph. 6:19, 20). God’s preachers do not fear lest they offend brother Social Drinker or Sister Dancer. That would be weak and cowardly.
- **In Love** — Christ placed evangelists, teachers and others in the church to minister unto the building up of the body of Christ by “speaking the truth in *love . . .*” (Eph. 4:11*15). “Let all that ye do be done in love Cor. 16:13).

- In the church of Christ evangelists “hold the pattern of sound words...” (2 Tim. 1: 13).
- They strive to please God, not men; they preach Christ, not themselves.
- **They are not in the entertainment business; rather, they are fishers of men in the soul-winning business.**
- Faithfully and courageously.
- Worthy preachers expose and oppose error; they rebuke sinners and condemn sin (John 8:44; Acts 8:20-23; 13:9-11).
- By doing their work well they glorify God.

CONCLUSION

NO UNIVERSAL ORGANIZATION

- Christ’s church may well be described as a monarchy.
- Other than Jesus, the absolute monarch and head of the " church (Ephesians 1:20-23), who possesses all legislative authority (Matt. 28:18), the New Testament authorizes no organization for the universal church.
- **In the absence of any Biblical authority for organizing the church universal, any assumption of authority beyond the local congregation constitutes a government not sanctioned by the scriptures.**
- In his divine wisdom, God did not permit ambitious men to wield undue influence on the church universal.
- Jesus emphasized humility and service to others as character traits of those great in his kingdom.
- **Ambitious men seeking power over others through an organizational structure greater than the local church runs contrary to greatness as God sees it.**

LOCAL ORGANIZATION

- The scriptures, however, do present God’s plan for the organization of the local church.
- That all things might be done decently and in order.
- He commands the selection of a plurality of men in each congregation to serve as shepherds of the flock.
- **These men are scripturally described as elders (1 Peter 5:1), bishops (Phil. 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1), the presbytery (1 Tim. 4:14), overseers (Acts 20:28, KJV), or pastors (Eph. 4:11).**

- The divine wisdom of God was demonstrated in making each local church self-governing under Christ.
- Each was to have its own leaders.
- In Acts 20, Luke records Paul's meeting with the elders of the church in Ephesus (v. 17). Paul gave these men the solemn charge to "Take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops. (v . 28).
- When writing to the church in Philippi, Paul addressed his letter "to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Phil. 1: 1).
- To Titus, Paul said, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge" (Titus 1:5). Each church had its own elders.
- **The elders in each locality had specific responsibilities /to teach, oversee, rule, and be examples to the flock of God under their care.**
- Each congregation functioned with a plurality of elders. The elders in one city, or congregation, had no responsibility or authority in another city.
- **Likewise, all elders in a congregation had equal responsibility and authority in that congregation.**
- The organization God planned for his church was simple.
- A plurality of men qualified by character and experience (1 Tim. 3:1-7) were to be chosen (Titus 1: 5).
- **The plan did not include a modern "single pastor" system.**
- **It did not include any individual with authority and responsibility beyond his own congregation. Bot in Ghana.**
- It did not include a "bishop" elevated above the other elders or bishops.
- Other forms of government such as are now practiced by many religious organizations with their synods, general assemblies, councils, conferences, presbyteries and the like did not develop suddenly.
- The departure from the New Testament pattern in organization began early in the history of the church and has gradually evolved into the many forms of organization used today.
- **However, any deviation from the New Testament pattern must be rejected for what it is — a deviation.**

TODAY'S PLEA

Churches of Christ today plead for a return to the organization of the church of the New Testament. Jesus Christ is the absolute monarch and sole legislator. **A plurality of elders with equal authority and responsibility in each congregation and with no authority beyond their local congregation oversee the affairs of the local**

church under Jesus, the chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4). All children of God throughout the world are brothers and sisters in Christ — with no clergy or laity distinctions — but each congregation must be autonomous, working within the framework of the simple organization described in the New Testament.

