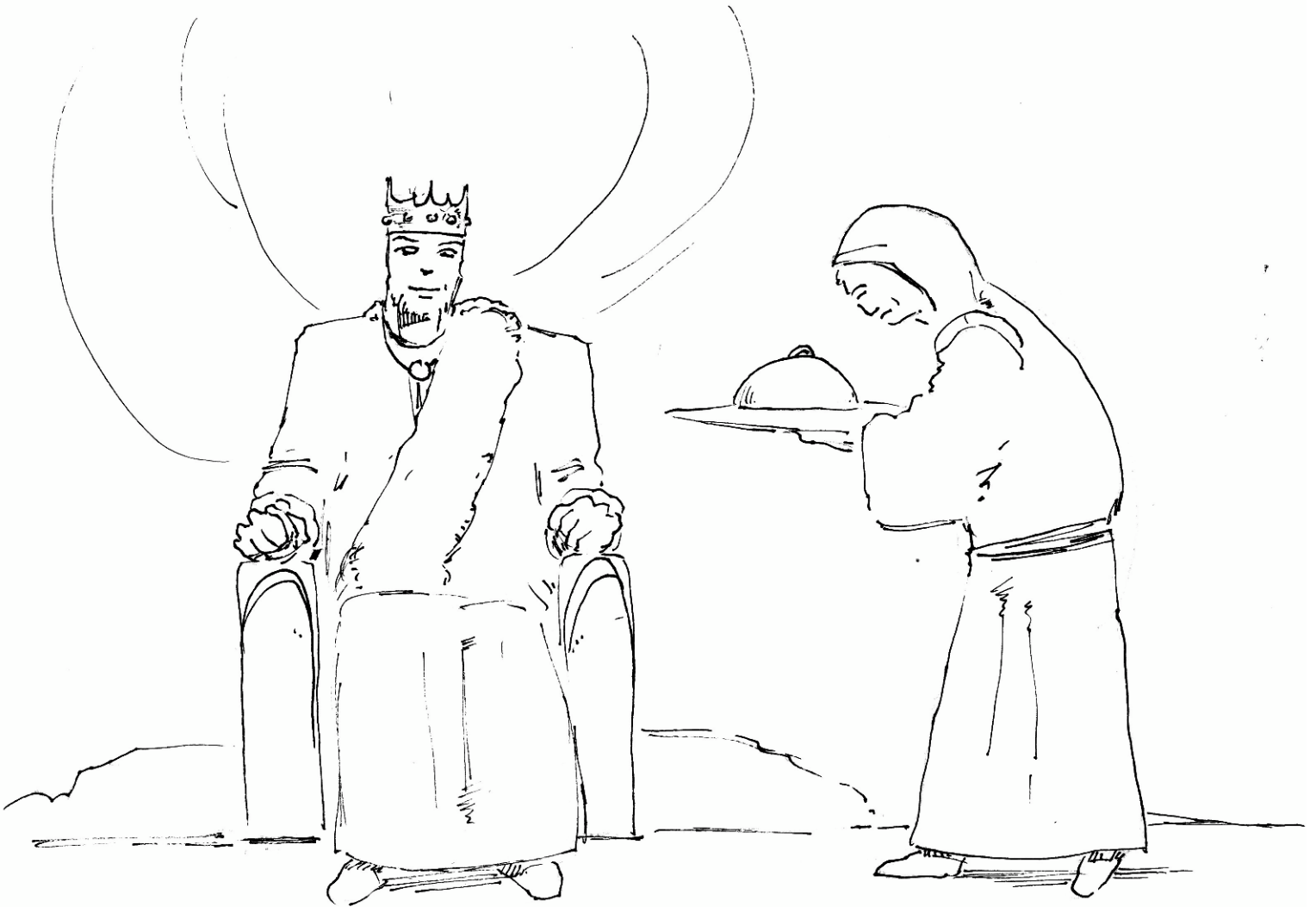


b.a.s.i.C.

(brothers and sisters in Christ)

Which one is the leader?

Who is “chief”?



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What is this?

How to BE the Church.

New Testament Bible rules--a different way to function together.

A simple Plan for working together

The Gospel--the PURPOSE to strive toward

Ministry gifts--"in all and through all"

"Authority" what to do with it and what NOT to do!

Money---don't worry about it!

Could you do this?

WHAT IS THIS?

This is a free booklet!

It's free for everyone to read, use, duplicate--whatever!

This booklet is about Christian church organization--church function.....

WARNING---it is NOT what you might expect!

What we have attempted to do (to the best of our imperfect ability) is to use the new testament Bible as the organizational guidelines for Christian function. We're not looking at tradition, or what many EXPECT "church" to be.

The subject studies in this booklet are very simple--but don't be fooled by this simplicity! In fact, one of the tenets we have learnt from many years of Bible study and prayer is how very much God desires simplicity--the "commonness" the Bible describes...

"And all that believed were together, and had all things common;"

(Acts 2:44)

Do you desire a simple, "basiC" Christianity?

Open your mind and your heart and study with us.

We pray this may bring change.

How To BE The Church

What is “church”?

Do you think of a building--a choir--an altar--?

Maybe, just maybe, you are wrong!.....

