

The Pauline Church

Paul tells us what God wants.

1 Timothy 2:3-6

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of **God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.**

Paul also tells us how men can be saved. To be saved, we must believe that the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ paid for everyone's sins.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Moreover, brethren, **I declare unto you the gospel** which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; **By which also ye are saved**, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how **that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:**

After we are saved, God wants us to come unto the knowledge of the truth. Jesus Christ told us that God's word is truth.

John 17:17

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

God wants all men to be saved and to know His word, found in the scriptures. This is where the Church, the body of Christ comes in. Paul tells us that we should use God's word to teach doctrine, to correct believer's errors, to teach righteousness, and make believers complete and ready for good works. It's a tall order.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Paul told us how God wants the local churches to do that. Remember, all believers are members of the Church, the Body of Christ. There is nothing

required for membership but believing we are saved through the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The local church is simply the best way to put God's mission into practice with our family, friends, and neighbors.

There is a history of God setting up a government for His church. God wants everything to be done decently and in order.

1 Corinthians 14:40

Let all things be done decently and in order.

The Church in the Wilderness had a government.

Moses' father-in-law Jethro helped him set up a governing group to help Moses. The group was trained in ordinances and laws so that they could make decisions in Moses' place. The tough decisions they would take to Moses who would take them to God.

Exodus 18:14-26

And when **Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people**, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou

thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God: When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws. **And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee:** for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: **And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.** Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: **And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall**

judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

The Church of the Kingdom had the scribes and the Pharisees who were sitting in Moses' place.

Jesus told His disciples to do what the leadership told them to do, but not to do what the men in those positions did.

Matthew 23:1-3

Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, **The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but**

do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

Jesus chose 12 men to be leaders of the Church of the Kingdom. After He ascended, they realized that they needed the help of others, well-trained and faithful, to do the daily tasks while the apostles spread the word of God.

Acts 6:1-6

And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. **Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.** But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor,

and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

The Church, the Body of Christ

We are not under law, but Paul told us the way the Lord would have us conduct ourselves in His Church.

When Paul addresses his letters to the church in a specific place, he is talking about all of the small groups meeting in a city or area.

Romans 16:27

To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen. (Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of **the church at Cenchrea.**)

1 Corinthians 1:2

Unto **the church of God which is at Corinth**, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon

the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

Many, if not all, of these small groups met in believers' homes.

Romans 16:5

Likewise greet the church that is in their house.

Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

1 Corinthians 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.**

Philemon 1:2

And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, **and to the church in thy house:**

It was expected that the letters sent by Paul would be shared among all of the small groups, local churches, meeting in the area.

Colossians 4:15

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.**

Even though the churches were small gatherings, there was a government set up to make sure God's word was taught according to Paul's direction at every gathering.

The 3 offices in the church's governing body that Paul talks about are: bishops, deacons, and elders.

The Bishop: There is one bishop in the church's governing body. Notice that the bishop should be a person who is apt to teach. It does not indicate that teaching is his primary job. He is the chief administrator. The bishop oversees an area of churches.

1 Timothy 3:1-2

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. **A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;**

Timothy (to whom Paul wrote 2 letters) was the first bishop of Ephesus.

2 Timothy 4:22

The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen. (The second epistle unto **Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians**, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.)

Titus (to whom Paul wrote 1 letter) was the first bishop of Cretia.

Titus 3:15

All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen. (It was written to **Titus, ordained the first bishop**

of the church of the Cretians, from Nicopolis of Macedonia.)

The Deacons: There is more than one deacon in this organizational structure, because the word is plural, and deacons are the pool from which you choose the bishop. The deacons would have to prove themselves in the ministry before being appointed as deacons. They most likely worked for the bishop in an assistant capacity.

1 Timothy 3:10-13

And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

The Elders: There are even more elders than deacons. It is probably the pool from which the deacons are selected. The title leads us to

conclude that to be an elder, a man would have been a good example of faithfully and dependably serving others in the church for a number of years. The word “ordain” here is to appoint. It is defined by a restatement. Paul appointed Titus as bishop, and Titus is to appoint (ordain) elders. Interestingly, Paul tells Titus to appoint elders in every city, but he does not mention how bishops or deacons are selected.

Titus 1:5-6

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and **ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife**, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

Following is the criteria that Titus was to use to appoint elders.

Titus 2:2

That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

Elders were to be treated with respect and not to be corrected.

1 Timothy 5:1

Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;

Not all elders were teachers, but the ones who taught the word and doctrine were worthy of “double honor.” The respect and honor meant that before an elder was accused of anything, there had to be 2 or 3 witnesses to verify the accusation.

1 Timothy 5:17, 19

¹⁷Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

¹⁹Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

There are women called elders, too, and they have a different focus. They are responsible for the young women in the church. They are to be respected in the church as mothers.

1 Timothy 5:2

The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

There was a code of conduct for aged women, elders. The elder women were to teach “good things,” (which would include scripture.) They were to bring the younger women under their wings.

Titus 2:3

The aged women likewise, that **they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands,** that the word of God be not blasphemed.

