

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Reagan Cunningham, Kelly Cochran (illness), Betty Eubanks, Linda James, Butch Morgan (ongoing medical), Wayne Ryland (blood pressure), and Arlene Turner.

Our friends and family: Jim Abram, Joe Brown (bone cancer), Diane Anderson (Linda's sister), Elnora Bennet (Moses Stevens' sister), Mildred Church (shut-in), and Canera Wisdom (Larry Wisdom's mother).

Group Meeting: Group (2) meets tonight after worship. We encourage all to participate in this good work.

Area Gospel Meeting: The Trilacoochee Church of Christ begins their meeting today with Joshua Creel, and it will continue through Friday (October 18-23). All are encouraged to support their meeting.

Kids' Review Class: The next children's review "class" will be on November 1st.

Afternoon Singing: November 8th, in the auditorium, at 5pm.

Ladies' Bible Class: The next ladies' Bible study will be November 9th at the Rice's home. In preparation, please study lesson number X (10), that begins on page # 63 in the book, "Some Do's and Don'ts for the Christian". Please see the sign-up sheet, as there are still opportunities available for you to contribute with.

Follow-up: We will have a follow-up meeting for the teachers this afternoon at 5pm to discuss our on-going Bible class curriculum.

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 10/21/15

Song Leader: Clay Sadler
 Opening Prayer: Charles Rawdon
 Invitation: Colby Sadler
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: Jerry Williams
 Parking Lot: Ed Lawson

Sunday Evening: 10/25/15

Song Leader: Keith Marschall
 Opening Prayer: Colby Sadler
 Lord's Table: Charles Rawdon
 Announcements: Leon Miller
 Closing Prayer: Jim Elliot
 Parking Lot: Larry Hicks

Sunday Morning: 10/25/15

Lord's Table: Charles Rawdon (B)
 Ben Cunningham (C)
 Serving: Eddie Lawson
 Trent Stevens
 Song Leader: Colby Sadler
 Opening Prayer: Nick Ross

Announcements: Leon Miller
 Closing Prayer: Wayne Ryland
 Parking Lot: (9:00) David Williams
 (9:50) Mike Sadler



**Lakeland Hills
 Leader**

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ELDERS

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SERVICES

Sunday
 Bible Study 9:00 A.M.
 Morning Services 9:50 A.M.
 Evening Services 6:00 P.M.
 Wednesday
 Bible Study 7:30 P.M.

DEACONS:

Robert Marschall
 Charles Rawdon
 Michael Sadler
 Moses Stevens
 David Williams

EVANGELIST:

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

What Is A "Sound" Church?

What is a sound church? We can be guilty, often times, of changing the meaning of things by changing the definition of the terms that describe or represent whatever is under discussion. This has been done of course with many subjects, but perhaps the most dangerous and destructive instances are regarding the word of God. Consider the term "pastor". Biblically, the term is poimen, and is found in Ephesians 4:11. However, the term is also translated "Shepherd" in 1 Peter 2:25 and refers to the same office of "Bishop" (1 Timothy 3:1), "Elders" (Titus 1:5), "Overseers" (Acts 20:28); collectively they are called "the presbytery (KJV; NASB) and "Eldership" (NKJV). This term is now used in the "religious world" to refer to an evangelist or preacher. Now due to this change in usage, there has developed a change in definition, and due to the change in definition, there has arisen a change in designation, and due to the change in designation, there now exists a misunderstanding of organization, and misguided view of authority, and ultimately, a rejection of God's wisdom (Ephesians 3:9-11). For all who may say that this is just a silly argument of semantics, I remind us of (1 Peter 4:11 & Ephesians 4:29).

Now, what of our subject title? I simply ask, have we as Christians redefined the word “sound”? As we examine the question, what is a sound church, we must first ask ourselves what does the term sound mean? Any biblical term must be defined and understood by its biblical definition and use. The word sound is used two ways in Scripture. 1) To refer to the voice or noise of something or someone (Romans 10:18; 1 Corinthians 14:7; 1 Corinthians 15:52). 2) To refer to the state or condition of something.

