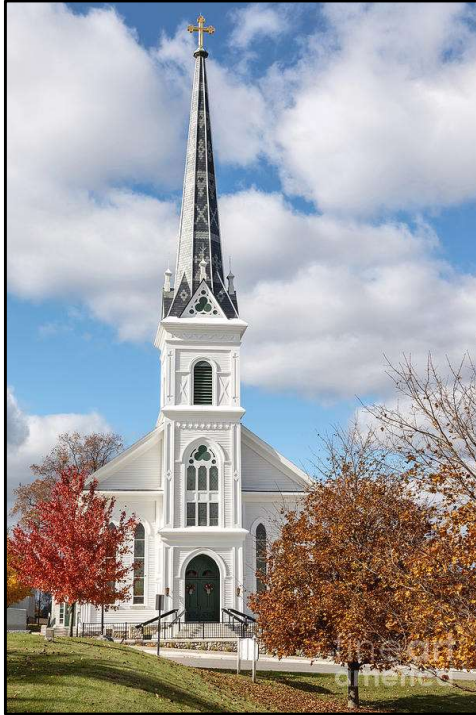






What are the differences in Church Polity?

Lots of new members over the last two years, thought we do a brief on why we do things the way we do.

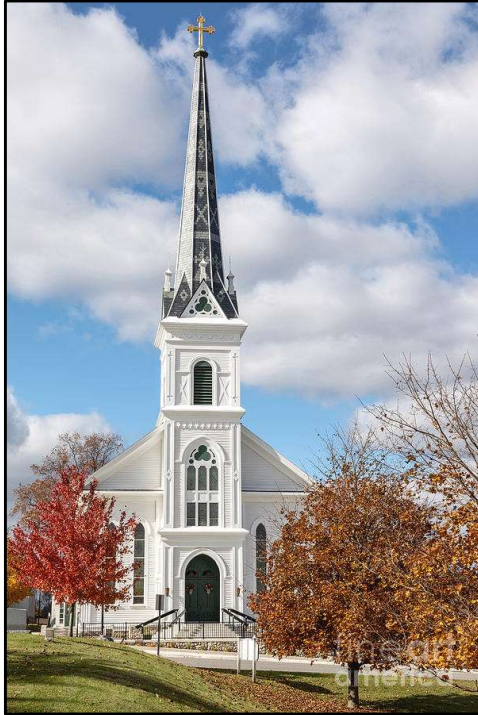


Church government

Church government (or sometimes **church polity**) is that branch of **ecclesiology** (study of the church) that addresses the organizational structure and hierarchy of the church. There are basically three types of church government that have developed in the various Christian denominations: the episcopal, the presbyterian, and the congregational.

<https://www.theopedia.com/church-government>

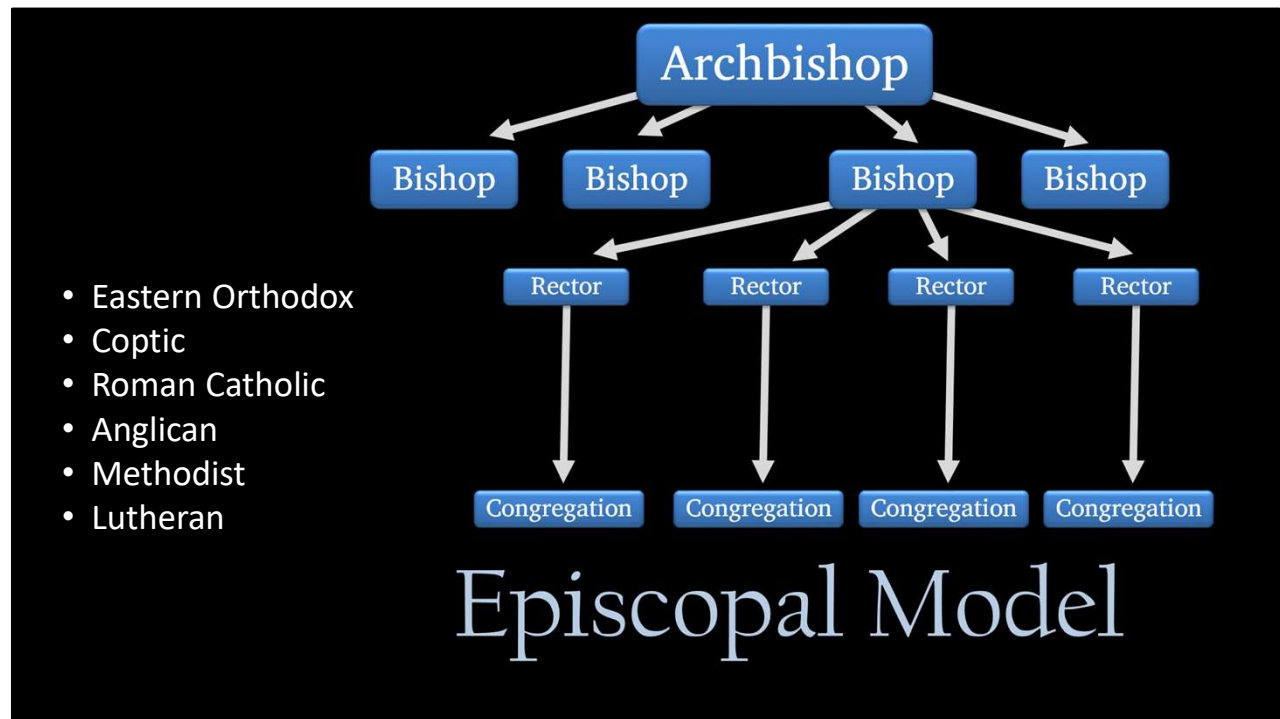
This is not a settled science, as is obvious in the fact we have so many different organizational structures in prominent denominations.



Episcopal

The episcopal form of government has been the polity of the Church catholic as early as Ignatius of Antioch, all the way down to the time of the Reformation. Advocates for an episcopal form of church government argue that the sheer fact that it went virtually uncontested until the time of the Reformation testifies to its claims of apostolicity, although not all contemporary episcopalian apologists argue from history rather than Scripture.