The most important requirement of anyone in any position of authority in the church was, and is, to acknowledge the authority of Paul. The mysteries of God were entrusted to Paul by Jesus Christ Himself.

1 Corinthians 14:37

If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

When the bishop, deacons, and elders are doing their jobs, they will help the rest of the people in the church to be stewards, faithful people.

Stewards have a very broad position description. They are the ministers of Christ and stewards, or caretakers, of the mysteries of God. The only qualification for a steward is that a man be found faithful. Since there is no additional information for women, the verse applies to men and women.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and **stewards of the mysteries of God**. Moreover it is required in **stewards, that a man be found faithful**.

It is the job of the bishop, deacons, and elders, as governors, to make sure that the teachings of the

church are from Paul “the things thou hast heard of me among many witnesses,” and done by faithful people who are able to teach others.

Here is why it is important to read the Bible for understanding. The King James Version of the Bible sometimes uses the masculine words, “man,” “men,” “brethren,” and others to include all people. When you understand this, you will not be concerned about faithful women who teach the Bible.

2 Timothy 2:1-2

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And **the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.**

Paul uses Timothy’s mother and grandmother as examples of faithful people who gave Timothy his faith. They were stewards.

2 Timothy 1:3-5

I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have

remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; **When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice;** and I am persuaded that in thee also.

Today, there is only one church, the Church, the Body of Christ. The members are literally Christ's body here on this earth.

Ephesians 5:30

For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Ephesians 1:22-23

And hath put all things under his feet, and **gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body,** the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Corinthians 10:16-17

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the

body of Christ? **For we being many are one bread, and one body:** for we are all partakers of that one bread.

Paul describes how we, as the Church, the Body of Christ, are a real body. Every one of the members is interconnected. We are all important to the functioning of the body. We suffer together and we rejoice together.

1 Corinthians 12:25-27

That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

Every member has been given gifts, to edify the other members in the Church, the Body of Christ.

Romans 12:4-9

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every

one members one of another. **Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us**, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

As servants of the Lord, this is our job description:

2 Timothy 2:24-26

And **the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves;** if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

The job of the governing body of the church is to make sure that what is being done and taught in the local churches is in line with Paul's teachings. Following is what Paul says we should do when we get together as Christ's body.

1 Corinthians 14:26

How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. **Let all things be done unto edifying.**

Ephesians 5:19-20

Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Colossians 3:16-17

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; **teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And**

whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

What we think of as “the church” today is probably not what Paul had in mind when he was setting up churches in his ministry to the Gentiles. The local churches were small groups which met in homes. There was a lot of participation among those in attendance. The believers would sing songs and hymns and spiritual songs. They would prophesy or teach, or discuss doctrine or revelations, or interpret based on Paul’s teachings.

The officers in the church government did not get paid. They had other ways of supporting themselves. Paul paid his own way. He did not want to be “chargeable” to anyone. He wanted to set an example to follow.

2 Thessalonians 3:7-9

For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; **Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail**

night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

Paul was a tentmaker. Acts records him working with Aquila and Priscilla and then attending the synagogue every Sabbath (Saturday) to teach both Jews and Gentiles.

Acts 18:1-4

After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. **And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.** And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

The governing body was one bishop per area, with deacons and elders to assist. The bishops, deacons, and elders were charged with living

lives which were examples of the way believers were to live. They came together to discuss areas of concern to make decisions about the best course of action.

One of the decisions that Paul recorded concerned a man who was openly having a relationship with his stepmother. The others in the church appear to have approved of it. Paul reproved them and told them to “deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh.” He was also having a bad influence on the others in the church. This man was to be on his own in the world (delivered unto Satan) and not welcome in the church because he was in the flesh and not in the spirit. This course of action was going to destroy his flesh but Paul hoped to save his spirit. (It appears that he was not already saved. If he had been, Paul would not have been concerned about saving his spirit.) We must guess that the man’s stepmother did not attend the local church.

1 Corinthians 5:1-5

It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and **such fornication as is not so**

much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

This course of action seems to have worked. Paul followed up with the Corinthians and told them it was time to forgive the man.

2 Corinthians 2:6-8

Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.

The church governors were also to act as the judges for believers. Paul was concerned that believers who had concerns with one another were going to the secular courts. He reminded them that they, and we, are going to judge angels, so we should be able to mediate disputes between members of the Church.

1 Corinthians 6:1-8

Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why

do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.

How is it that we will judge the angel?

The angels that followed Satan are the only angels we know about that will be judged at the great white throne. Scripture records the Lord Jesus Christ as the one sitting on the great white throne in judgement of the unsaved—even the angels.

Revelation 20:11

And I saw a **great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away**; and there was found no place for them.

2 Peter 2:4

For if God spared not **the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment**;

Jude 1:6

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

Satan is specifically mentioned as being cast into the lake of fire. The angels waiting in hell will go there when death and hell are cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:10, 14

¹⁰**And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.**

¹⁴**And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.**

The members of the Church, the Body of Christ, will play a significant role in the judgement at the great white throne, by Jesus Christ, because we are in Jesus Christ.