

# The Organization of the One True Church

If we are truly committed to being a church like the one that we read about in the New Testament, we will strictly maintain the organization of the church which God ordained.

- **The Church: Universal and Local**

- Sometimes the New Testament uses the word “church” to refer to all saved believers in the universal sense (throughout the entire world)
- At other times the same word is applied in a local sense to the believers in a certain place
- An understanding of this and a careful examination of each context is essential to a proper application of Scripture
- A faithful Christian would be a member of both the universal church and (when possible) a local congregation

- **The Universal Church**

- Jesus is the head and king
  - He has all authority
  - No one else can legislate or make laws in His kingdom
- There is no other organization for the universal church
  - There is no decision making capacity
  - There is no provision for a universal treasury
- Any action that seeks to mobilize the church in a universal sense is unscriptural

- **The Local Church**

- A plurality of men serve as overseers
  - Also called elders, bishops, the presbytery, pastors
  - Qualifications are clearly set forth
  - Their realm of oversight is limited to the local congregation
- Deacons are special servants in the local church
- Christians work and serve together in the congregation
- Preachers are not elders or pastors unless qualified and appointed to serve with other qualified men

- **Common Errors in Church Organization**

- Hierarchies of church government
- Synods, general assemblies, councils, conferences, conventions, presbyteries, etc.
- Single pastor system
- Human institutions and/or “sponsoring church” arrangements that violate local church autonomy