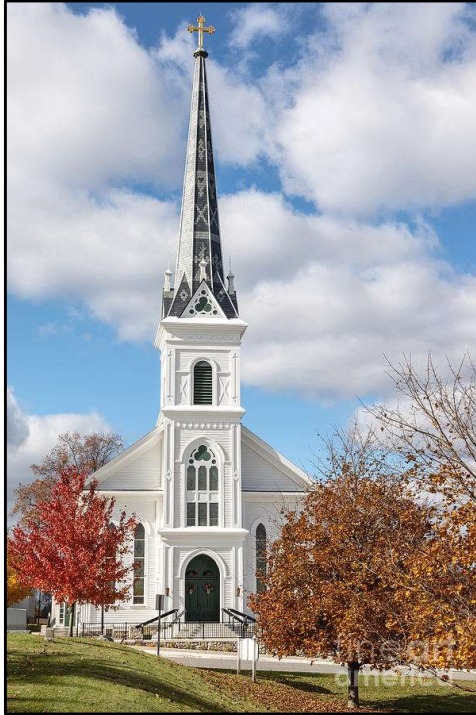
<https://www.theopedia.com/church-government>



This is the form of theocratic church/state religions. The Dark Ages of Roman Catholicism used this model of top-down control over the people.

When Henry the 8th broke from Catholicism, he formed the Church of England after the same model. King James used his bishops as a means of controlling his people. You were added to the roles at 8 days in your baptism. Mandatory membership, mandatory attendance, mandatory tithes.

We have had difficulty getting cooperation from many churches because their pastors aren't free to operate. They answer to higher ups which control what the pastor does.



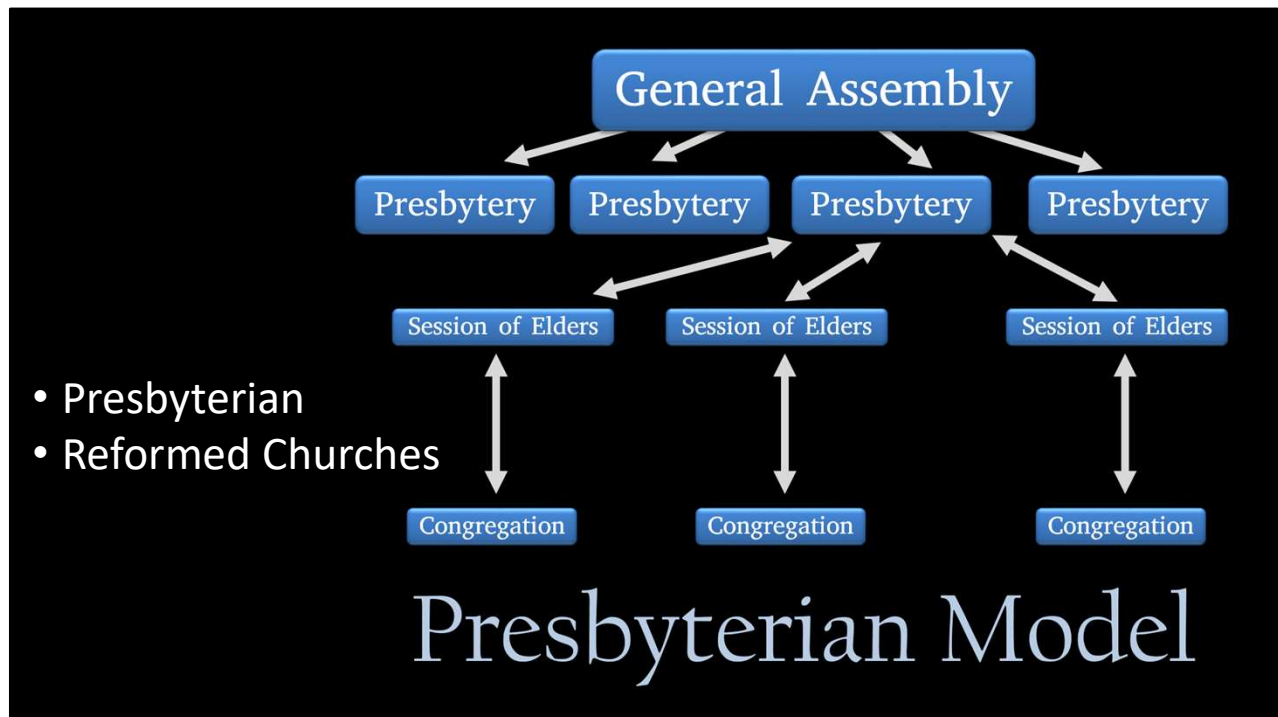
Presbyterian

Thus the "highest" authority in a presbyterian or reformed church (after Christ) is said to be the Elders of the church. Those elders are typically elected by the congregation on a periodic basis (usually a term lasts about 3 years). Sometimes elders are elected by the drawing of lots.

Those who are elected to office serve their terms as the spiritual/theological/moral/visionary leaders of the congregation. They also then participate in the governance of the regional body of churches (sometimes called a "classis") by sending delegates to a classis meeting on a regular basis. The "classical" level of church governance, in the presbyterian model, is not a higher authority, but rather is seen as a "delegated" authority--one that only derives its power from the acquiescence of the Elders at the local level.

In a similar manner, Classis will send a select number of delegates to a still broader body of authority, sometimes called a Synod.

<https://www.theopedia.com/church-government>

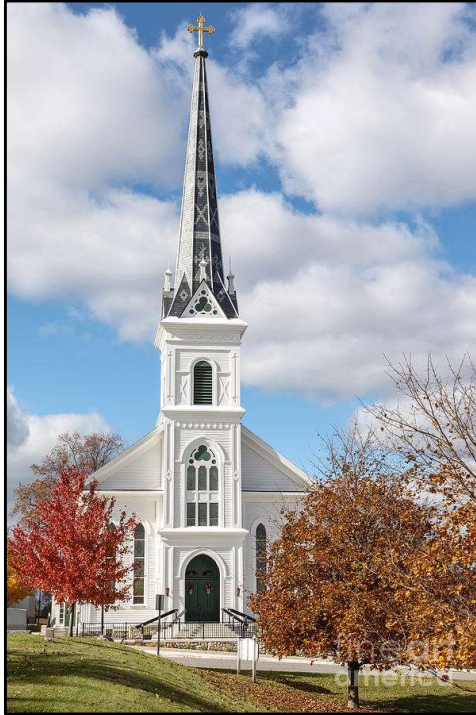


The pastor is the senior elder of the elder board.

Many Bible Churches and Baptist Churches use a similar model, except they are autonomous churches. Basically a Congregational self governing church led by elders.

This also can be troublesome as it can turn into a situation where the pastor works for the board and can be fired if he doesn't tow the line.

