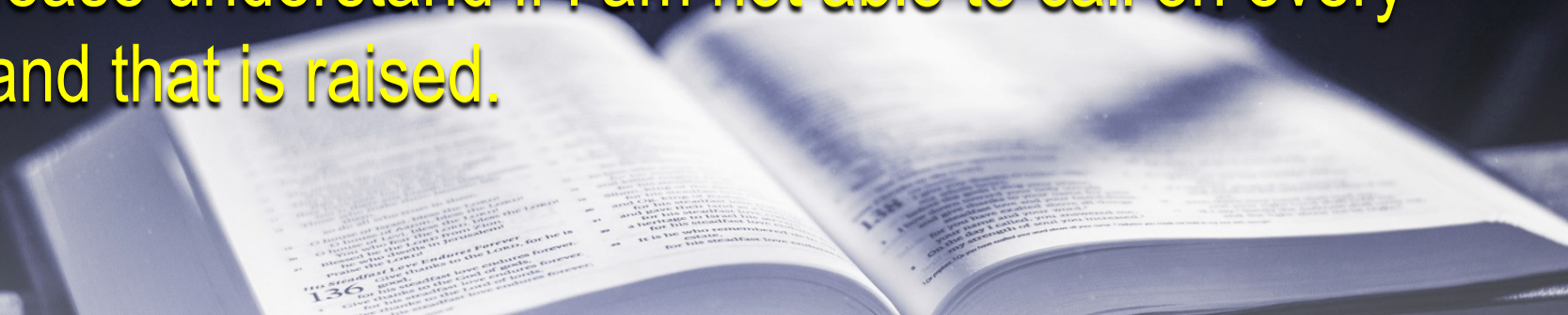


# Authority of the Scriptures



# Class Rules

- Please limit yourself to one comment a class.
  - Exception – Class exercises
- Please make comments that are on topic.
- Please come to class with an open mind.
- Please come to class with a desire to grow.
- Please come to class with a desire to honor the Lord.
- Please understand if I am not able to call on every hand that is raised.





# Class Lessons

- Lesson 1 Why Study Authority?
- Lesson 2 False Standards of Authority
- Lesson 3 Inspiration – Part 1
- Lesson 4 Inspiration – Part 2
- Lesson 5 How Does God Communicate With Us?
- Lesson 6 Wrong Attitudes About Bible Authority?
- Lesson 7 Establishing Bible Authority
- Lesson 8 Generic and Specific Authority
- Lesson 9 When is an Example Binding?
- Lesson 10 Aids and Additions
- Lesson 11 The Silence of God
- Lesson 12 The Universal and Local Church



# The Universal and Local Church

- Difference in Scope  
The universal church is unlimited in scope.
- Difference in How One Becomes a Member  
The Lord adds to the universal church.
- Difference in Make-up  
The universal church contains all the saved.
- Difference in Spiritual Standing Before God  
Only the saved are added to the universal church.
- Difference in Leadership  
The universal church is led by the Chief Shepherd.





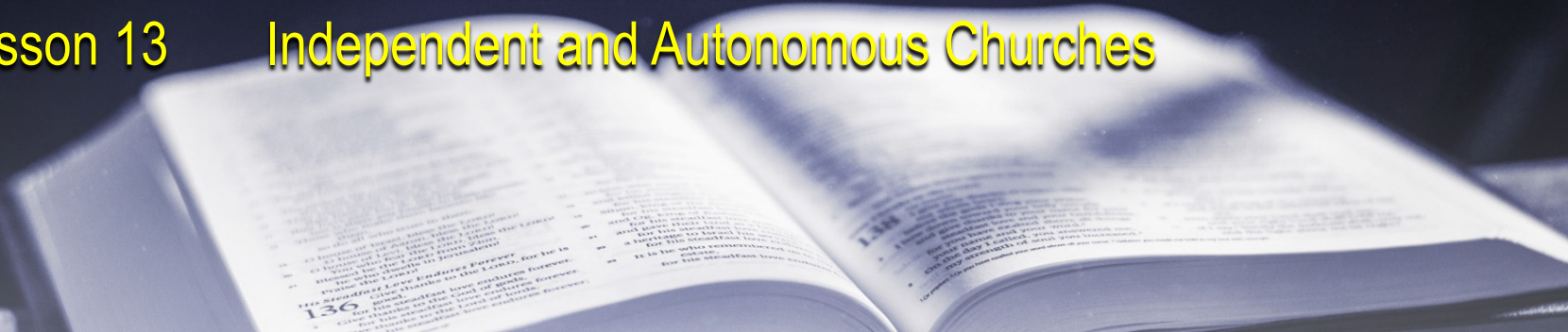
# The Work of the Local Church

- Unity and Oneness (Acts 4:32; 1 Cor. 1:10)
- Worship (1 Cor. 14:23-26; 16:1-2)
- Pooling Resources and Talents (Phil 1:5; 1 Cor. 16:1-3)
- Appointing Qualified Leadership (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5)
- Holding One Another Accountable to Righteous and Godly Living (1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Thess. 3:14-15)
- Edifying and Building Up One Another (1 Thess. 5:11-14)
- Maintaining Fellowship with Christ (Revelation 2-3)



# Class Lessons

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- Lesson 12 The Universal and Local Church
- **Lesson 13 Independent and Autonomous Churches**





# In-de-pend-ent and Au-ton-o-mous



# Independent and Autonomous Churches

- What does it mean to be **Independent** and **Autonomous**?  
**Free from a larger controlling unit**
- What are some terms that show local “churches” are not independent?  
**Earthly “headquarters” (Diocese, Synod, Papacy, Temple Square, etc.)**
- What are some practices that cause “churches” to lose independence?  
**Sponsoring Church, Missionary Society**
- Do we find scriptural authority for “independent and autonomous?”