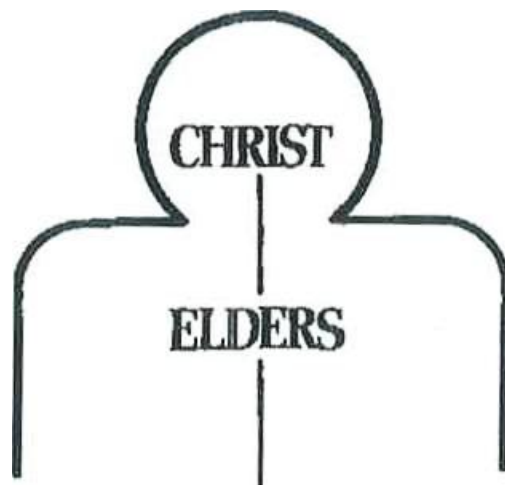
UNITY OF COMMAND

A Subordinate reports to one officer receives instructions from one officer

In the church – members receives directions from the elders not the preachers

MATERIALS CONSULTED

1. Church of Christ - Edward Wharton
2. Why I am a member of the Church of Christ - Levoy Brownlow
3. The church everybody is asking about – Wendel Winkler
4. The church in History AD 100 – 1517, Jones.
5. sound Doctrine II - Whiteside
6. Introducing the Church of Christ
 - a) self-governing under Christ, Wallace Alexander
 - b) Overseen by Biblical Elders - Ray A. Turner
 - c) Preachers in the Lord's Church - A. Kay Gardner
7. Friendly Talks to Elders by E.H. IJAMS



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LESSON 3
ARISE AND REBUILD
(PLANTING, WATERING AND GROWING THE CHURCH)

P. V. Agyare

PROLOGUE

The incarnation of Jesus Christ (Jn 1:14), His ministry and agony on the cross that culminated in His victory over death and Satan, fulfilled all the prophecies about the Church, the designed, medium of God to salvation. Notable among the age-old prophecies beginning with Gen: 3:15, are Dan 2:35, 44 and Isa 2:1-4. While Isaiah described the Church in vision as the most elevated mountain, (Kingdom) above all Hills, Daniel saw a rock smashing the royal statue and becoming a huge mountain that filled the whole earth.

Prophetic Implication of Isa 2: 1-4 and Dan 2:23,44

These prophetic visions about the Kingdom simply imply that, the Church, built by the Lord himself, had the utmost purpose of reaching out to the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:4-5, 7-8), beginning from Jerusalem and then to the entire District of Judea, and eventually to Samaria, and then to all nations – LK 24:46 – 48. Matt. 28: 18, 19

They Would Not Move Away From Jerusalem

When the Church started in Jerusalem, which was only a strategic fulcrum for the rapid spread of the Gospel of salvation, on the Day of Pentecost, (Acts 2:1) the leadership, and the Apostles were happy to observe the fast growth of the Church from 3,000 and more, increasing further to over 5,000 disciples and becoming a great multitude Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14. The Lord however was not pleased about that. That was not His intention when He promised to build His Church, in Matt. 16: 18.

In his appointed way therefore, he made the disciples flee from Jerusalem to Judea and to Samaria, preaching the Good News of the Church as they travelled along. Acts 8:1. So the Sauline persecution worked out Jesus' intention of the Church, just as God scattered the people from the tower of Babel to all parts of the earth, when they would not want to move away. Gen. 11:7-9

At Caesarea in Philippi where Jesus promised to build His Church, and at the house of Cornelius, the faithful Centurion, the Gentiles also had their first taste of the Holy Spirit, confirming their eventual inclusion in God's plan of salvation to all mankind. Acts 10:1

Why Did The Jews Have To Rise And Rebuild?

In Nehemiah Chapter 2 and verse 18, when he told them about his intention, that is, the need to construct the once imposing wall around the city of Jerusalem, the remnants in unison, replied, "Let us start rebuilding" (NIV). Why did they have to rebuild the wall? The stubbornness of their fathers had resulted in God, using His servant Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 27:6) to destroy the city, with its wall in ruins.

Why Do We Have, To Rise Up And Rebuild Today?

We in Ghana got to know of the one True Church in 1960. Though not too popular during its first two decades in Ghana, it gained grounds and gradually became the fastest growing Church in the 80s. That was when the preachers, though not very academically endowed, nor were they financially sound, loved to see the Lord's Church growing and spreading speedily. There were not many scholars as well, in the Church. That was when the entire congregation would move immediately after worship, to a specified community to evangelize; no one excluded himself or herself; even pregnant women, as well as nursing mothers were on board to massive house-to-house witnessing.