We had a friend that was one of us in spirit, but he was Church of Christ and the elders actually required him to turn in his message to them ahead of time for their review and approval.



Congregational

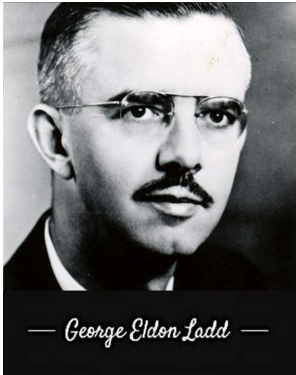
- **With Elder Leadership**
- **Congregational with Pastor Leadership**

Congregations organize on their own. They may belong to a convention, but do not answer to another higher authority like a bishop or pope.

Can be governed by a Board of Elders or by a Senior Pastor.

<https://www.theopedia.com/church-government>

This what most independent Baptist Churches are and many charismatic congregations follow this model.

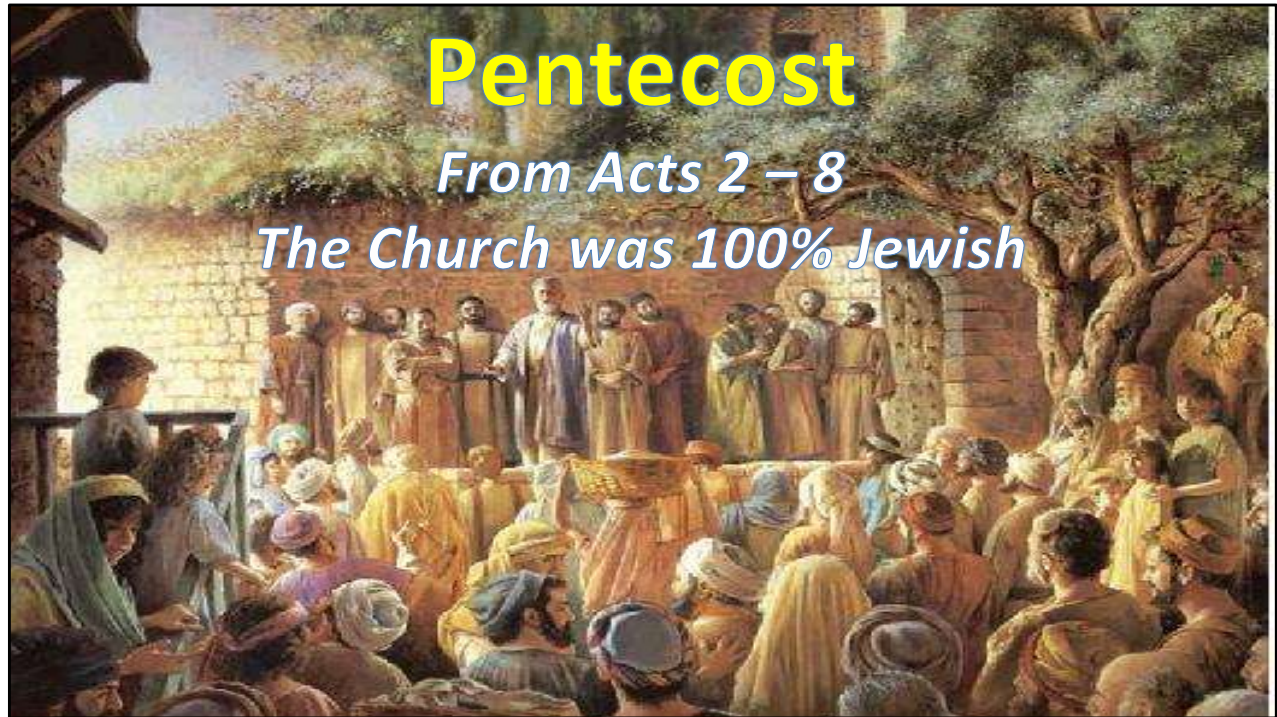


"It appears likely that there was no normative pattern of church government in the apostolic age, and that the organizational structure of the church is no essential element in the theology of the church."

George Eldon Ladd (July 31, 1911 - October 5, 1982 [1]) was a Baptist minister and professor of New Testament exegesis and theology at Fuller Theological Seminary

George Ladd, while I am not endorsing his beliefs, do appreciated his honest conclusion of this debate.

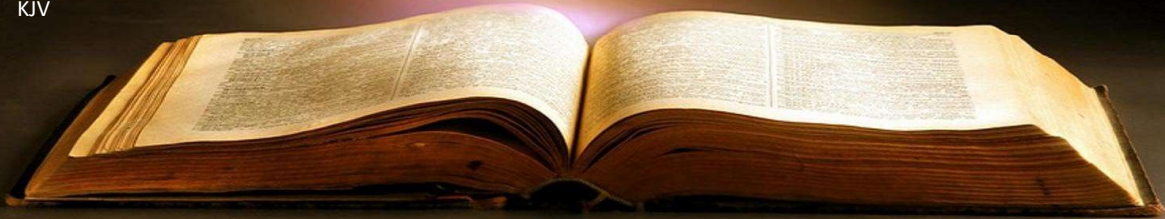
It's all about Jesus. Sadly, very few churches stay hot after the founding pastor = Bellevue (Adrian Rogers), Coral Ridge (d. James Kennedy)



Acts 24:5-6

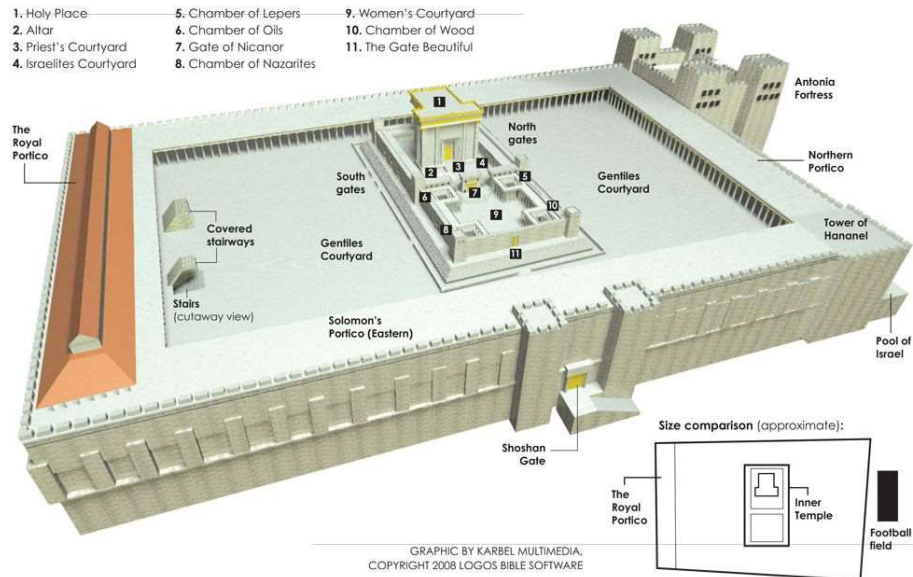
For we have found this man a pestilent fellow,
and a mover of sedition **among all the Jews
throughout the world**, and a ringleader **of the
sect of the Nazarenes**: Who also hath gone
about to profane the temple: whom we took,
and would have judged according to our law.

