

The Church of Christ @ Fremont

3361 W. State Street, Fremont, OH 43420

Worship Services

Sunday Bible Study 10:00 am
Sunday Worship 10:45 am
Wednesday 7:00 pm

Preachers: Ted Bowen and Sean Rizer

October 22, 2023

Songs : Chris Frantz

Lord's Supper : Tony Smith

Speaker : Melvin Monroe

Wednesday Bible Study

Invitation: Melvin Monroe

Birthdays

4 Mason Frantz
7 Vicki Shue
20 Janet Baker
25 Cory Davis
28 Frances Northcutt
30 Josie Appelhans

Anniversaries:

24 Matt & Stacey Appelhans
27 Sean & Stephanie Rizer

Prayer List

Gen Stanley
Jean Adkins
Betty Davis
Connie Runion
Mack Stanley
Tina Smith
Ted Bowen
Richard Slattman
Myrt Bohn

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

1. Learn the truth (Hear) (John 8:32; 17:17; Rom 10:14-18)
2. Believe in Christ (John 8:24; 20:31; Heb 11:6)
3. Repent of all sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30; Rom 2:4; 2 Cor 7:9,10)
4. Confess faith in Christ (Rom 10:10; Acts 17:30; Matt 16:16)
5. Be baptized into Christ for remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)
6. Live faithfully (Revelation 2:10)

7 THINGS TO REMEMBER DURING THE LORD'S SUPPER!

- 1 LORD. "There is one Lord." (Ephesians 4:5)
- 2 THIEVES. "There were also 2 others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death." (Luke 23:32)
- 3 CROSSES. (Luke 23:39-43)
- 4 PARTS of HIS GARMENTS. "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier, a part, and also the tunic." (John 19:23)
- 5 WOUNDS. His back was scourged. His head was crowned with thorns. His hands were pierced. His feet were pierced. His side was cut open. (John 19:1-2,34 Psalm 22:16)
- 6 HOURS of AGONY. Christ was crucified at the 3rd hour and died at the 9th hour. (Mark 15:25-37)
- 7 SAYINGS of The CROSS. (Matthew 27:46; Luke 23:34, 43-46; John 19:26-30)

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH #2

Jim McDonald

At the conclusion of Paul's first journey, he and Barnabas (his fellow traveler and laborer) retraced their steps, visiting the churches they had begun and "appointed for them elders in every church" (Acts 14:23). The appointing of "elders in every church" was a universal practice in the first century church: there were elders in the Jerusalem church (Acts 15:2) and Titus was instructed by Paul that he was to appoint elders in "every city" (Titus 1:5).

The word "church", literally "a called out body", is used of God's people in two senses. The word is used in the universal sense, including all those who are part of God's grace throughout the world. Paul wrote the Ephesians that "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25). The word is also used to identify a body of saints in a particular location. In the universal sense Christ is the head and each saved

person a member of that body: “Now ye are the body of Christ and severally members thereof” (1 Corinthians 12:27). In the local sense, the church is limited to those who have chosen to identify themselves with a particular body. It is in this latter sense that the word “church” is used when it’s said “appointed for them elders in every church” (Acts 14:23). The word “churches” also is found in a number of different places in the New Testament having no reference to different denominations with varying views and dogmas. Rather, it is a reference to many different assemblies of saints who all teach and believe the same thing. Thus, we read of the “churches in Judea” (Galatians 1:22); “the churches of Galatia” (Galatians 1:2); the “churches in Macedonia” (2 Corinthians 8:1); “the churches of Asia” (1 Corinthians 16:19); and, “the churches of Christ” (Romans 16:16). Whenever used in the plural sense there is no reference to an organization among those particular congregations — the reference is to the region where those churches were located. The churches did not function collectively; the churches in the local sense did, functioning through their elders and deacons (Philippians 1:1).

In the first century there was no organization other than the local congregation; organizations which emerged in the churches later were the works of men. Among men we hear of archbishops, cardinals, popes, superintendents, and presidents. But such distinctions and designations are the works of men. We read of elders in every church, that is shepherds in every church, and we read of the chief Shepherd, who is Christ (1 Peter 5:4). We read of bishops in a congregation (Philippians 1:1) and of Christ who is the “shepherd and bishop of our souls” (1 Peter 2:25). What we never read of is a “head elder” between the elders of the local congregation and Christ. We do not read of an “archbishop” between the bishops of the local church and Christ who is the bishop of our souls. We read of shepherds (pastors, elders) in the local church and Christ who is “the chief shepherd” (pastor), but nothing between the two.

The falling away of the first century church began with the elders (Acts 20:29-30). It took centuries for the hierarchy of cardinals and popes to develop. In the Restoration Movement the desire to function on a level higher than the local level brought about missionary societies and division. The desire to function on a national or international level among churches of Christ who had resisted the missionary societies of the Christian Church brought about “sponsoring churches” and division once more among those who claimed to be simply “New Testament churches” .

Some might ask, “What is a ‘sponsoring church’ ?” A sponsoring church is one church attempting to do a work no local church alone has the ability to do. Thus, it calls upon all churches to help it in the work it proposes to do. Remember, God made His church sufficient to do the work He assigned it to do. If a congregation takes on a work which neither it nor any other congregation could ever do, clearly it or they are attempting to do a work God did not intend for it or they to do. While in principle “sponsoring churches” had been practiced for many years on a lesser scale, it was the ambitious plan set forth by the Highland church in Abilene, Texas in 1951 to sponsor a national radio program called “The Herald of Truth” which raised cries of concern and voices of protest.

Men have never been content with God’s ways for long. They think they know better than God, forgetting that Isaiah wrote more than 2,500 years ago, “For my ways are not your ways, neither are your thoughts my thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8). The only way we can know what God is thinking is for Him to tell us. And He has, through His Word.

The church in its simple organization of elders in every church in the first century was able within 35 or 40 years to preach the gospel to every creature (Colossians 1:23). The church in the twenty-first century, with the same, simple organization can do the same. But to do that today we desperately need two things: 1) complete faith and love for God and His word; and, 2) a burning love for the souls of lost men. Do we possess these two things?