What do we see today? The reverse is the case. The apathy on the part of some preachers, the entire leadership and the congregation as a whole, has crippled the evangelistic and Church planting efforts, resulting in a general slack of growth numerically and spiritually, of the once vibrant Church in Ghana. Christians today, don't find it worrying to absent themselves from Church meetings, or coming to Church late. Read Isa. 50:2. Evening assemblies have come to a halt, almost everywhere in the Churches in Ghana today, especially Sunday evening meetings. The evening meetings do not only enable absentees from morning sessions to partake of the Holy Communion, but also served as a platform for up-and-coming leaders to be trained before eventually taking part in the order of service (Worship) at Sunday morning. All these sum up to the reason why we must rise up to rebuild and stop recounting our past glories, for after all Paul said we must forget the past and surge forward. Philip 3:13-14

The Church, The seed

Jesus, in Matt 13:31,32 likened the Kingdom of Heaven, the Church to the mustard seed which a man planted in his field, which is the world. Though smaller than other seeds, it grows to become the biggest garden plant, turning into a big tree, serving as abode for birds of the air. So, like the visions of Daniel (2:35-44) and Isaiah (2:1-4) Jesus was revealing that, the Church, when established, will grow to fill the entire world, for all people to flow into it for salvation.

In the case of a local congregation, efforts must be made consciously, to extend the good news of the Church to communities both far and wide.

Who Is To Accomplish This Task?

Primarily, it is the responsibility of the Church to plant branch Churches within its catchment areas, in order to ease the stress of brethren who commute from far to attend meetings. That is why in the perfect wisdom of the Lord, he made some to be Apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors and teachers so that every member with special gifts can, together with the others, plant Churches and water them to grow as the Lord requires Eph. 4:11-13

Like Begets Like

For the sound doctrine of the Church to remain safe and intact from adulterations, it is always expedient that a Church of Christ plants an infant Church, that looks exactly like the mother congregation, in every respect. In a typical scenario, during the time of the Apostles, a disciple called Apollos initiated an evangelistic effort that gave birth to

a body of faithful brothers in Ephesus. As many as twelve men were baptized to start a Church. Apollos, as we know, knew only of John's baptism. The simple meaning to this is that, if Paul had not been to them, the twelve would constitute a Church which may look similar to the Lord's, but vary from the very fundamental step to salvation, which is baptism in the name of Jesus. Acts 19:1-6. Is the "One Cup Movement" a near example?

That was why, after Philip, evangelizing the district of Samaria and winning souls for Christ, "sent word" to Jerusalem. That was also why Peter and John did not hesitate to go and bless the efforts of Philip. The same should be the case today. It is encouraging that individual members who find themselves in communities where the Church is not available, endeavor to plant one there. However, after the grounds work have been done, word must reach the parent congregation, or any nearby Church to formally inaugurate it for the few new converts to know that they belong to a bigger and glorious family in Christ.

The Role of The Preacher

The preacher, with his team of leaders, will have to set up an effective evangelistic team of brethren who are talented in preaching the Gospel and planting new Churches, to lead ventures to spread the Lord's Church, by means of public preaching programs, as well as personal or house-to-house witnessing.

A Simple Way of Church Planting

A very simple way of spreading the Church is the peaceful permission and inauguration of a zonal branch of the mother congregation to be an autonomous young Church. This facilitates regular attendance of members concerned to Church gatherings.

This, sometimes is faced with several challenges, especially where the preacher and some leaders usually do not love to see a very good number of the total population departing to establish a newly planted Church. The major reason for such an unfortunate situation simply is that, a reduction of the size of population of the Church may result in a drastic fall of Church revenue. This should not be countenanced at all, since the will of the Lord must surpass any parochial interest.

Nurturing The Young Church

Much is the joy of family and loved ones when a child is born. This joy, however, becomes perfect only if the baby is well nursed and properly catered for. 1Pet. 2:1-2. Paul said of the Corinthian Church that he, Paul, planted the seed and Apollos watered it, but God, it was, who made it grow. 1Cor. 3:6. In this way, he categorized the Church planting business into three distinct stages, namely, Planting, Watering and Growing. When an infant Church is born, it becomes the onerous responsibility of the mother Church to ensure that, it is well fed and well nurtured until it gains roots to stand firm on its own. Otherwise, the effort becomes vain.