KJV



Herod's Temple

King Herod the Great began renovations on the Second Temple approximately 20-19 BC. The entire temple wasn't completed until approximately 62-64 AD, only to be destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

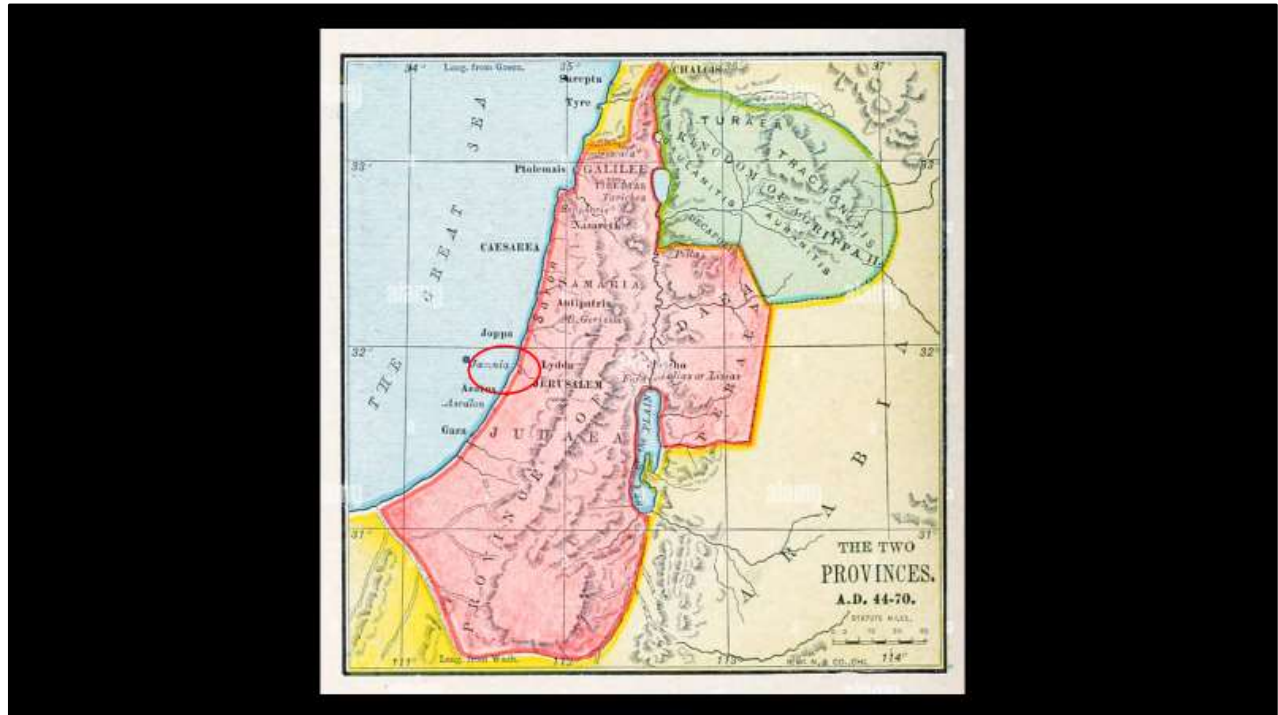




Luke 21:20-22

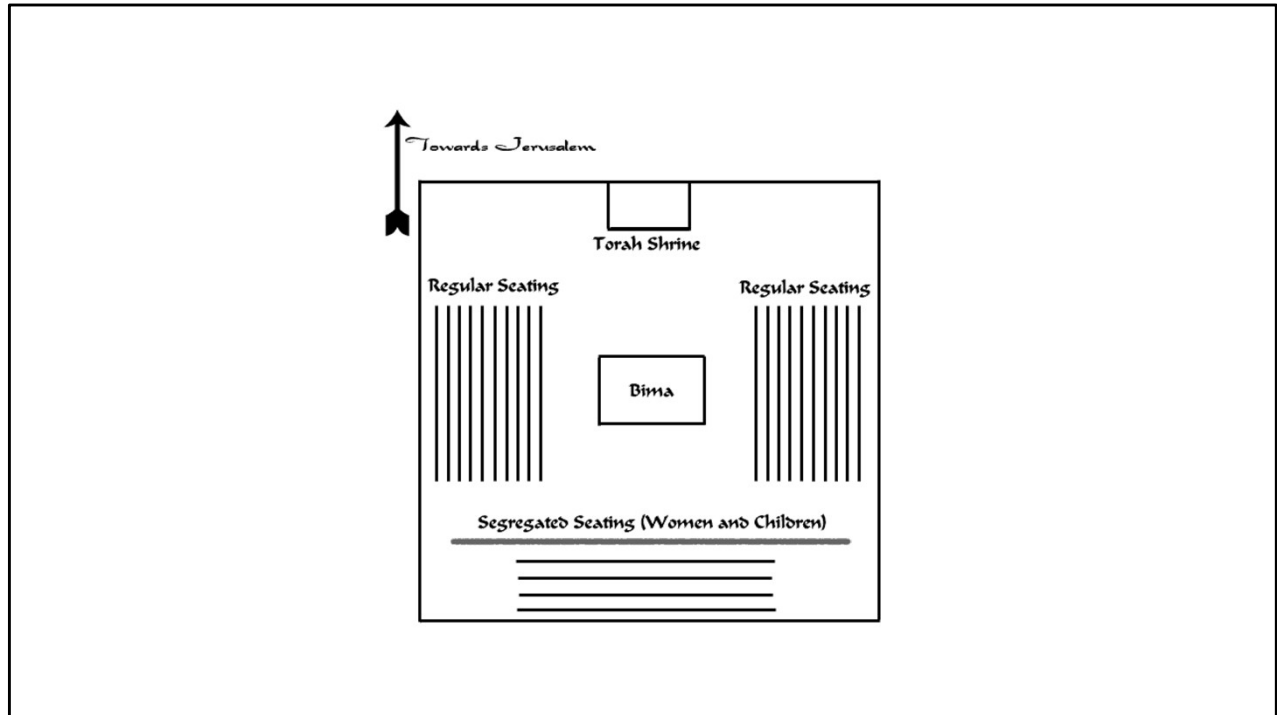
And **when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains;** and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

KJV



Synagogues had existed around the world beginning with the Babylonian captivity and the destruction of the Temple in 587BC.

