

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

April 8, 2007

The body of Christ

by David King

"He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the **church**, which is His **body** . . ." (Eph. 1:22-23).

"That He might reconcile them both to God in **one body** through the cross" (Eph. 2:16).

"There is **one body** . . ." (Eph. 4:4).

"For we are members of His **body**" (Eph. 5:30).

Paul's use of the "body" metaphor in Ephesians provides some important lessons in understanding the nature of the church, and our role in it. Consider the following:

First, these passages teach us clearly that Christ has only one church. He did not die to create some polymorphic monster with multiple bodies. Rather, He built only one church, His church. That simple truth should forever settle the question of how many churches Christ owns. Just one.

A second lesson is closely related to the first, namely, the church is an instrument of reconciliation, not division. It is the place where people from totally different backgrounds can find a common basis upon which they can be united, and work together in peace and harmony. But be careful here! Note that it is Christ who does the reconciling, not the church. The church is merely the result of the reconciliation that occurs when people come to the Lord. And it does not follow that peace is the ultimate objective, above all other considerations. Sometimes division is inevitable. But whatever the cause, division among followers of Christ is not a gift to be celebrated, but a tragedy to be mourned.

Third, the church of Christ is comprised of people — individuals, not congregations. Stated another way, the church is not a confederation of congregations, or some hierarchal institution. Rather, it is an assembly of people. This may seem like too fine a point, but the implications of this simple truth are far-reaching. If the Lord's church consists of individuals, then we cannot identify the Lord's church by simply compiling a directory of the "right" congregations. We must look to individuals to determine the identity of the church, not to congregations or collectives. Certainly, how those individuals organize themselves and their work in local congregations is important, but in the end it is individuals who will be saved or lost, not churches.

Finally, the church is ruled by Christ. He is its head, not a panel of delegates or "experts." It is not up to the members of Christ's body to make up their own rules, or to decide whether or not Christ's rules will apply to them. We cannot amend, ignore, or supplement any instruction that Christ has given us. By definition, to be a member of Christ's body is to accept His authority in one's life. That authority is expressed through Christ's word, revealed in the New Testament. All those who honor Christ's word are in His church; all those who do not, are not in His church. It's that simple.

Put all these together, and it's obvious that the modern conception of "Christianity" as a kaleidoscope of diverse denominations all doing their own thing is not Christianity at all. Rather, it is a sad corruption of Jesus' original intent.