Salient Points To Note

The young Church must not be left all alone to fend for itself, like the unlucky baby

antelope who is deserted by its mother as soon as it lands on the ground. This is known in an Akan parlance as “Otwee Awo”. To well nurture the young Church therefore, the following must be noted:

1. The young Church can or may be temporarily begin at the house of a prominent member, in a classroom or even, under a shady tree. Rom.16:3-5, 1Cor. 16:19. Such a situation should not be lasting. This is because, prospective visitors look around first, before considering the need for salvation. Since the young Church cannot afford to build a befitting place of worship, the mother Church must seriously support in this direction. Is this the case today?
2. At infant stages, the Church may be taken care of by key leaders of the mother congregation. Provisions, however, must be made to employ a permanent preacher as quickly as practicable, to effectively nurture the young Church to grow steadily, spiritually and numerically. Talented and loyal members of the Church who are willing to serve as ministers of the Lord’s Church should be enrolled by the Church, in the biweekly modules of the Ghana Bible College, for example, to avail them of professional experience. Preferably, those who are already, self-sufficient such as teachers or artisans, will be best for this purpose so that, their entire burdens of life will not be shouldered by the young Church. Many Churches of Christ here in the Adansi Area benefited immensely from the satellite Campus of the Ghana Bible College at Asokwa, a few years ago.
3. To meaningfully nurture an infant congregation, a well-planned edification program must be instituted. A body of God-fearing young men and women must be commissioned and adequately supported to “walk among” the young converts to spur them on to love and good works. Heb. 10:24,25. Eph 2:10.
4. Churches planted in rural communities must be treated with much more love and tenderness than those of urbanized areas. Visitation must be intensive here. The visiting team must be backed financially to enable them offer a little assistance to the needy. This, therefore, requires that, members with benevolent heart be part of any body set aside for visitation. Acts 4:34-35. Benevolence was a key factor in the speedy growth numerically, of the first century Church. If it is practiced very well today, it will boost the progress of the Churches.

The Growing Church

After planting the Church and watering it to take grounds firmly, the next stage is helping it to grow steadily, spiritually and numerically. Numerical growth makes the church lively and beautiful. It also makes Heaven rejoice because of the so many people who repent and are baptized Lk. 15:7-10

Sustaining The Steady Growth In Numbers

The following factors must be noted in order to maintain a steady growth in numbers:

1. Every member must consciously present himself at every Church meeting.
Heb. 10:25; 1:6;2:1
2. Proper attendance records must be kept in order to spot absentees at every meeting for a quick check on him or her.
The Church will then know the cause of their absence for an action to be taken if necessary. 1Sam. 20;25-27.
3. God is happy meeting many people when He visits His church. Isa. 50:2.

A Sad Situation

In almost all rural congregations, we find many more unbaptized members sometimes, than the baptized ones. What is the cause of this sad trend? It is simple: so many “couples” have problems with their marriages. Proper marital rites have not been performed, a situation which deter them from being baptized. The Church or an individual who is willing must “bail” them out of a hindrance like this. Immediately after baptism, they and, may be, the children they have had during their extramarital relation can be baptized to the glory of Christ

Spiritual Growth

In John 4:23,24, Jesus said that, a time was coming where sincere worshippers of God must worship Him in spirit and in truth. In Matthew 22:14, He again said that, although many are called, a few are chosen. Also in Matt. 7:21-23, he said that, not anyone who just mentions the Lord’s name will be saved but those who seriously do the will of God. This implies that, all members of the Church must endeavor to be very sincere to God, and to sanctify themselves, to avoid worldliness. They must think about pleasing the Lord all the time. Ps. 1:1.2.

Bible teachers therefore should seriously teach the members to;

1. Know that God is Spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.
2. Know that God is present everywhere, He is all knowing and Almighty Ps.
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3. Know that when God gets hold of you, there is no one who can deliver you out of His Hands De. 32:39
In fact, knowing and believing these divine attributes of God will instill a holy fear of God in them. This will help them to be careful as they try to worship Him in spirit and in sincerity, and lead holy lives.
4. Have death and judgement constantly in mind, in order not to get wayward.
5. Love God and Jesus with a whole-hearted devotion, by obeying His commandment. Mk. 12:30-31; Lk. 6:46
6. Love their fellow Christians as themselves in all sincerity. Jn 13:14, Rm 12:9.
This will make every member feel at home among the entire brotherhood.