After the Romans destroyed the Temple, the Sanhedrin moved to Jamnia and there began establishing the Traditions of Talmudic Judaism. Synagogues rather than supplementing Temple worship now had replaced it.



The Jewish Synagogue – facing towards Jerusalem, men and women are segregated (Zech. 12), the Ark held the Torah and the Prophets, the Bima held a chair and a lectern. The reading of Scripture would be standing at the Lectern and the preaching or teaching took place as the Rabbi sat.

In many communities, when the number of Jews was small, a large room in a private house was set apart for the purpose of synagogue. This also passed to the church. (Sketches on Jewish Social Life, Alfred Eidersham)

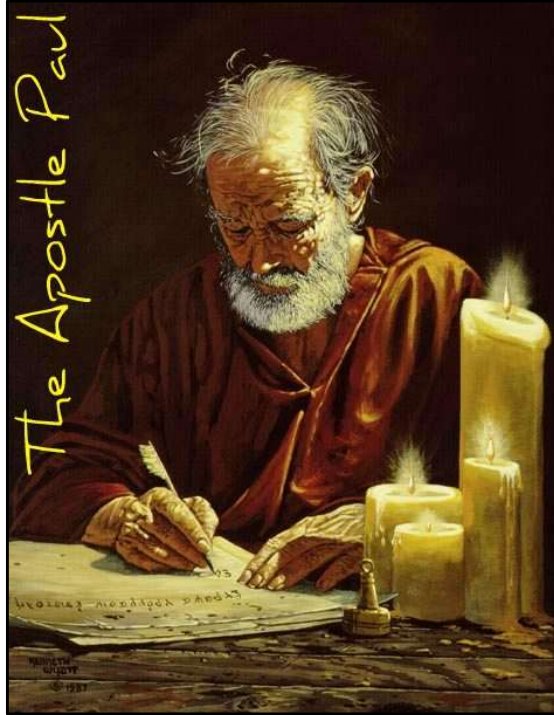
Matt 9:35

³⁵ And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, **teaching in their synagogues**, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Luke 4:16

¹⁶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, **as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.**



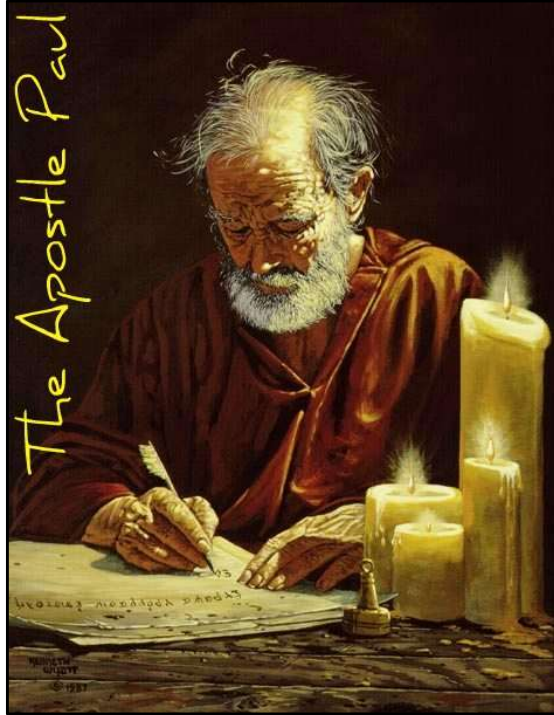


Acts 17:1-3

Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, **they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews:**