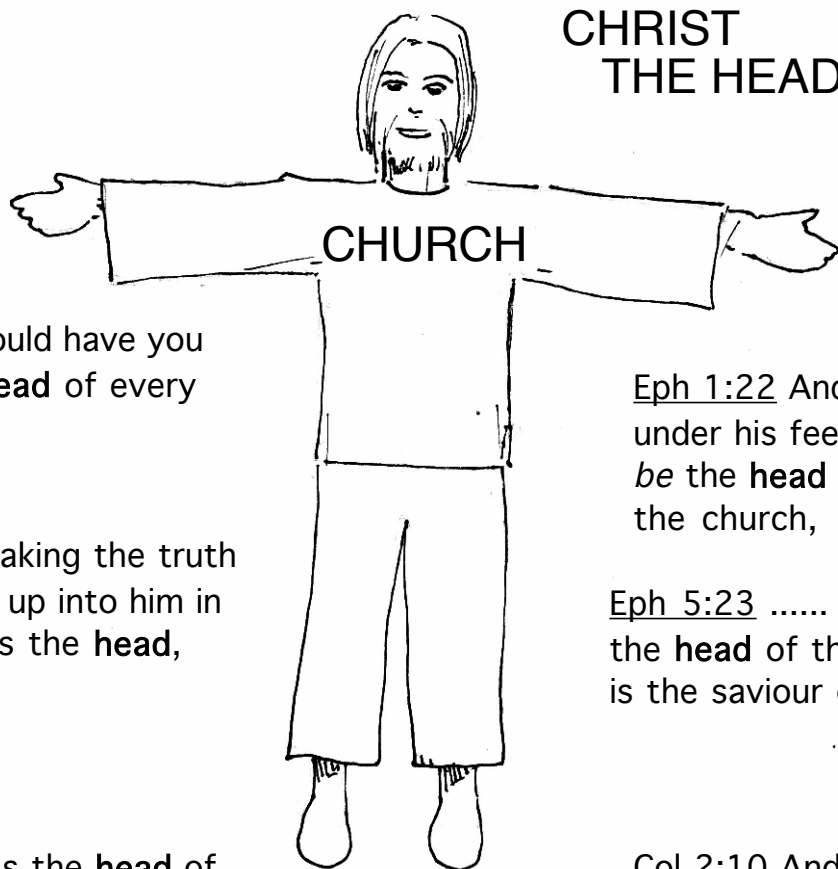
*“Now **ye are the body** of Christ and members in particular.” (1Corinthians 12:27)*

Look in the mirror--you ARE the church!

“Church” Biblically is who we all ARE as believers in Jesus Christ.

We are all supposed to be part of a structure, a structure that is compared to the human body.

May we introduce the Head.....



1Co 11:3 But I would have you know, that the **head** of every man is Christ;

Eph 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the **head**, *even* Christ:

Col 1:18 And he is the **head** of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

Eph 1:22 And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the **head** over all *things* to the church,

Eph 5:23 even as Christ is the **head** of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

Col 2:10 And ye are complete in him, which is the **head** of all principality and power:

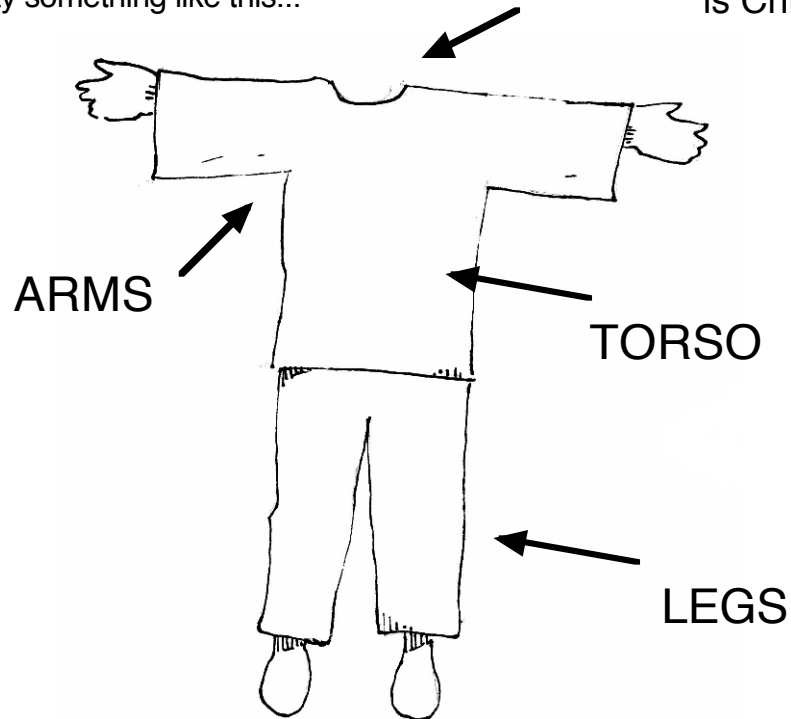
In the Church, each member has a function--just like in your human body. It's absolutely vital that every part works (what part of your body would like to loose?--none of course!!)

The "work" each part is meant to do is to "serve" or to minister.

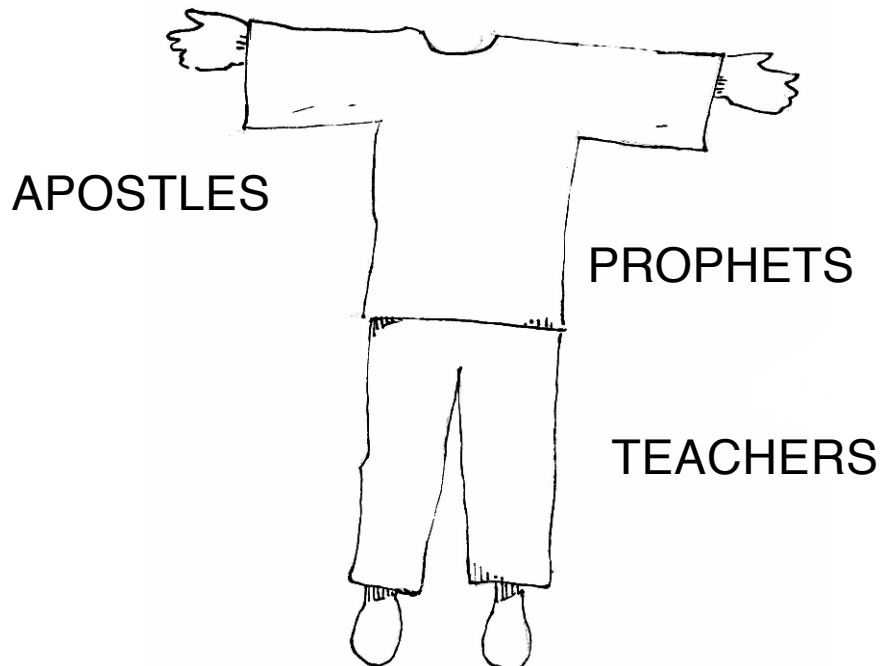
Can you name your body in 3 parts ?

