

WHY GOD CHOSE OUR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE!

“Read the Array a week ago and just now getting back to you. Enjoyed the article on Evolution and found the one on Predestination interesting - an unusual focus - but don't really disagree.

The Elder/Shepherd article troubles me a bit. There is a premise in Biblical interpretation that says, "the text cannot mean something today that it did not mean at the time it was written." The leaders of the church were probably patterned from the 12 men in the synagogues - Where the elder male has predominance - and the degree of respect and honor could probably never be reproduced in our era. God put a committee in charge - which of course is the least efficient leadership profile known to man. I guess he intended for them to operate slowly. I do what I can do and try not to bother them. Keep up the good work! Beth”

The feedback was interesting, particularly on the statement regarding our organization **“which is of course the least efficient profile known to man”**. Granted that there is some truth to the statement, but why did the smartest Guy in the universe select such an operating style when we can do so much better.

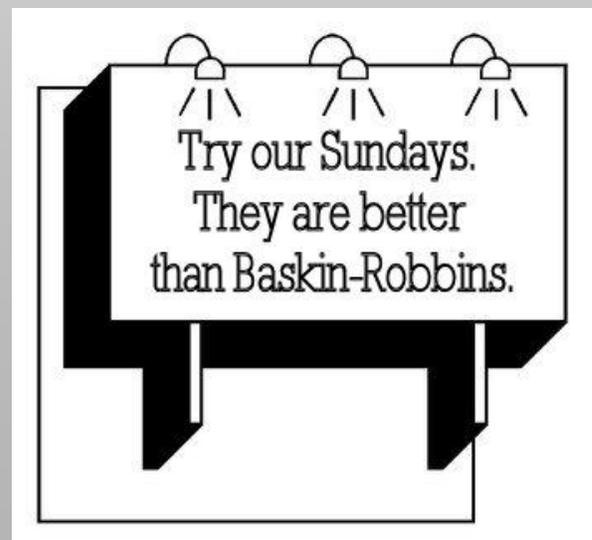
On the surface it appears to be giving life tenure to old guys who can get out of touch with the congregation and there is nothing the others can do about it.

The first suspicion is of course that it is actually the best form of organization for the stated

purposes. After all, He is God and He knows what he is doing.

From a human point of view, the church organization is much like the board of directors of a corporation trying to run the church directly. Characteristically each of the members of the board of directors takes a short turn at running the organization. Few human endeavors presume that each of the organizing members is equally suited to the chief operating officer's role (COO). Most organizations are ecstatic to find one qualified COO and wouldn't dream of having a dozen on hand. No corporation would dream of changing the leader every 3 months as is the habit of many congregations.

It is probably reasonable to say that no human organization achieves significant size without a single COO. Some may have 2 share the role, but only temporarily.



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The Bible teaches local autonomy, but it doesn't actually teach no COO. It only says the shepherds are in charge of the local congregation. It doesn't say how to execute the charge. In one place shepherds directly doing the management may be the best solution, but in another specifically hiring a full time COO under the direction of the shepherds may be the best thing to do. There are a variety of options which can happen between group management by the shepherds to a full time paid COO under the leadership of the shepherds which can be fully scriptural.