² And **Paul**, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,

³ Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

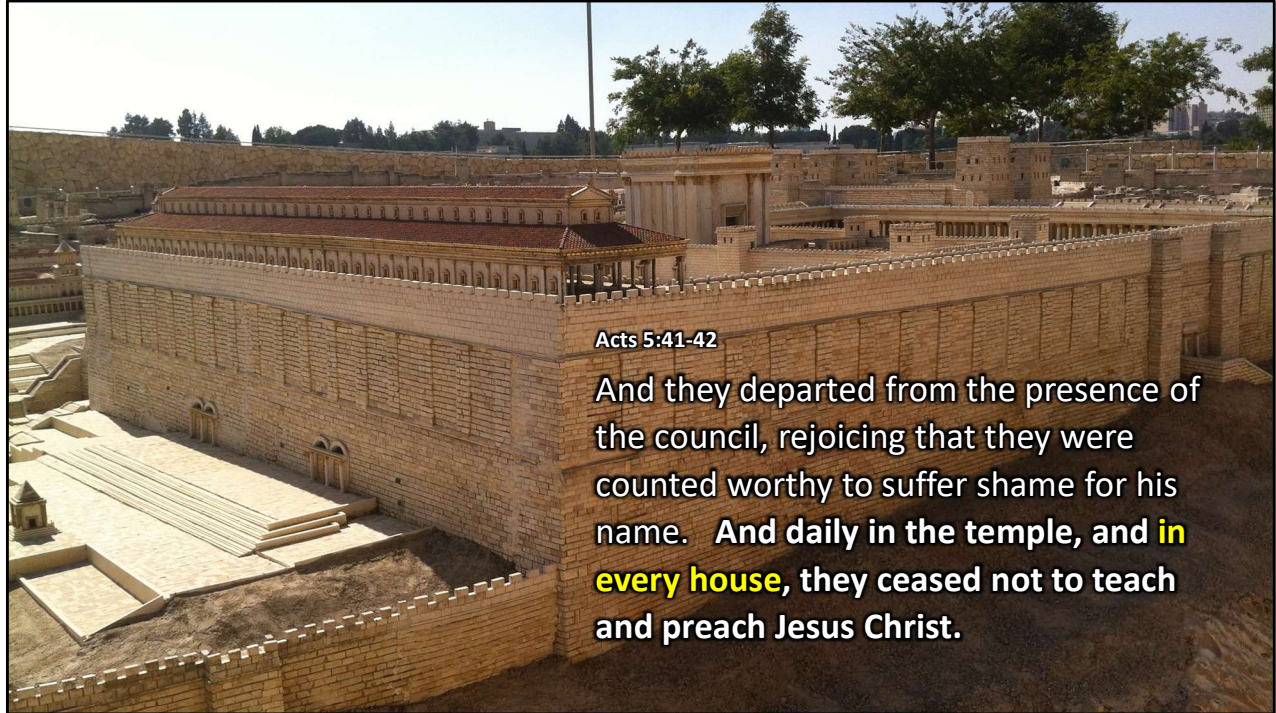


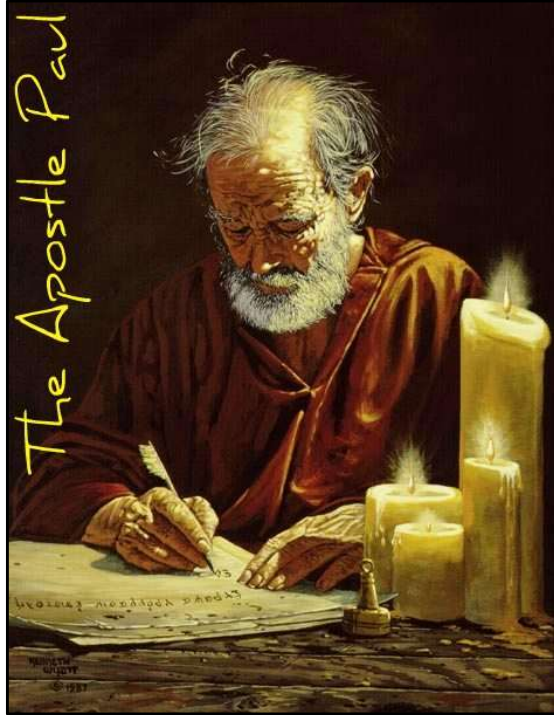
Eph 4:11-12

“And he gave some, **apostles**;
and some, **prophets**; and
some, **evangelists**; and
some, **pastors and teachers**;

12 For the perfecting of the
saints, for the work of the
ministry, for the edifying of
the body of Christ:





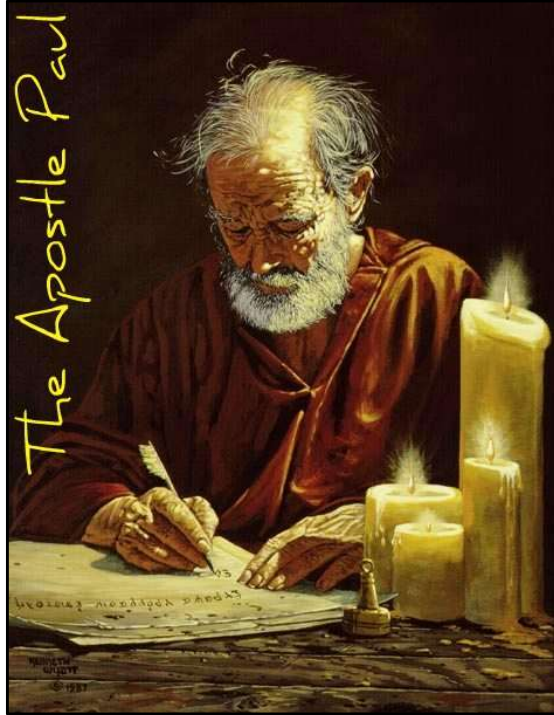


Rom 16:3-5

Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, **but also all the churches of the Gentiles.** Likewise **greet the church that is in their house.**

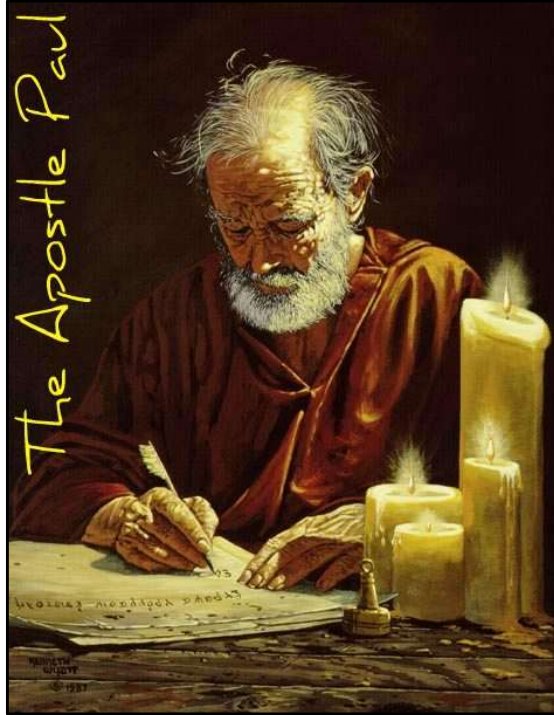
Rom 16:15-16

Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them. Salute one another with an holy kiss. **The churches of Christ salute you.**



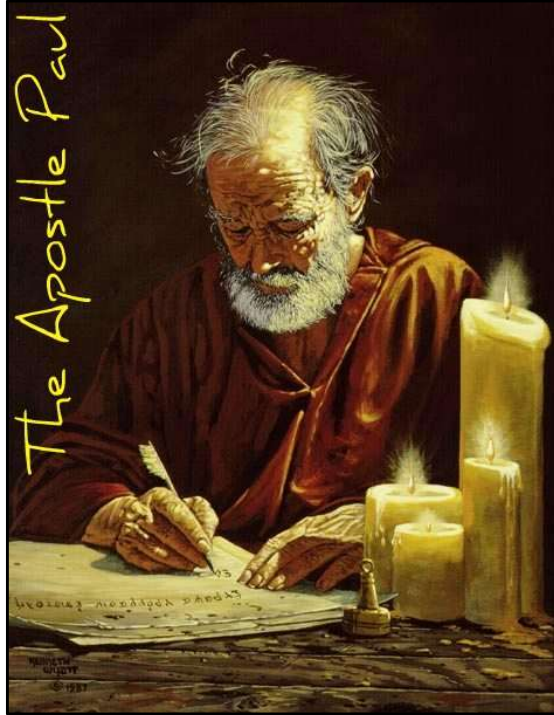
1 Cor 16:19

The churches of Asia salute you.
Aquila and Priscilla salute you
much in the Lord, **with the
church that is in their house.**