You might say something like this...

(remember--the Head is Christ!)



The Bible names the parts of the Body of Christ It names the general areas of function in this way...



(notice: "ministers" are NOT the Head--this is so important!)

What are these ministries?

Using the example of Jesus and the Church in the Bible, and the simple Greek definitions, we can come up with a basic outline of these functions.

APOSTLES This is the first, foremost ministry of the Church (1Corinthians 12:28). The word apostle is mentioned in the Bible many times more often than any other ministry. The Greek word means someone who is “sent” with a message. We might better translate the word as a messenger. In the Bible, apostles worked together in small groups, being lead directly by God, to spread the Gospel.

PROPHETS Biblically, this is the second most important ministry function. To prophecy simply means to speak. The Bible clearly gives the right to prophecy to every believer (1Corinthians 14). The Church in the Bible met frequently in small groups and they prayed. When God spoke through someone, they listened! The prophetic word is God’s way of speaking to His people, but the most important function was the apostolic.

So in the Bible the prophetic gift released the apostolic gift.

Let’s take a brief look at an example of this:

1 ¶ Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.

4 ¶ So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. (Acts 13:1-4)

Notice, a small group of believers--they are called “prophets and teachers” because that is what they are going to do (ministry is action!). The Holy Ghost speaks. How? Through one (or more) of the prophets at hand! And what does God ask for? He has work for them, a calling, to be “sent” to a specific place. The Greek word which has been translated as sent is “apostello”.

So in the Bible, the prophetic gift released the apostolic gift.

What a great plan! Meet together in a small, ready group. Pray and fast and let God speak. Expect to be sent, by God, with the Gospel.

TEACHERS Anyone who teaches, is a teacher (boy that was easy). Who can teach?

“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.” (1Corinthians 14:26)

“Every one of you””hath a doctrine”. The Bible says that everyone can teach. The Greek word which is translated as doctrine, is “didache” the same word used in Ephesians 4:11, translated there as “teachers”. Everyone can do these ministries, these services to God. They’re the names of the parts of His Body.

EVERYONE has a ministry, just by being in the Body.

Just by believing in Jesus--"ye are the church"

You have the right to be lead by the Head!

Just like your own body, it's the Head that calls the shots.
Your leg doesn't tell your arm what to do--right?!

ALL the leading comes from the Head....

Therefore--every part is important--and ought to be able to express itself freely and function freely.

And, the BEST way is for all the parts to work together.....

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

(Ephesians 4:15-16)

So, if we can grow up and let Christ be the Head, work together in our ministries, our work for God--every part doing it's work, we will have 2 results.....

"maketh increase of the body".....increase the Body--grow the Body, grow the Church---get people saved!

"the edifying of itself in love".....we ourselves will grow in love--the power and purpose behind everything God does--love.

more love.

NEW TESTAMENT BIBLE RULES A DIFFERENT WAY

So, how to work as the “Body”--this “Church”?

How to meet?

What are the rules?

“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.” (1Corinthians 14:26)

EVERY ONE OF YOU....Well here we go again!

Each of you--EVERYONE has the right to speak...sing...prophecy (speak from Godly inspiration and prayer).....pray in tongues (speak as God the Holy Spirit gives inspiration).....and...teach (yes---EVERYONE can teach!)

So, this is the “stuff” the Christian meeting ought to consist of. People talking---praying--sharing what God has told them---singing---and teaching one another.

Sounds great doesn't it!

Wouldn't it be great to do this--EVERY time we met with one another?!

Can you see yourself “fitting in” to this church? Certainly! These are common, simple, human gifts and functions that God has put inside of EVERY ONE OF US!

Read 1Corinthians chapter 14--There are simple rules of courtesy to follow....let “2 or 3” speak within the group at any given meeting--not everyone talking at once--speak most of what is said in a way that anyone can understand, so that when you invite the unsaved in (yes do this often!) they will understand and be able to believe too!

“But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or *one* unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on *his* face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.” (1Corinthians 14:24-25)

So, if “all prophecy” people will get saved.

Once again we see the biggest purpose of “ministry” is to get people saved. So, the more ministry we have going on, the more God can accomplish His purpose, the Gospel.

Makes sense.

Let's stop and think about it.

Could 500 people get together in one place and follow these rules?

Probably not--since everyone wouldn't get a chance.

How about 50 people?

Well, maybe, but the truth is that these rules are for...