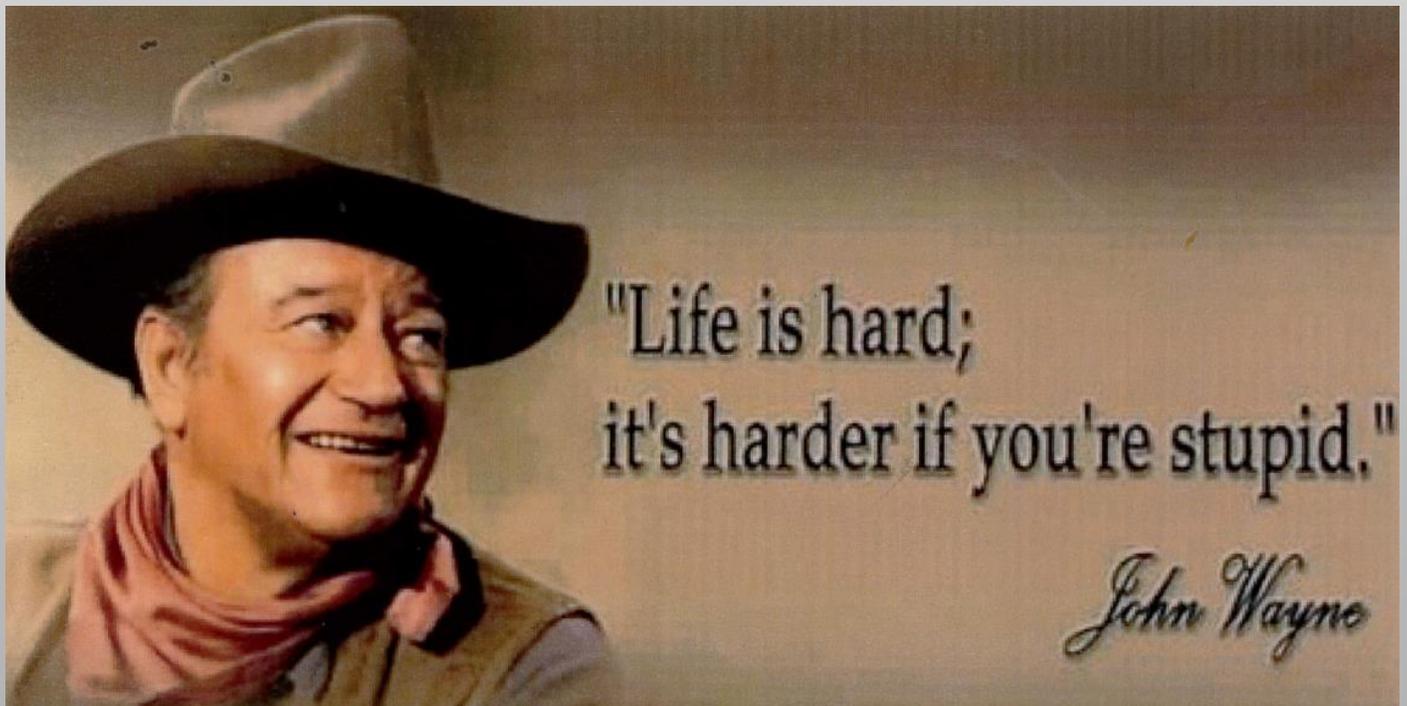
That being said, Beth's comment about a committee being in charge is our customary way to do it, but it is not a requirement of God. We must not constrain ourselves by elevating our practices to the level of being a scriptural requirement.

Local autonomy is a requirement of God, so is subject to discussion here. The other option is

a multi-church hierarchy. Some of the advantages of a multi-church hierarchy are:

1. Ability to recognize outstanding ministers and shepherds in more influential roles,
2. Ability to regulate the church's teachings to have greater uniformity,
3. Better ability to coordinate mission work,
4. Better ability to do cooperative good work such as raising money to build hospitals, and
5. More ability to influence and/or cooperate with the government

All these would be good reasons to establish a greater hierarchy than the Biblical local autonomy method. We can see Baptist, Methodist, and Catholic Hospitals, and in the extreme case the Catholic religion joined with the Roman Government to functionally rule the civilized world. This would be good in human eyes, but is simply not consistent with the scriptures.



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Consider alternately that God's purpose was not to build a great corporation, but rather to take the gospel to all the world and have all the world individually responsible for their actions.

If this was His objective, consider the benefits of local autonomy as an organization pattern:

1. Every person is responsible for what they believe. If the local shepherds go off the deep end, each member is free to move to another autonomous congregation where the truth is being taught.
2. If there is not a congregation following the scriptures, members are allowed to simply start another one.
3. If one congregation or group decides to do something other than following the scriptures, they do not take everyone else down with them as a central hierarchy can do.
4. There is no central hierarchy who can specify what to teach or who can teach it.

If we were to choose our preferences as to what to do, we may like some of the advantages of the hierarchal model. For better or worse, we don't get to pick our model, God does. We need to accept that God knows what He is doing.

On the right hand column of the next page there is a defining motto of the churches of Christ which teaches who we are and what we are about. It has served us well and had yielded a generally harmonious group image.

In our generation, we need to hold onto the basic gospel teachings that we have long held to, and continually update our methods to be all we can be in compliance with God's instructions.



**EVERY DAY I
ARRIVE AT
WORK WITH
GOOD
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AND A GREAT
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THEN
IDIOTS HAPPEN**

THE POWER OF EXAMPLE

Don't tell me, show me! I want to see how it works in your life. Think about the thirty minute infomercials, demonstrating every facet and wonder of a new product. That's what I want to see. I don't want to hear about it. I don't want you to explain it to me. Show me your example.

That is what Jesus did. He could have sent a messenger. He knows and speaks our language, after all he created it. He could have sent a book of instructions...hummm, I think he did. But he came first and showed the way. "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you." (John 13:15)

It starts at the top, Jesus is the Chief Shepherd and he sets the example for the shepherds of the church, his flock. "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock." (I Peter 5:2, 3)

Young and old, rich and poor, men and women - every one follows the leaders. Show us how. Do you want us to give quality attention to teaching others? Let us see how you do it. Do you want us to visit the sick, welcome the visitor, minister to the poor or be kind to the bereaved? We need to see your example.

Maybe we should all look around to see who is following us. Is there someone watching you and me? Yes, our example counts too. Follow Jesus example, look to our leaders for their example and show others the way to Jesus Christ.

