

Oak Mountain Informer

August 28, 2011

Volume 20, Number 35

SOLVING A CHURCH PROBLEM

Not long after the church was established a problem arose that could have been quite damaging. There were widows in the church who did not have sufficient means to support themselves, so the church provided for their daily needs (Acts 6:1f).

Some of these widows are described as "Hellenistic Jews" (NASB). That is, these widows were from among those Jews who may have lived outside Palestine, spoke Greek, and were more accepting of a non-Jewish way of life in some ways. The others were native to Palestine and spoke Aramaic, the common language of the Jews in that place in the first century.

It is not hard to understand how some animosity might develop between the two groups. The Aramaic speaking Jews may have seen the Greek-speaking Jews as compromisers or tainted by the world to some degree. Of course, when people from either background obeyed the gospel of Christ, these feelings of resentment should have disappeared.

The widows from the Greek speaking, Hellenistic Jews were not receiving the daily portion of food they needed. There is no indication in the text that this was intentional, but it caused a problem. Given the friction that may have existed between the two groups, it is easy to see how this slight could erupt, even if it was accidental. How could the church address the issue and avoid division?

Fortunately the church had good leaders who guided the church through the process of solving the problem. They told the congregation to choose seven men that they could appoint over the matter. We don't know exactly how these seven men were chosen, we only know that they were. The apostles prayed and laid their hands on the seven, and the issue was resolved.

Without good leadership small church problems become big problems. Without effective leaders

problems are never fully solved. They are only put off until they become more complicated and more explosive and irreparable damage is done. But with good leaders explosive issues are defused, unity prevails, and good work can be done.

The apostles handled the situation wisely in several ways. First, they involved the congregation in solving the problem. They provided guidance, but did not impose a solution on the church without any input from them and against their will. They kept priorities right. The apostles understood that their work was to teach the word. Spending all their time making sure that these widows received their daily portion of food would have taken away from the work Christ had chosen them to do. Finally, the apostles prayed when they appointed the seven. Every congregation needs prayerful leaders who guide without lording it over the flock and keep things in the proper perspective so that the work of the Lord can be accomplished.

On the other hand, no problem can be solved if the congregation is uncooperative. In this case, the people were willing to implement the plan suggested by the apostles. Imagine the confusion that would have resulted if several factions within the church each proposed their own solution while complaining about how foolish the suggestion of the apostles was. Absolute chaos would have prevailed. But when there is mutual respect and a willingness to work together, no problem is insurmountable. It's only when pride, stubbornness, a desire to control, an unwillingness to listen, and other such self-centered qualities prevail that problems fester and explode. We need to make sure we don't possess any such qualities.

Because human beings are prone to sin, churches are prone to have problems. God anticipated this and gave us some guidance in His word which should help us solve them when they arise. The passage before us demonstrates that when good leaders and willing congregations work together, even the most thorny issues can be solved successfully.

Leading in Worship

August 28, 2011

Welcome

We want to welcome everyone attending worship today at Oak Mountain. If you have never been with us before, we are especially grateful that you have come our way. We hope to greet you personally before you leave. Our goal is to worship God in Spirit and truth, according to His word, seeking to please Him in all we do, and not ourselves. Our prayer is that you will benefit from being with us as we glorify our God and Father through His Son Jesus Christ.

Sunday Morning

Reading: Bryan Hill [Ezekiel 17:1-10]

Opening Prayer: Mark Delk

Song Leader: Allen Holcomb

Closing Prayer: Bill Sparks

Lord's Table John Clemons; Steve Sewell (Heads)

Jeff Beavers; Drew Martin; Russell Thomas;

Jeremy Noble; Jonathan Troulias; Jason Reed

Sunday Evening

Reading: Ben Holcomb [Ezekiel 17:11-24]

Opening Prayer: John Little

Song Leader: David Hammond

Closing Prayer: Rick Mays

Lord's Table Jason Reed; Jeremy Noble

Congregational Leaders

Elders

Jerry Bailey

Simon Bowen

Bob Hutto

Eric Martin

Deacons

Bryant Allen

Brian Barham

Dewitt Marcrum

John McMunn

Roger Noble

Wayne Troulias

Mark Zeanah

Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study 9:00

Sunday Worship 10:00

Sunday Worship 5:00

Wednesday Evening 7:00

Our goal: Every member working

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Remember to pray for Caroline Delk. and Erlene Davis. Both are confined to home.

Katherine Mitchell has returned home after having heart surgery. Please continue to pray for her recovery and support the entire Mitchell family.

Two babies were born last week. On Monday Sewell Manning was born to Lindsay and Landon, and on Wednesday Megan Fry was born to Amy and Chris.

Our Wednesday morning class will meet at the church building each week at 10:00 am.

Tony Mauck will hold our next Gospel Meeting October 16—19. We will meet each evening at 7:00. Regular service times on Sunday.

Daily Bible Reading

August 28—September 3, 2011

Sunday: Lamentations 1—3:36

Monday: Lamentations 3:37—5:22

Tuesday: Ezekiel 1—4

Wednesday: Ezekiel 5—8

Thursday: Ezekiel 9—12

Friday: Ezekiel 13—15

Saturday: Ezekiel 16—17

The Oak Mountain Church of Christ meets at 2054 State Park Road Pelham, AL. We may be reached at P.O. Box 385 Pelham, AL 35124 or at (205) 663-6566.

Read your Bible and pray each day.

Facts and Figures

Attendance & Contribution

August 21, 2011

Sunday AM: 230

Sunday PM: 163

Wednesday PM: 164

Contribution: \$5226.09