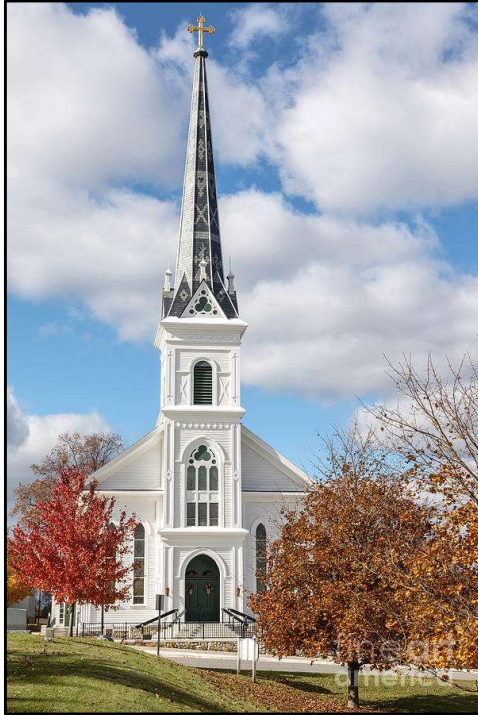
Col 4:15-16

Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, **and the church which is in his house.** And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.



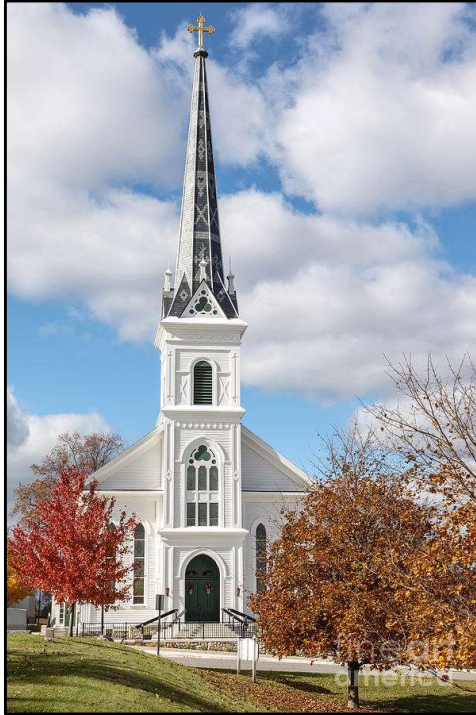
Philemon 1-2

Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ,
and Timothy our brother, unto
Philemon our dearly beloved,
and fellowlabourer, And to our
beloved Apphia, and **Archippus**
our fellowsoldier, and to the
church in thy house:



The Church was birthed out of Judaism.

Christians initially met at the Temple, synagogues and in house synagogues/churches.



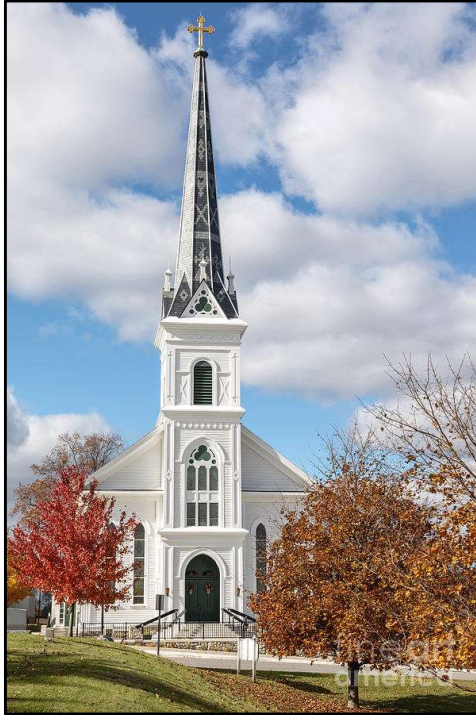
Church Offices

1 Tim 3:2-6

- ² A **bishop** then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;
- ³ Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;
- ⁴ One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;
- ⁵ (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)
- ⁶ Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

NT:1985 ἐπίσκοπος **episkopos** (ep-is'-kop-os); from NT:1909 and NT:4649 (in the sense of NT:1983); a superintendent, i.e. Christian officer in genitive case charge of a (or the) church (literally or figuratively):

KJV - bishop, overseer.



Church Offices

¹ Tim 3:8-12

⁸ Likewise must the **deacons** be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

⁹ Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

¹⁰ And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

¹¹ Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

¹² Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

^[NT:1249] δῆκονος **diakonos** (dee-ak'-on-os); probably from an obsolete **diako** (to run on errands; compare ^[NT:1377]); an attendant, i.e. (genitive case) a waiter (at table or in other menial duties); specially, a Christian teacher and pastor (technically, a deacon or deaconess):

KJV - deacon, minister, servant.

Birtherd in Acts 6



ELDERS

Were just that. They were respected for their age and experience.

The rabbis made it clear that every age group—from five years of age to one hundred—has its special function within the community: “At five years old [one is ready] for the study of Scripture, at ten for the Mishnah, at thirteen for [the fulfilling of] the commandments, at fifteen for the Talmud, at eighteen for marriage, at twenty for the pursuit [of a livelihood], at thirty [man reaches] full strength, at forty full understanding, at fifty able to give counsel, at sixty for old age [i.e., for to be an elder], at seventy for gray hairs, at eighty [his survival reflects] special strength, at ninety for a bent body, and at one hundred he is as good as dead and passed away and ceased from the world” (Abot 5: 21).

Marvin R. Wilson

Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith

Elders were literally “older and wiser.” Rabbinic tradition held that a man reached full strength at 30, full understanding at 40, and able to give counsel at 50. Greeks and Romans prized youth and strength, the Hebrews prized the wisdom of old age.



Acts 14:23

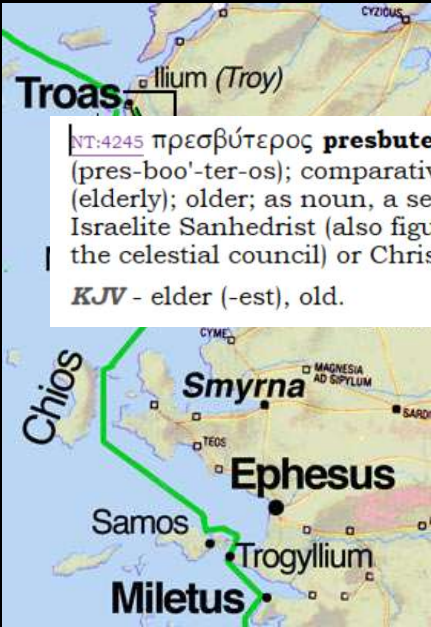
²³ And when they had ordained them **elders** in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

NT:4245 πρεσβύτερος **presbuteros**
(pres-boo'-ter-os); comparative of presbus (elderly); older; as noun, a senior; specifically, an Israelite Sanhedrist (also figuratively, member of the celestial council) or Christian "presbyter":
KJV - elder (-est), old.