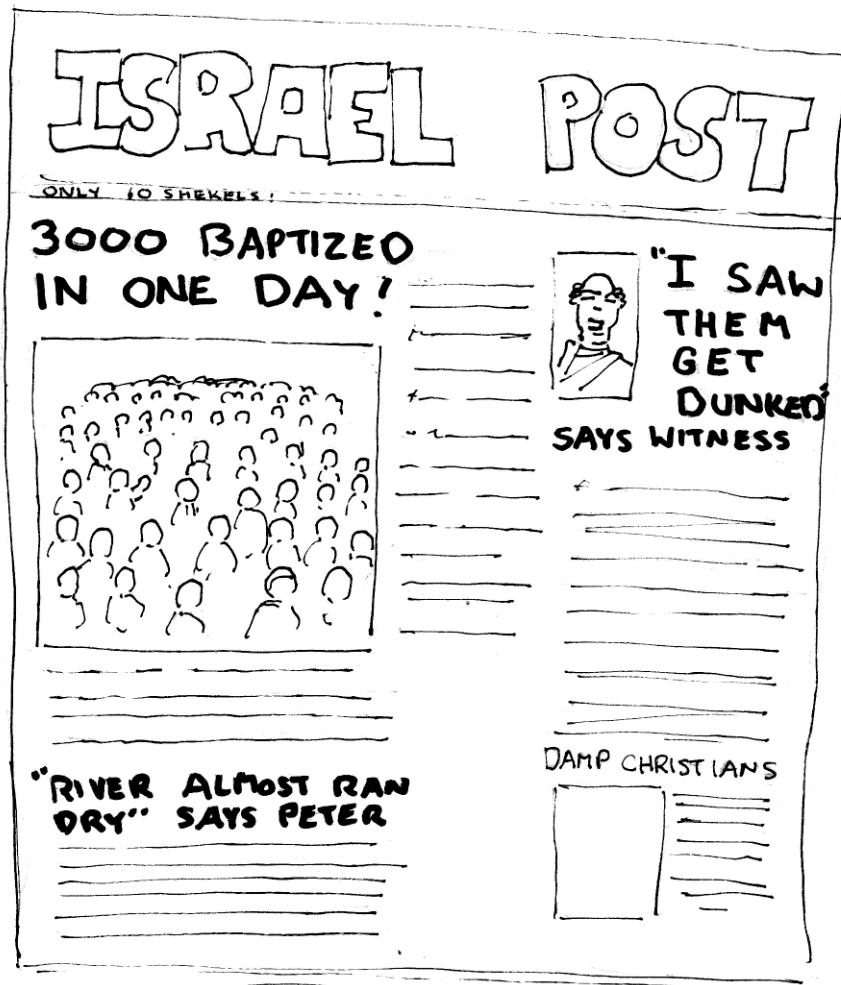
SMALL GROUPS

And, it's very clear that the new testament church met in **SMALL GROUPS** (yes, occasionally they "assembled" all the church in one place--but this happened rarely--only as God lead)

They met in small groups, not because there were only a few Christians back then--no not at all..

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls." (Acts 2:41)

Let's read the headlines in the news that day.....



3,000 baptized in one day!

And what did they do?

How did they meet?

Did they all chip in and build a big building, meet once a week, elect someone leader, have praise and worship and teaching (always in that order--over and over and over...) and collect money to keep the party going?

NO!

“And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,”
(Acts 2:46)

Instead they met daily (not everyone, every day--or everyone once a week in one place) in SMALL GROUPS--usually in their homes, but it could be anywhere God lead them.

(As it says here, the church in Jerusalem met in the temple as well as their homes. But think about it, they didn't build their own temple, and it's very clear that latter Christian groups which existed outside of Jeruslaem did not have to meet in the temple or build their own "sanctuary". Later in the book of Acts the Bible tells us that many of the priests in the temple became believers--so they were witnessing the Gospel in the temple--not ritualistically following it's rules and structure--they got the idea from Jesus, because that is exactly what He did!)

So, they met where God lead them to, on a daily basis,

AND--they followed the rules of function--

AND they had a result.....

“.....And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”
(Acts 2:47)

RESULT--they got people saved every day!

This is the RESULT God wants.

They got this RESULT from the SMALL GROUP meeting.

Why?

Well, they weren't just meeting "socially".

They were doing something in their meeting.

They had a PURPOSE which was the GOSPEL

So...

They met in SMALL GROUPS FREQUENTLY

They followed the rules...EVERYONE could pray--speak--prophecy--teach (in other words--minister)

And--they followed the PURPOSE of the GOSPEL.

They prayed and asked God how they could accomplish His PURPOSE.....

...and when they got an answer....

...they ACTED--(easy to do in a small group)

Remember this example.....

1 ¶ Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.

4 ¶ So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. (Acts 13:1-4)

Notice: SMALL GROUP---ALL MINISTER--they PRAY--GOD speaks (obviously through one or more of the participants)

GOD SENDS

2 in the group are “sent out” (the word “sent” is a root word of apostle which is used hundreds of times in the new testament! Lot’s of Gospel sending going on here!!)

....and, if we keep reading acts of APOSTLES it’s quite clear that Saul and his fellow laborers (such as Barnabas) went out and accomplished the PURPOSE of the GOSPEL!

By the way..... Why did they do things this way?

Well, probably because JESUS did things this way!

Think about it. Jesus worked with a small group of 12 “regular guys”. He met in homes--in the streets and fields---anywhere the Father lead Him.

Our Head is Christ. He's in Heaven, but we can receive His instructions through prayer.

Jesus followed His Head, the FATHER.....

John 8:28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing **of myself**; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. (John 8:28)

John 8:18 I am one that bear witness **of myself**, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

John 14:10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not **of myself**: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

....and He had the purpose of bringing the GOSPEL.

The Church in the Bible followed their Head, Jesus, and had the same purpose.

How did they do things?

They were just imitating JESUS!

How can you go wrong with that?!

The Gospel....The PURPOSE

“The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

(Luke 4:18-19)

Okay--here's Jesus--just starting His ministry in the book of Luke. He walks into the synagogue and tells everyone just what He is going to do.

He states His PURPOSE
He calls it the GOSPEL

We could break it into 5 parts.....

1. The GOSPEL--salvation by faith in the name of Jesus. Saved from hell--the consequence of sin, by grace thru faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). We are all born with sin, but thru faith in Jesus we can be born again (John 3:3) and have eternal life (John 3:16). Our renewed spirit heaven-bound--sin washed, cleansed, forgiven by the blood offering of Christ at the cross (1John 1:7).

He lives and so will all who believe.

wow--pretty good!! (but there's more...)

2. Healing (“he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted”)
Hey--did Jesus heal people? You bet He did!! Does He do it today?

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”
(Hebrews 13:8)

Jesus healed those who believed.
Healing is part of the Gospel PURPOSE.

3. Deliverance What is “deliverance”? Well, it means that someone who was captured has been set free. Who “captures” men’s souls? Yep, Satan.

So, did Jesus cast out the devil? Yes He certainly did..

“And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.” (Mark 1:39)

Jesus brought deliverance from the oppression of the Enemy.
Deliverance is part of the Gospel PURPOSE.

4. Who receives the PURPOSE. Question: To whom did Jesus bring this Gospel?...
“the poor....the brokenhearted...blind...the bruised....”