Elizabeth Brown

THE BASIC PREMISE OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IS THAT:

- 1. ALL CHRISTIAN REVELATION WAS GIVEN IN THE FIRST CENTURY, &**
- 2. FIRST CENTURY REVELATION INCLUDES SOME INSTRUCTIONS WHICH ARE NOT OPTIONAL TO IGNORE.**

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY THIS IS "SPEAK WHERE THE BIBLE SPEAKS, AND REMAIN SILENT WHERE THE BIBLE IS SILENT".

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY THIS IS REV. 22: 18-19: ¹⁸I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

The old law tells us of the seriousness of God's judgment.

The new law tells of God's expectations of us today.

The church of Christ attempts to follow God's instructions rather than contemporary preferences to be sure you will be pleasing to God on judgment day.

Would you want to be anyplace else?

All we need to do is to effectively communicate that.

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION: VENOM!

Venom of snakes, Man of War, Bees, and other creatures are an interesting creation. To have a venomous creature, you must have:

1. Cells which will create a venom which will kill other cells, but not kill themselves,
2. Cells which will form into a bladder to store the deadly venom, without killing the cells forming the bladder (can be the same cells as item #1),
3. A hollow fang, barb, or the like which will pierce the skin of a victim to allow the venom to be injected into the victim,
4. A venom duct which communicate the venom from the gland to the fang, without the duct being killed by the venom,
5. A valve which is closed until the venom is needed to be dispensed,
6. A compressor muscle will pressurize the venom for delivery (can again be the cells of item #1 or the cells of item #2), and
7. A control system which will activate the venom injection process when the fang or barb is engaged.

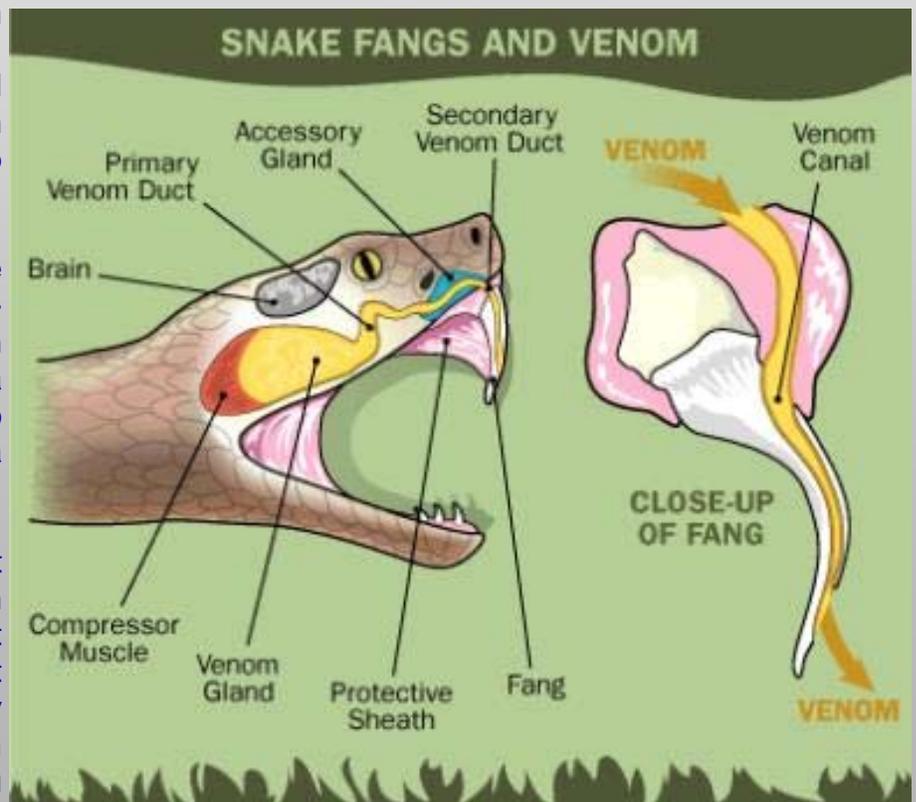
It is reasonable to presume the inclination for a snake to bite already existed and is simply taken advantage of. In the case of a bee or ant sting, the decision to do the barb injection must be a part of the control system.

A venom system consists at least 7 specific inventions in which cells having a zero I.Q. must function differently, and they must make all at the same time. If any one of the 7 things are not in place, nothing happens. If you

want to believe that each item can be invented by chance a million years apart, you do not have the survival of the fittest, you have survival of the awkward until they are all finished.

There would be no reason to evolve a bladder cell which could withstand venom, if venom did not exist. If you evolved venom before you evolve a bladder capable of storing it, it simply kills itself. It doesn't get another try, it simply dies. If it happens again a million years later, it dies again.