Elders – Responsible mature leadership

What offices? Bishop/Overseer and Deacons.

The Church Leadership.



The map shows the Aegean Sea with a green line indicating Paul's route. It starts at Troas, goes south to Miletus, and then west to Ephesus. Other locations marked include Chios, Smyrna, Samos, Trogyllium, and various islands like Cyzicus, Cyme, Magnesia, and Sardis.

16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he did not wish to spend the time in Jerusalem; he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the **elders** of the church.

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(Read)

Paul had missed Passover. He was dead set on getting back to Jerusalem with this love offering by Pentecost. So Paul couldn't afford to stop in Ephesus for he knew that when word got out there was no way it would be a quick stop.

So he sailed to Miletas and sent for the "Elders" (presbuteros). Not bishops or deacons, but the "elders." Could be one big church or many house churches or both.

Paul wanted to meet with the pastors in Ephesus. (Next Slide)



Jewish Style of Leadership

Moses
and his 70
along with Aaron.



High Priest and the Sanhedrin

Acts 15:1-2

And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.



About 20 years after the ascension. About 1-2 years after Paul wrote Galatians.



3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.

5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;

9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.



About 13 years ago

V. 8 – Another indication that they (Cornelius) had tongues of fire above their heads when they were filled with the Holy Ghost

V. 11 - WE KNOW how we were saved just like them.

Acts 15:12

12 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.



They gave a detailed account of their first mission trip (lasting some 3-5 years)

13 And after they had held their peace, **James answered**, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:

14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.



If Gentiles don't have to become Jews to become Christians, then is God done with Israel?
NO.

V. 18 - After this (age of Grace and Tribulation) THEN...(v. 18 – references the MYSTERY of the Church hidden as Jesus Referenced in Matt. 13 & Eph 3)

Acts 15:19-21

19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:

20 But that we write unto them, that *they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.*

21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.



This is the same list for Gentiles given in Leviticus 17-18.

22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:



24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, **"Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law"**: to whom we gave no such commandment:

25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

29 That ye **abstain from meats offered to idols**, and **from blood**, and from **things strangled**, and from **fornication**: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

This wasn't just the "bias" of Paul and Barnabas, Silas and Judas (two devout Jews from Jerusalem) corroborated the message.

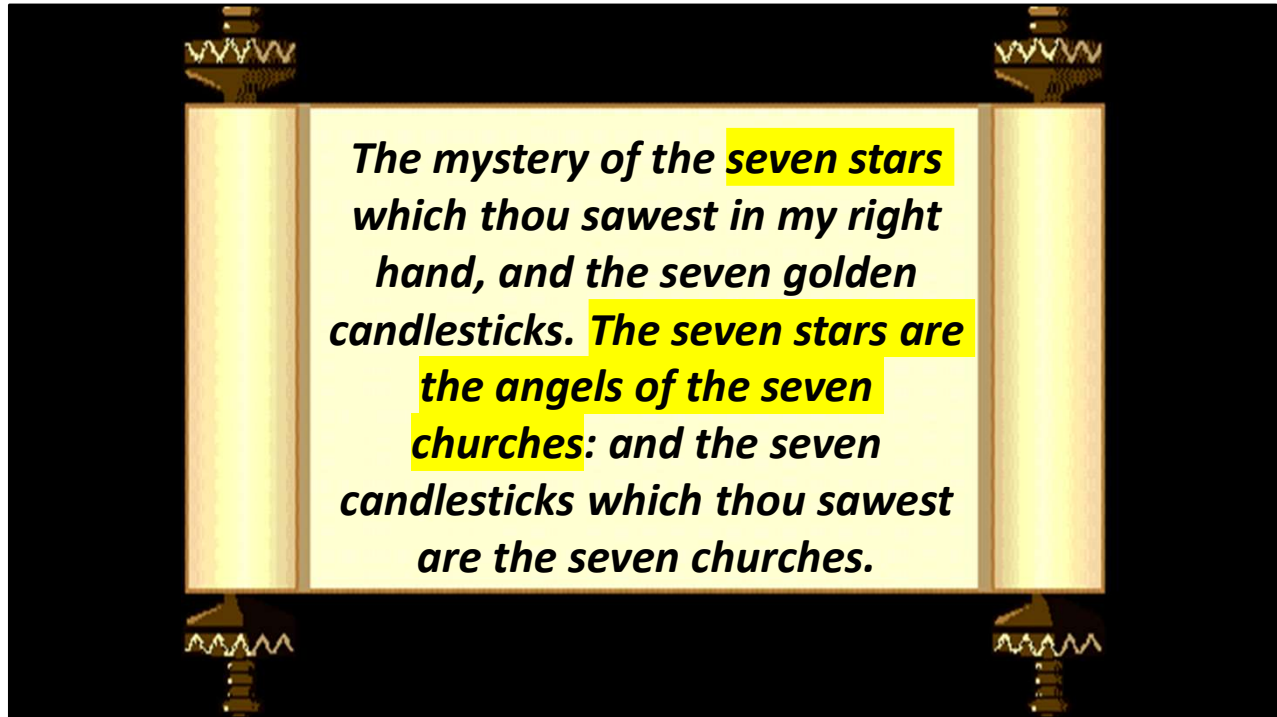
Acts 15:30-31

30 So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle:

31 Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.

32 And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.





“angelos” - messengers

- **Luke 7:24** And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?
- **Matt 11:10** For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.
- **Luke 9:52** And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.
- **James 2:25** Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

Seven Pastors of the Seven Churches

*The mystery of the **seven stars** which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. **The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches:** and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.*

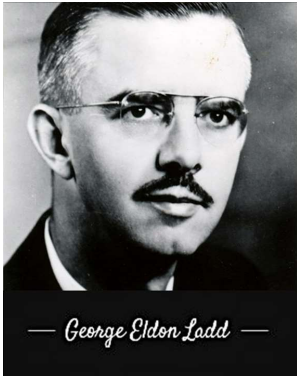






Jewish Style of Leadership

We use the
Mosaic Design.
Pastor & Deacons



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