This part of the Gospel PURPOSE tells us who to minister to.

So, we see Gospel functions of salvation, healing, deliverance--brought to THOSE IN NEED. Jesus went to the folks who needed help. He was “sent” (here we go again--the Greek word “apostello”) of the Father--to bring the Gospel to THOSE IN NEED.

5. The little know part! “to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. “

Well, what does that mean?

“Jesus makes us free?!”--Well, yes that’s true, but, if we look at the Greek of this phrase we’ll see that the little word “set” in the Greek is “apostello” (that root word of apostle--again!)

So, there is something called “apostolic liberty” that Jesus said He was going to bring.

What is it?

Well, Jesus made “apostles” right? Sure!

And He gave them (and us through them) the same purpose and authority, for example....

“And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.” (Mark 3:14-15)

Were there only 12? Were those folks back then the only ones who should function in this apostleship, this release to minister the Gospel purpose? No, not at all--in fact in John chapter 17 Jesus said “as I was sent so I send you” (the Greek “send/sent”--apostello) and He prayed this prayer not only to those 12, but....

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;” (John 17:20)

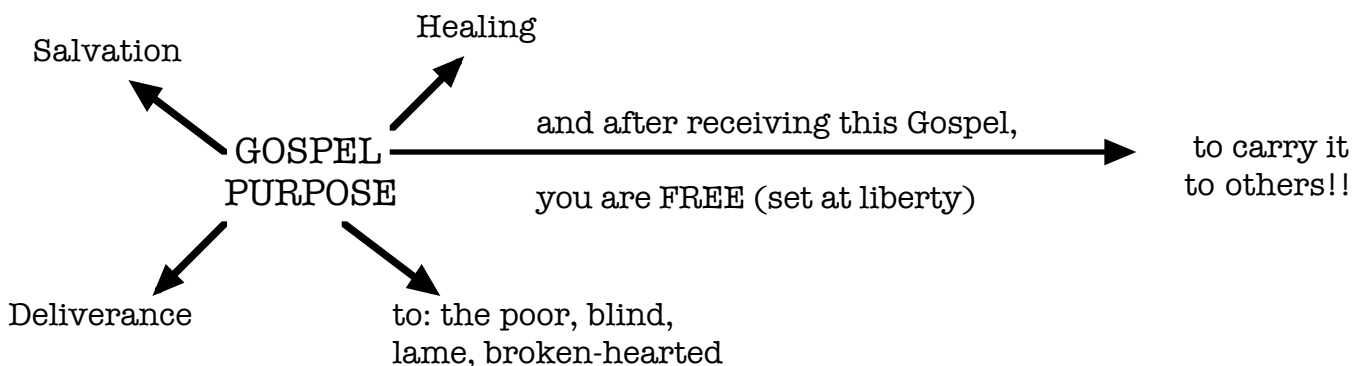
Later, Paul says..... “By whom we have received grace and **apostleship**, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: (Romans 1:5)

We spend a lot of time studying “grace”--do we spend any time studying “apostleship”?

What are apostles? What is “apostolic liberty”?

Simply the freedom for all believers to minister--to be sent with the Gospel and follow God’s leading to fulfill the PURPOSE.

The freedom to serve God.
It’s part of the Gospel.
It’s part of the PURPOSE.
It’s a full circle....



Ministry Gifts....”In all and through all”

Read Ephesians chapter 4, let’s say verses 1-16.....

1 ¶ I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 ¶ With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

11 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:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Look at this area of scripture for yourself.

What is being said here?

Simply that everyone has been created by God to serve Him.

Everyone has a ministry gift.

Look....

“.....walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called”

Who has been called? (“Ye all have been called”)

What is “ministry”?

Well, the word means to serve others. Christian ministry is God, working through a believer, to serve others. I’m not making that up, it says it right here, the place where the Bible lists the ministry gifts.

Who has God inside? ALL!!!!

“One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all..”

Grace = gift (that’s why they’re called ministry “gifts”)

Who has been given the “grace”, (gift) of ministry?...

“But unto every one of us is given grace.....”

Question: What old testament verse is used to establish the new testament ministry gifts? (a very little known or studied verse in scripture)

“Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, *for* the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell *among them*.” (Psalm 68:18)

What it says is that “He who ascended (Jesus) gave (ministry) gifts unto “men” (Hebrew- ‘adam”--which means “mankind”---EVERYONE!)

The “gift of Christ”--the gift of the anointing. Different people have different gifts--this is certainly an evident truth!

Let’s just think. So far we have studied about the way the church in the Bible worked (small groups--Gospel purpose--the church a “Body”--Christ the only Head). The idea that ministry is in everyone and for everyone to do fits just right into this operational plan--don’t you think?

For God’s purpose, the Bible defines these gifts as “apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher. [sounds familiar--the same basic list is in 1Corinthians 12]

They are simple gifts really--if we used the Bible.

apostles--small groups that are “sent” by God with the Gospel.

prophets--those who “speak” the word of God in any way.

evangelists--individuals who carry the Gospel.

pastors--the gift of guiding other to Godly service.

teachers--people who teach.

Anyone can function in these gifts at any time--GOD is supposed to "ordain" ministry.

He is the One who is supposed to call the shots.

Why are ministry gifts so important?

Well, the Bible says something very unique regarding these gifts....

The ministry gifts are.....