- Doctrine (Titus 1:9; 2:1).
- Words (2 Timothy 4:3; 6:3; Titus 2:8).
- Mind (2 Timothy 1:7).
- Status (Titus 2:1).

Considering the 2nd definition the above verses means to be healthy, have sound health, or to be whole (3 John 2).

Redefining terms can take place by broadening the definition of term or narrowing the definition of a term. Let us ask: Has this been done in regards to the word sound and our understanding how a sound church is defined?

By a church, I am referring to a local church. This is important because local churches are composed of individual Christians. Any local church is as sound as the soundness of its local members. Paul’s epistles to Timothy and Titus speak more of “soundness” than any New Testament epistle or book. Of the 12 times the word

“sound” [ὑγιαίνω hugiaino] is used, 8 of those instances are in the epistles written to Timothy and Titus. Look closely at (Titus 2:1-10). Titus is commanded to speak “sound words” to those in Crete. Titus was also commanded to set in order the things that are wanting and appoint elders in every city (*remember elders are to oversee local churches—1 Peter 5:1). Within this commandment to Titus, we find that there was individual compliance as well as collective obedience demanded. This is the case throughout the whole epistle! It is the same with Timothy who was in Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3). It is also important to remember what Paul said the Ephesians elders while at Miletus (Acts 20:15-31). Note the individual and collective nature of the commands given in both epistles to Timothy (1 Timothy 2:1-15; 3:1-16 etc.). The Corinthians could also be used as an example, along with the church at Sardis (Revelation 3:1), to show the distinction and connection between the individual Christian and the local church. Collective faithfulness and individual faithfulness, although not solely reliant upon one another (Revelation 3:4), are most certainly relative to one another, (Revelation 3:1-3).

Have we redefined “soundness” by limiting the definition only to the collective work of a local church? Please, do not misunderstand my point. I wholeheartedly believe that a local church can be “unsound” by the way it carries out its collectively work, if contrary to the authority

of Christ, or the fact that it is not carrying out its collective commanded work through the authority of Christ! However, are we to limit “soundness” only to the collective work of a local church? There are many local churches that are “non-institutional” but are far from “sound” because of what we’ve previously noted about the term and how it’s revealed in Scripture.

You see...

- Many non-institutional churches don’t use the Lord’s money regarding benevolence in an unauthorized way, but use it to pay false teachers to speak.
- Many non-institutional churches don’t collectively use the Lord’s money to utilize and support human institutions to carry out their collective work, but have individual members who believe and support those institutions that do the work of local churches in other places.
- Many non-institutional churches say they are sound but have those who dress immodestly and neither the elders, evangelist, husbands, fathers, wives, mothers, men nor women, do or say anything about it (1 Timothy 2:9-10).
- Many non-institutional churches say they are sound but allow false teachers to remain, exist, and teach among them, and are afraid to stand up against them and their teachings (2 Timothy 2:15-18).
- Many non-institutional churches say they are sound but many of their husbands and wives openly ignore commands regarding the home (Titus 2:3-5).

- Many non-institutional churches say they are sound but will not, quite frankly, have men like Timothy or Paul as their evangelist (2 Timothy 4:1-5 Cf 2 Corinthians 10:10).
- Many non-institutional churches say they are sound but allow prejudice and allegiances to cloud their commanded impartiality (1 Timothy 5:20-22).
- Many non-institutional churches say they are sound but allow disrespectful and irreverent behavior by their young people with no consequences (1 Timothy 5:1-2).
- Many non-institutional churches say they are sound but have an inactive or non-responsive generation of older people (Titus 2:1-5); as well as unfaithful generation of young people with no admonition given (Titus 2:6-10).

So what is a sound church? A sound church is a local group of Christians who strive to be faithful in every command of God regarding every aspect of their lives. From the pulpit to the pews, from the home, to the work place, to the ball park, as well as the parking lot and driveway they are sound individually as well as collectively. This is a sound church! Their soundness is not measured solely on the basis of being non-institutional.

- By Harold Carswell, Jr.