It may be unclear as to why God wanted to create venomous snakes or bee stings, but it is clear that their existence is the work of a highly intelligent inventor.



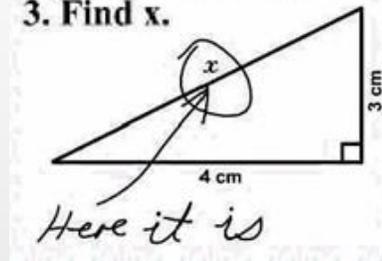
Foster's Home for Children

*"More than a home,
A sanctuary."*

Placement applications accepted.
Employment applications welcome.
Applications and donations available
online at
www.fostershome.org
Stephenville, Texas

FAILING A TEST WITH DIGNITY

3. Find x .



DO
YOU
BELIEVE
THE
BIBLE?

The first century church taught communion was on the first day of each week.

If your religious group teaches something else, you might like to visit your local Church of Christ.

The Churches of Christ attempt to speak where the Bible Speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent. (Rev. 22:18-19)

Quotable Quotes

A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing.

MONEY PAGE

GUARANTEED CHURCH GROWTH

If your congregation does the following, BCE Publications guarantees that it will grow.

Poll your congregation three times at 6 months intervals with the following results:

- 50% of the members know who their elder is
- 50% of the members will say that a minister is their friend
- 50% of the members will say that they are uplifted by the song services
- 50% of the men will say that their input is considered before physical decisions are made
- 50% of the members will say they are an important part of the work
- 50% of the members will say they are aware of the goals of the congregation
- 50% of the members will say that they know what their part is in achieving your goals

GUARANTEE: For the first congregation which does this and does not grow by at least 10%, we will send \$1000 to the church related children's home of your choice in your name.

I have never met a person who said that if they did this their church would not grow. If your congregation is not growing, what have you got to lose? (Offer made since 2001)

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION?

We will offer \$100 to the first person who can explain how we could have violated the first law of thermodynamics and have come into existence without God.

We will offer \$100 to the first person who can explain how we could have violated the second law of thermodynamics and have existed forever without God. (Offer first posted 8/08)

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION!

This publication continues (since 1991) to make a standing offer of \$100 to the first person who can give any reason (1 or more) as to why atheistic evolution is a better explanation for the universe and/or life than creation by God, The Father of Adam, Abraham, and Jesus; as revealed in the Bible.

We will also give you \$100 if we cannot give you 12 reasons why atheistic evolution is impossible as an explanation for our existence.

We will discuss this any place, any time, and in any forum. (Offer posed since June, 1991)

RUN AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT:

We will offer \$100 to the first person who can refute the logic that a person can in fact run at the speed of light as presented in a "technical paper" on our website. This strikes at the erroneous belief that of the relativity theory based on the "constant" speed of light.

THE MONEY PAGE:

This page may seem odd, even irreverent to offer money for something like this. It is 3 simple statements on church growth, that we cannot be here without God, and evolution is not possible. The steadfastness of putting money on the line for this is to try to be of assistance against those who would discourage church growth, believe in atheism, or promote atheistic evolution. The page is intended to be a continuing reinforcement.

THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

AN E-MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO SUSTAINED SCRIPTURAL CHURCH GROWTH IN OUR GENERATION

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1				
2				
3				
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AREA WIDE ACTIVITIES

2nd Tues. Preacher's Luncheon, confirm with Dale Foster at dalefost@gmail.com for address.

December Annual Sacred Harp Singing

5/22/14 Foster's Home For Children Golf Tournament, Blackhorse

Aug 2014 Area Wide Campaign for Christ

YAHOO GROUP

HoustonCofC is a Yahoo group hosted by Steve Sandifer [steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net] for the purpose of communicating Houston area news among the brethren. It is open to any member of the church at no cost.

The Christian Array Newsletter

This newsletter will be sent to members of the church on a monthly basis as an attempt to promote scriptural teachings, area wide activities and church growth. If you do not want to receive this newsletter, send an e-mail to info@thearray.org and it will be stopped.

If you know of anyone who would like to receive this newsletter, send their e-mail addresses to info@thearray.org. All past copies of the newsletter can be found on the website "thearray.org".

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

A goal of this newsletter is to develop a mailing list of as many members of the church as possible and to communicate church related information to as many members as possible. In that light, we would appreciate:

1. Your forwarding the church member e-mail addresses which you have.
2. Sending the directory of the congregation you attend or any other directories which you might have.
3. Give us an idea of how to collect church member e-mail addresses.

The Christian Array is dedicated to support the sustained scriptural growth of the churches of Christ. It is published by BCE Publications, a 501(c)(3) organization with Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E. as editor BCE is solely responsible for the content. Any announcements, requests for publication, or comments should be e-mailed to info@thearray.org.