7. Be caring for one another. Rom. 12:15.
8. Live by the Spirit and mortify the passions of this mortal body Rm 8:13,14; Gal. 5;16-19; Col 3:5-9
9. Be Heaven-bound all the time. Col. 3:2; Jn 14:1-3.
10. Crave for the sincere milk of the word to enable them grow spiritually. 1Pet 2:1-2

Epilogue

For the Body of Christ to fully grow to attain the whole measure of the fullness of Christ, all hands must be on deck. Evangelists must evangelize effectively availing themselves of such technological gadgets as the phone and the internet, the radio and television, which can help spread the message fast. Teachers of the Church everywhere must be knowledgeable to teach nothing but the truth. While preachers proclaim the whole counsel of God. Acts 20:27. All members must exhibit all talents given them by the Holy Spirit to facilitate the overall mission of the Church. Eph. 4:7-14.

All workers in the vineyard must be totally committed to the service of our Lord, just as one would work in his own field. There should not be any sense of malice, slander, hypocrisy or envy among the brotherhood. We must rather learn to appreciate each other's effort just as Peter praised Paul's gift of wisdom and understanding with which he wrote insightful letters to all the saints everywhere 2Pt 3:15-16. In 1Cor. 3:5-8. Paul also acknowledged Apollos' evangelistic effort without claiming all the glory of the success. In this way there will not be contentions within the leadership, or among the members, a situation which will result in peace that promotes effective Church growth.

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LESSON 4
BUILDING BRIDGES IN THE CHURCH
Shadrack Oppong

INTRODUCTION

In any war, one of the first things the enemy will try to do is to build or take out bridges. A bridge is a structure carrying a pathway or roadway over a depression, chasm or obstacle. Bridges provide easy access for people and supplies to remote or hard-to-reach areas. Building a bridge in the churches therefore refers to ensuring connectivity and relationship with brethren in the Lord. Obuasi and Adansi area have a great number of churches but how connected are we to one another? This connectivity or bridge may be “intra” thus within one congregation or “inter,” thus between brethren in two or several local congregations. Human dynamics and personality differences are by themselves enough chasms in human relationships. Without bridges over such chasms, we stand no chances of overcoming the enemy. Jesus prayed for unity among His followers (**John 17:11; 20-21**), where each one can be connected with one another whether in the same congregation or others. It cannot be overemphasized that what the devil, (our only enemy), seeks is the opportunity to scatter the sheep that we may be isolated into our own islands. When Nehemiah desired to build the wall of Jerusalem for Jehovah God, he first built a bridge to God and to his fellow Jews. In this lesson, we shall consider two main things; **1. Matters That Create Chasms**, and **2. Materials to Build Bridge**.

I. MATTERS THAT CREATE CHASMS

God is not happy when His people are divided and scattered. Jeremiah wrote, “Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!” says the Lord. Therefore, thus says the Lord God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: “You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings,” says the Lord (**Jeremiah 23: 1,2**). God wants His people to be united and not divided. However, sometimes obstacles that foster division and chasms emerge, making a great gulf between brethren for whom Christ died. Let us consider some of these obstacles that promote chasm in the brotherhood.

A. DESIRE FOR POWER

The struggle for power has **never** promoted united in any group in the history of mankind.

The church at Corinth had the more severe records on division in the scriptures. Why was it so? Because there was a struggle for dominance. The factions of “I am of Paul, I am of Apollo, I am of Cephas, and I am of Christ, are just ingredients of disunity. Paul was disappointed about how much such division had weakened the Corinthian church (**1 Cor. 1:10-12**). Individuals like Diotrefes are example of people who desired preeminence. John acknowledged that such a desire did not create unity and

brotherliness (**3 John 1:9**). Sometimes, we have elders, committee leaders, preachers, etc. who get entangled in the sin of pride. They forget the Lord's instructions and desires to be served instead of serving (**John 13:12-17**).

This is a situation that needs a bridge from one member to another. The struggle for power is a phenomenon that are seen in political arena, workplace, in schools etc. Jesus warned us not to entertain such things in our midst (**Luke 22:25-27**). When people's desire for such power leads the way, the end results are chasms among families, friends, and sympathizers. This is a matter that calls for a bridge.