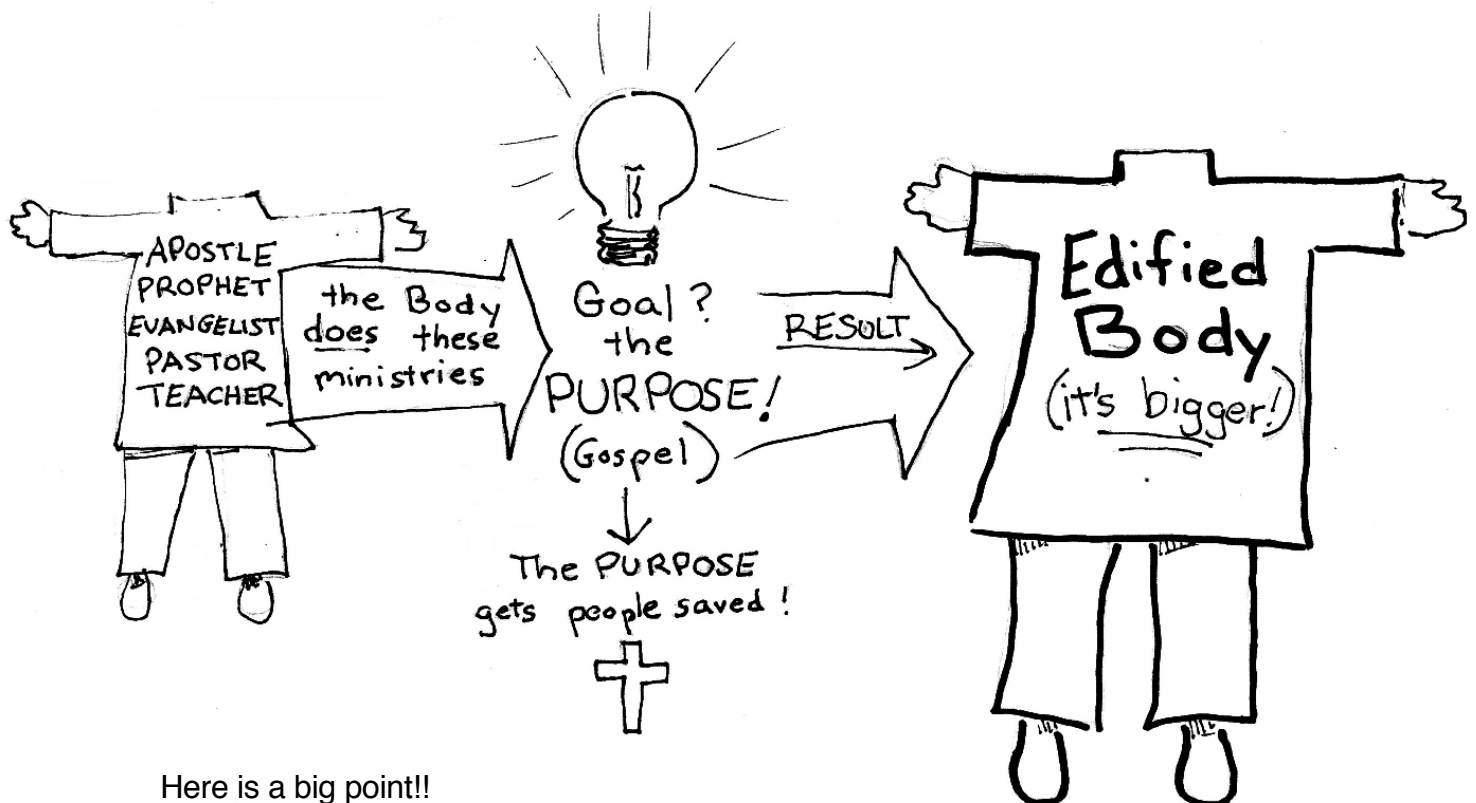
"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"

Okay, so it's like this...

God's PURPOSE (the Gospel) gets people saved (and healed and delivered and fed and released)

When God's PURPOSE gets done, His Body gets edified (edified means to build up or ADD TO)

So let's get the picture...(remember our headless body?)....



Here is a big point!!

The more ministry--the more "service" Christians do--the more people will get saved--with the result that the Body will grow!

Makes perfect sense..

So, go and do it--!

Authority--What NOT To Do With It

“For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to **every man** his work.... “

(Mark 13:34)

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even to them that believe* on his name:” (John 1:12)

Hey you! Do you believe in Jesus?

Did you know He gave you power?

Did you know He gave you authority?

So, what are you supposed to do with this authority?

Jesus gave every believer the authority to use His name. This authority is power over 3 things---sin---sickness--and Satan!



power over sin--because of the forgiveness of the cross. The blood of Jesus forgives sin.

power to heal in Jesus name.

power to cast out the devil and all worldly spirits and influence.

Wow! Great! Terrific!

Use that authority!

Spread the Gospel!

Pray for the sick!

Cast out the devil!

The Church (which is YOU--remember?) has power and authority....

But.....

Did you know what Jesus said NOT to do with your authority?

“And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye *shall* not *be* so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.” (Luke 22:25-26)

“But Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10: 42-45)

“But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;” (Matthew 20:25-26)

Jesus said that we as believers....SHOULD NOT EXERCISE AUTHORITY ONE OVER ANOTHER AMONG OURSELVES.

What does this mean?

Well it's the headless church.

It's all we've studied about how the church should work.

Let's think.....

SMALL GROUPS-----EVERYONE can speak, teach, prophecy---EVERYONE MINISTERS.

SMALL GROUPS-----seeking to be lead by the Head and His PURPOSE.

The Church, a Body--every member with a function in accomplishing the purpose. Different functions, different ministries, working together as EQUALS.

No one part exercising authority over another.

There is a way to NOT exercise authority one over another. The Bible describes it in many places, for example...

3 *Let nothing be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;

11 And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
(Philipians 2:3-11)

Take a look at this area of scripture.

Doesn't it "fit" into the ideas expressed in this booklet?

If we will not exercise authority one over another, if we esteem others better than ourselves, if this would be on our mind, in our functions and workings together.....then, the Gospel would be accomplished among us. And where should we get this example? From Jesus! Jesus, who was God, but lowered Himself, humbled Himself, made Himself of no reputation, to give us the example of Christian ministry.

Jesus said that He did not exercise authority over His apostles (take a good look at the 3 scriptures on the last page).

He said that it should be this way among us.

Jesus said he was "among" His disciples. The word "among" means to be an equal with someone. And that is the way to not exercise authority one over another...

Everyone working together as EQUALS.