# Independent and Autonomous Churches

Three key areas which demonstrate the scriptural plan

- Oversight of the Elders
- The Treasury
- Receiving Benevolence



# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Oversight of Elders

- Where does God want elders appointed (Acts 14:23)?





# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Oversight of Elders

- Where does God want elders appointed (Acts 14:23)?

And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting...

- Acts 14:23

# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Oversight of Elders

- Where does God want elders appointed (Acts 14:23)?
- Where did Paul tell Titus to appoint elders on the isle of Crete? (Titus 1:5)?

This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you...

- Titus 1:5



# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Oversight of Elders

- Where does God want elders appointed (Acts 14:23)?
- Where did Paul tell Titus to appoint elders on the isle of Crete? (Titus 1:5)?
- Who are the elders to oversee and shepherd (1 Peter 5:1-3)?



# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Oversight of Elders

- Where does God want elders appointed (Acts 14:23)?
- Where did Paul tell Titus to appoint elders on the isle of Crete? (Titus 1:5)?
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Shepherd the flock of God  
that is among you...

- 1 Peter 5:2



# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Oversight of Elders

- Where does God want elders appointed (Acts 14:23)?
- Where did Paul tell Titus to appoint elders on the isle of Crete? (Titus 1:5)?
- Who are the elders to oversee and shepherd (1 Peter 5:1-3)?
- How do these scriptures limit the oversight of elders?

Shepherd the flock of God  
that is among you...

- 1 Peter 5:2

# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Some Implications of 1 Peter 5:1-5

- Peter was a fellow elder to those receiving this letter (vs 1). What else was Peter?

So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed

- 1 Peter 5:1



# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Some Implications of 1 Peter 5:1-5

- Peter was a fellow elder to those receiving this letter (vs 1). What else was Peter?
- Who is head over the elders according to verse 4?

And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

- 1 Peter 5:4



# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Some Implications of 1 Peter 5:1-5

- Peter was a fellow elder to those receiving this letter (vs 1). What else was Peter?
- Who is head over the elders according to verse 4?
- Who is subject to the elders according to verse 5?

Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble

- 1 Peter 5:5



# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Observations from Revelation 1-3

- How did Jesus address the seven churches in a close geographic region (Rev 1:11)?

Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”

- Rev 1:11

# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Observations from Revelation 1-3

- How did Jesus address these 7 churches in a close geographic region (Rev 1:11)?
- What if the Sardis elders oversaw all the churches in the region (Rev 3:1b)?

... “I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead”

- Rev 3:1b





# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Observations from Revelation 1-3

- How did Jesus address these 7 churches in a close geographic region (Rev 1:11)?
- What if the Sardis elders oversaw all the churches in the region (Rev 3:1b)?
- What if the Ephesian elders oversaw the region (Acts 20:30)?

...and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

- Acts 20:30

# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## Oversight of Elders

- Elders in every church overseeing a local flock and a local work
- Elders accountable to the Chief Shepherd, Jesus
- What other scriptures authorize additions to this “reporting structure”?
- When we change the scope of oversight for the elders, whose authority is usurped?





# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## The Treasury



# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## The Treasury

- How was the treasury in Corinth controlled (1 Cor 16:3)?





# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## The Treasury

- How was the treasury in Corinth controlled (1 Cor 16:3)?

And when I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift to Jerusalem.

- 1 Cor 16:3

# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## The Treasury

- How was the treasury in Corinth controlled (1 Cor 16:3)?
- How did local churches in Macedonia and Achaia aid needy saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor 8:1-14, 9:1-5)?





# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## The Treasury

- How was the treasury in Corinth controlled (1 Cor 16:3)?
- How did local churches in Macedonia and Achaia aid needy saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor 8:1-14, 9:1-5)?

For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints

- 2 Cor 8:3-4

# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## The Treasury

- How was the treasury in Corinth controlled (1 Cor 16:3)?
- How did local churches in Macedonia and Achaia aid needy saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor 8:1-14, 9:1-5)?

Now it is superfluous for me to write to you about the ministry for the saints, for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year. And your zeal has stirred up most of them.

- 2 Cor 9:1-2



# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## The Treasury

- How was the treasury in Corinth controlled (1 Cor 16:3)?
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- Why was it necessary for Jerusalem to receive relief from other local churches (2 Cor 8:13-14)?



# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## The Treasury

- How was the treasury in Corinth controlled (1 Cor 16:3)?
- How did local churches in Macedonia and Achaia aid needy saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor 8:1-14, 9:1-5)?
- Why was it necessary for Jerusalem to receive relief from other local churches (2 Cor 8:13-14)?

...your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness.

- 2 Cor 8:13



# Independent and Autonomous Churches

## The Treasury

- Every church controlling its treasury
- Every church determining how to use its treasury
- Every church determining its capability to contribute
- No example of churchwide “relief fund” – give when there is need to those having need