B. SELFISHNESS

Paul in his epistle to the Philippians expounded to them the Holy Spirit's desire that we all live selfless lives. That we consider others first (**Phil. 2:3-4**). If we do not consider other first, but our own wishes and bellies, we would teach things that divide us. Paul warned the Romans to mark those and withdraw from them (**Rom. 16:17-18**). This creates a great chasm and sometimes, we have to build a bridge to bring back such people into the fold.

C. BITTERNESS AND STRIFE

There are occasions where strife arises among brethren with a potential of creating separation among brethren. Bitterness can be harmful to the harmony and unity of any group. Chasm happened in the lives of Cain and Abel (Gen. 4), Abraham and Lot (Gen. 14), Joseph and his brethren (Gen. 37; 50), David and Saul (1 Sam. 17-18), Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15). Brethren, in all these examples, the fundamental cause was bitterness and strife. These two identical twins have the potency of destroying brotherhood and families. We shall revisit some of these accounts and study how they built bridges to overcome them. Paul warned the early church at Ephesus to guard against bitterness prescribing antidotes to it which we will discuss momentarily (**Eph. 4:31-32**).

II. MATERIALS FOR BUILDING BRIDGES

Now let us turn our attention to how to build bridges. We shall consider what materials to use in building the bridges and how to build them. David said "Behold, how good and how pleasant [it is] for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (**Psalms 133:1**). In fact, it is pleasant to be peacefully dwell with others of equal aim. But such requires effort from all to ensure unity. Like Nehemiah, we must inspire many to join us in building bridges amongst ourselves so that we can easily connect with one another.

A. WHAT MATERIALS SHOULD WE USE?

Note those who need such bridges are the lost, those who have turned from the truth, and the weak in the faith. So, with these in mind, what kind of bridge should we be willing to build. Having that knowledge would necessitate the materials to use. What Materials can we use to build the bridges?

1. Love

- a. **John 13:34-35** – Jesus said He was giving a new commandment, that they love one another. Why did Jesus say a new commandment, was this the first-time people were taught to love others? No! God commanded the people of Israel to love their neighbors (**Lev. 19:17-18**). So then, what new commandment about love was Jesus giving us today?
- b. This new commandment was for us to love the brethren just as the Godhead loved us. Jesus loved us and demonstrated by willingly laying Himself down for us. God the Father demonstrated His love by sacrificing Jesus (**Isa. 53:3-7; 10-11**).
 - i. **Rom. 5:5-8** --- The Love that transcends comprehension that a righteousness willingly dies for a wicked (**John 10:16-17**).
 - ii. **John 3:16-17** --- God gave His Son, He come down to earth, take took a body, flesh and blood that He should be slaughtered for our pardon (**Heb. 10:5-10; 9:22**).
 - iii. **1 John 3:14-18** (emp. 16) --- He laid down His life for us, and we must lay down our lives for the brethren.
 - iv. **Acquila and Priscilla – did same – Rom. 16:3-4**.
- c. This is the new commandment, that we must be prepared to lay down our lives for the brethren. Will you sacrifice or be destroyed because of one soul? (**1 Cor. 13:3; 16:14**).

2. Mercy

The next material to use is mercifulness.

- a. **Mat. 5:7** – Blessed are the merciful. Are you a merciful person?
- b. **James 2:13** – God will have no mercy on those who had no mercy on others. On the day of judgement, do you want God to go strictly by the statutes or be merciful to you?
- c. **Mat. 7:1-5** (cf. **John 7:24**) – God wants us to judge righteously. To assess matters concerning our faith and contend for the faith (Jude 3; Rom. 16:17-18). We need to know how to treat others right and have compassion for our brethren in all situations.
- d. **1 Pet. 3:8-9** --- We need to show much compassion and be tenderhearted to our brethren and bridge over to one another. Isn't it sad, that brethren who use to be friends are no longer talking to each other? Where have our tenderheartedness gone?

3. Truth

- a. **1 Thess. 5:21** – We must test all teachings.
- b. **John 17:17** – The Word of God is the truth.
- c. **Jude 3** – We must defend the truth and expose lies but in love (cf. **Eph. 4:13-16**).
- d. **2 Cor. 13:8** – We can do nothing against the truth but for the truth. Let us build the bridge of connectivity to our brethren whiles ensuring doctrinal purity.

- e. **2 Thess. 2:15** – We must hold fast to the truth.
- f. **1 Cor. 1:10** - We have fellowship because we preach and teach the same things.