The very short book of 3John talks about a guy named Diotrophes.

This fellow liked to "have the preeminence"

He wanted to have authority over others in the church.

The Bible says this is wrong.

Jesus says this is wrong (He said it at least 5 or 6 times in the Gospels and demonstrated this often by His actions and teachings). There are literally a few words here and there in the Bible that sound as if someone within the church is meant to have authority over others. They are simply poorly translated words--study them--and bare in mind that the system of organized authoritarian church predates the translation of the Bible into English by over 1,000 years!

Take a look at Luke 22 verses 25-29...

25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

26 But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27 For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.

29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; (Luke 22:25-29, KJV).

Jesus said that he did not exercise authority over His disciples.

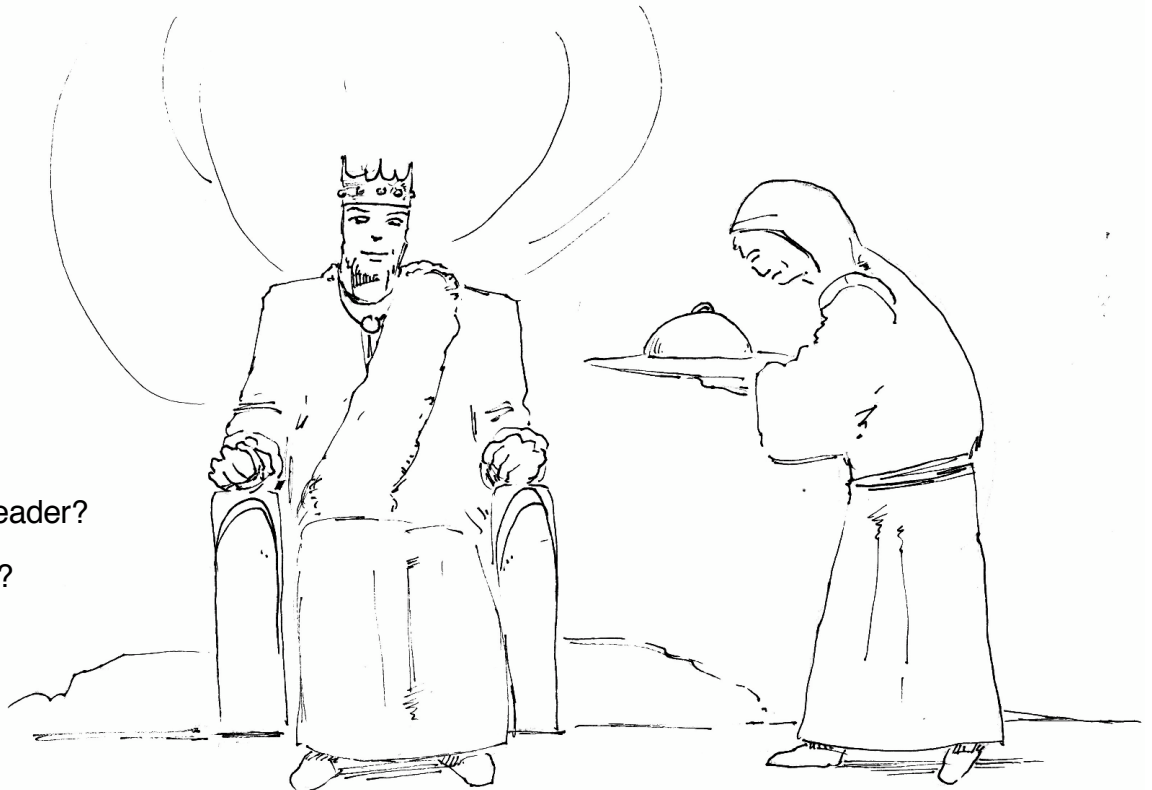
He served.

He washed their feet.

He was AMONG them--not "over" them.

They worked together as EQUALS.

.....remember the picture?.....



Which one is the leader?

Which one is chief?

Money---Don't Worry About It!

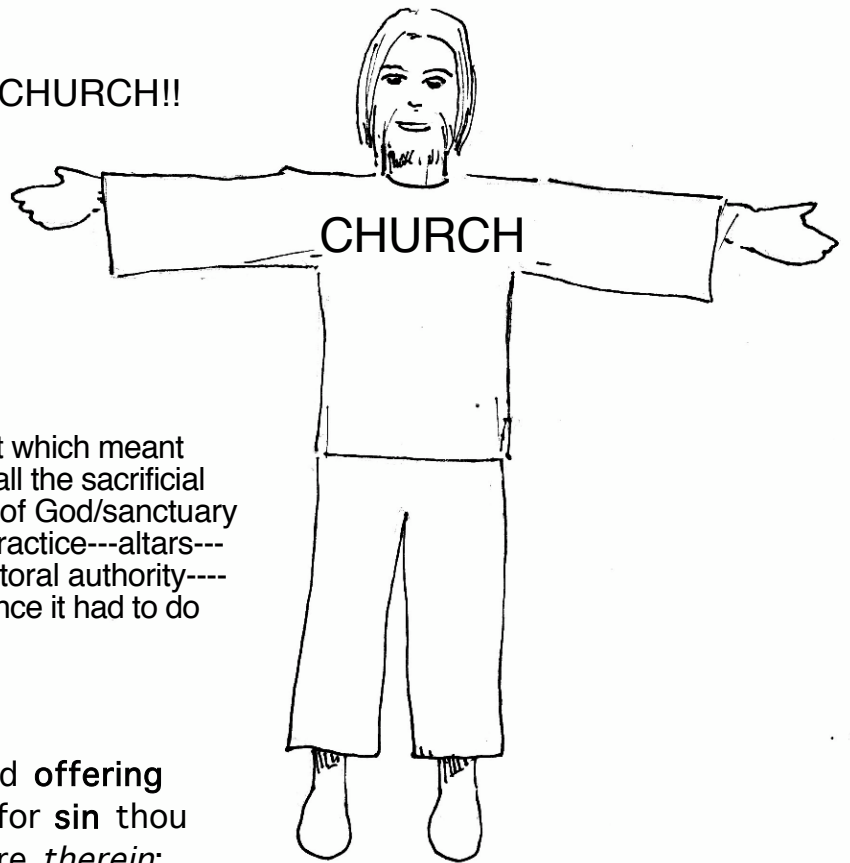
Okay, I know, you may be reading this booklet and saying..