4. Forgiveness

- a. **Gen. 50:15-21** – Joseph forgave and prospered; He was generous to his brothers.
- b. **Acts 7:60** --- Forgiving spirit of Stephen. We must forgive and build bridges to connect to each other.
- c. **Luke 23:32-34** --- Jesus forgave those who mocked him
- d. **Mat. 18:21** – Jews by tradition believed that one should forgive 3 times. Peter made it seven (7) times to seek for Jesus’ commendation, but He said 70x7.
- e. **Mat. 18:23-35** – God will forgive if we forgive others their trespasses (cf. **Mat. 6:12-15**).
- f. What has any preacher or leader of member done to you that you cannot let go and forgive? Are you still holding grudges with anyone for something that happened years ago?

5. Encouragement

- a. **Gen. 13:7-12** - Abraham encouraged Lot to live in unity. “We be brethren!”
- b. **Philem 1:7** – Paul encouraged the brethren to live peacefully.
- c. **Acts 11:22-27** – Barnabas spirit must be cultivated in the church.
- d. **Acts 15:36-39** – Barnabas preachers and leaders are needed in the church.
- e. Speak encouragement and not disappointments etc.

B. HOW DO WE BUILD BRIDGES IN THE CHURCH?

1. Build a bridge by first Connecting to God.

We can only build bridges in the church if we first have a personal connection with God. God wants to have a relationship with His people. Our connection with one another is unprofitable if we have no relationship with God.

- a. Prayer
 - i. Bridge to God demands speaking daily to God - **James 5:15-18**
 - ii. Pray for many people and yourself without ceasing - **1 Thess. 5:17**
 - iii. Pray with all prayer - **Eph. 6:18-19**
 - iv. Paul highlighted the need to pray in all his epistles – Romans to Hebrews
- b. Bible Studies
 - i. Bridge to God demands hearing His Word - **Psa. 119:103-107**

- ii. Study the word with all joy and urgency- **2 Tim. 2:15**
- c. Conviction
 - i. Connecting with God demands conviction in God – **Rom. 8:31-39**
 - ii. Connecting with God demands utmost faith – **Heb. 11:6**
 - iii. Connecting with God demands that we go nowhere! – **John 6:66-68**

2. Having The Heart of Togetherness

- a. The sense of brotherliness (**Gen. 11:1-9**).
- b. If you are together, you can do whatever according to the will of God;
- c. They were United - one mindset, one desire.
- d. One Language - Clear Understanding.
- e. One Aim -To Build - to make a name though a bad one.
- f. We can have similar ideas of oneness but according to the will of God. God called us into the fellowship of His Son so we must be united (**1 Cor. 1:9-13a**). Look for the good of others before yourself (**Rom. 12:9-11. cf. Phil. 2:1-7**).

3. Having The Heart of a Willing Sacrifice

- a. Bridges in the church are built with: Human resources and Material resources.
- b. **1 Chron. 29:6-18** - The Joy of Giving to God.
- c. **2 Cor. 8:1-9**. - The mind of them that have given themselves first.
- d. **Exo. 36:3-7**. ... Moses begged the people to stop giving.
- e. **Psa. 100** - come before the Lord with a joyful heart to sacrifice.
- f. **Gal. 6:7-10** – Do Good for that also build bridges to the brethren.

4. Having The Heart that arises to Build

- a. **Neh. 2:11-16** - Purpose something to do for the Lord, plan something to do for God.
- b. **Neh. 2:16-17; 2 Cor. 9:5-7** - Motivate others to help build for God but in a willing fashion.
- c. **Haggai. 2:1-8**. - Don't stop God's work because of yours, All silver and gold are His.
- d. **Neh. 2:17-18** - We need to focus on God and involve God in the work (He is willing to help -**Rom. 8:31-32**)
- e. **Neh. 6:1-4; 8:4-6** - Let's not be distracted but get the work done!
- f. **2 Tim. 2:19-21** - Repent from Sin, Pray for forgiveness and become a vessel the Lord can use!

CONCLUSION

May we always listen to Christ's knocking and open the door. May we trust Him and build bridges that reach, unite, and heal all of God's children. There is so much power

when hearts are knit together in unity, and love towards one another. This is one work. It is God's work. It is so vital, that we all come together and work in love and unity. Let us continue building bridges in the churches of Christ located at Adansi area. God bless.

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