“Oh, it's all so naive and unrealistic. In our day and age you need money to build a church.”

Well, that's true---IF you think “church” is a building-!

Don't forget:

YOU ARE THE CHURCH!!



But, what about money?

Should we take up offerings?

No.

“Offering” is a term from the old testament which meant a payment for sin. (you see, Jesus undid all the sacrificial laws of the old testament--temple/house of God/sanctuary --gates of praise and worship--sabbath practice---altars---offerings---tithes---Levitical priesthood/pastoral authority--- all this stuff is not in the new testament, since it had to do with the forgiveness of sin)

The new testament says....

“Above when he said, Sacrifice and **offering** and burnt offerings and **offering** for **sin** thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law;”

(Hebrews 10:8)

“Now where remission of these *is*, *there is* no more **offering** for **sin**.”

(Hebrews 10:18)

Why?

Well because JESUS is our offering for sin!

Offerings and tithes are simply not the plans for the new covenant church. Even in the old covenant, tithes and offerings had nothing to do with money. They had to do with how many animals and crops God wanted to receive, so that Israel's sin would be forgiven. Look in your Bible at all the verses that speak of these things and get the full picture of what these practices were.

A good question: Why do we spend so much time hearing about money in the church of today?

So, what about money?

Jesus said not to worry about it-!

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25 ¶ Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

Jesus said point blank that we cannot serve God and money (mammon). Money is another master. God's kingdom operates on different principles than the kingdom of money. We're going to serve in one or the other kingdom, and it's a choice. Actions must be taken so that we will not be fooled into serving money.

How does a repetitive, mandatory system of money giving, fit into this teaching of Jesus?

So, let's take on His attitude first.

No repetitive mandatory money rules.(it fits into our picture of the church so far).

Why don't we just do with money, what we ought to do with everything else...

LET GOD LEAD!

In the church in the Bible they did give...

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;
45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. (Acts 2:44-45)

I have heard some people look at this particular area of scripture and say that it was somehow "weird" --a difficult, strange, extreme measure that God forced the early church to do in order that the Church would "survive". I've heard it said from the pulpit that we should be happy that God is not asking us to do this crazy, extreme, difficult thing today.

The reason someone believes this is that they simply don't understand the operational principles of the Biblical church!

This fits perfectly into the simple system we are studying.

They "had all things common"--the word common means to be Levitically unclean. In the old testament certain foods were for the offerings, some foods were unclean to be eaten, and some foods were able to be eaten by everyone. All this means is that they were sharing what they had with one another, since no one was exercising authority over another as the Levites did in the old testament.

In the old testament only the Levitical tribe were the ministers--now, everyone was.

They "...sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need."

This doesn't mean that everyone sold everything they had!!

It simply means that God was leading some people to sell some things to give to the needy.

God lead them to collect for the poor and needy.

Hey! Remember the PURPOSE!?

"The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

(Luke 4:18-19)

We're supposed to bring the "Gospel to the poor"

It's an important ministry function for all of us to do.

Jesus gave this example (and warning--keep reading the next verses in your Bible).....

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. (Matthew 25: 34-40)

It's very important to God to help the needy.

We could do it together.

Wouldn't that be great?

Working together as EQUALS--

with other believers.....

praying and asking God to lead in.....

accomplishing the PURPOSE.

and--one of the things God might lead you to do--would be to collect for the poor...

"Only *they would* that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do." (Galatians 2:10)

But maybe it's not money they need!!

Maybe cookies--maybe clothing--maybe canned food--maybe stuff we already have..

for the poor

to minister--to SERVE others

to carry God's love to others and help them with their needs.

Wouldn't that be a great thing to do with our money, and our time, and our lives?

Could You Do This?

Sure you can!!

Where to start?

Start with you..

“Ye are the Church....”

YOU are the Church.

and so is EVERY other believer.

Start with you

BE the Church.

Let God lead you and do all you can to follow His PURPOSE of the Gospel.

Do all you can to work with others (as EQUALS!) in this PURPOSE.

Recognize and encourage the ministry gifts that are in ALL believers.

Try not to exercise authority one over another!

You will be amazed at how well other believers respond to these ideas--they've read the Bible too!

Try to meet together with other believers on the terms of the Bible. Meet in an environment (such as a home) where EVERYONE can speak--pray--minister---as God leads.

EVERYONE can influence the meeting.

Don't accept other rules--know your Bible!

Try to focus on the Gospel--how might God want you to further His PURPOSE.

If the groups grows--

keep it small--!!

Let as many people as possible host meetings.

Meet in many different places (let God lead!) at many different times.

Do the best you can to follow Jesus.

Remember---He is the Head--but He needs a Body.

You are a part of the Body. In order for the Body to function, all the parts should work together. All the parts should minister.

Okay--sounds very high-minded--but maybe this is very practical.

This Church can be done anywhere--any time, by any amount of people.

Use What You Have.

Do you remember how Jesus fed the 5,000?

5 When Jesus then lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. (John 6: 5-13)

When Jesus said to feed all those people, the disciples couldn't see how to do it. (see--it could be a problem we might have, to believe that God doesn't have enough supply, and turn to money to solve the problem!). And then, a little boy came forward with 5 loaves and 2 fishes.

Jesus had no problem with what God had given, He thought it was enough!

He used what He had.

It's very clear that the church in the Bible did the same thing. They collected for needs and distributed what they had for God's purposes. But the bigger lesson in the Bible is that the greatest thing we have, is one another.

Believe God has given a sufficient supply.

Believe in the ministry of everyone.

Work together as EQUALS.

Be His Body, and He will be the Head.