

Churches Under Christ Newsletter

November 1, 2021



The Churches Under Christ Ministry helps churches who want to organize under Christ alone and is under the authority of Charity Baptist Tabernacle of Amarillo TX, Ben Hickham Pastor

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The ministry published [Church Spiritual Fornication Does Not Matter?](#) (October 25, 2021)

Highlighted October 2021 Ministry Activities

Note. Only the most important ministry activities are included below.

October 1: Published [October 1, 2021 Ministry Newsletter](#).

During October, the ministry continued working with three churches who are in the process of declaring a Bible trust so as to keep the churches under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. The ministry has been working with one of those churches, and incorporated 501(c)(3) church in laying the groundwork to execute trust documents and transfer real estate and other property to the trust estate, owned by the Lord Jesus Christ, execute a trust bank account, get the property tax exemption on the trust property once transferred, etc. The church had to amend the corporate constitution which required all property, upon dissolution of the corporation, to be transferred to another corporate 501(c)(3) religious organization. The church also coordinated all matters with state officials concerning the amendment and plans of the church to transfer the property to a trust and with the county tax assessor concerning property tax exemption on the real estate to be transferred to the trust.

On October 4, I received a request for a complete example of the Bible trust. I sent the following link: <https://jeraldfinney.com/2019/09/16/do-you-have-a-template-for-a-common-law-or-bible-trust/>

On October 10, I discussed a problem with an insurance policy taken out in the name of the trust, but which compromised the position of the church as a church under Christ alone. The trustee is to try to take care of the matter himself and call me if he cannot.

October 10-12 Went to UBF Conference in Indianapolis.

On October 15, I received the old trust documents to which I was not a party, from a church who wishes to up date and amend those documents. I will be working with the trustee to get this task completed.

October 25: Published [Church Spiritual Fornication Does Not Matter?](#)

October 27: Received an email from _____ with attachment, “_____ Newsletter, Oct 2021. I replied to that email as follows:

Dear Brother _____. Thanks for sending me a copy of the Newsletter. I must begin by saying that I love you dearly. I love the Lord and His Word, Commandments, Doctrines, etc. more. Therefore, I must be honest with you. Your Newsletter informed me of matters which I had no knowledge of, thus making this e-mail necessary.

I notice that you have the _____, which you call your personal mission as opposed to a ministry of [name of church]. It appears that this ministry is not under the authority of [name of church]. I find no basis in Scripture for dividing the work of a local church into a church under Christ alone and a separate ministry or ministries. I believe that the New Testament is clear: all ministry is to be under the authority of a local church under Christ and the church is to be solely under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ. That alone can be easily corrected if you desire.

Additionally, the church has, as you described it, a parent organization, "_____ Ministries." "_____ Ministries" is 501(c)(3). The work that "_____ Ministries" does is, according to the New Testament, to be a function of a local church body, not a so-called government 501(c)(3) ministry or organization. "_____ Ministries" should, according to the Bible, be under [name of church]. [Name of church] should be the "parent organization" if you will. Since "_____ Ministries" is the "parent organization," and [name of church] is an alter ego of "_____ Ministries" and not a church under Christ and Christ alone. Therefore, [name of church] is subject to the rules and regulations that come with 501(c)(3) status, and therefore, not a church under Christ and Christ alone.

All church plants, according to New Testament doctrine are to be out of another church, not a ministry. All ministries are to be under the authority of a local church and all local churches are to be under the authority of Christ alone.

If you disagree with me, let's set up a time to discuss this. Unless you can show me, from the Word of God, where I am wrong, I cannot be of any assistance to you in the future. Again, I love you, but I will not compromise on the matter of church doctrine.

Acts 20:28: *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."*

Ephesians 5:25-27: *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."*

Introduction to Lessons on the Bible (Common Law) Trust]



"But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts." 1 Th. 2:4

"According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." 1 Ti. 1:11

"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called." 1 Ti. 6:20

"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." 1 Co. 4:1-2

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Lk. 16:10-13

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

Note. "Property" includes both real and personal property. Personal **property**, also referred to as movable **property**, is anything other than land that can be the subject of ownership, including **money and bank accounts**.

American law recognizes, but did not originate, the concept of trust. Efforts of scholars to trace the origin have been futile. See, e.g., [Trusts, trust-like concepts and ius commune](https://www.academia.edu/5937188/Trusts_Trust_like_Concepts_and_Ius_Commune), 8 Eur. Rev. Private L. 453 (2000), C. H. Van Rhee: "... Whether these origins are Roman, Canonical or Germanic [or of some other origin] remains an unresolved question. ..." (This article can be viewed and/or downloaded at: [https://www.academia.edu/5937188/Trusts Trust like Concepts and Ius Commune](https://www.academia.edu/5937188/Trusts_Trust_like_Concepts_and_Ius_Commune). It can also be downloaded and viewed at:

[https://www.academia.edu/3568421/On the Origin of the Uses and Trusts?email_work_card=view-paper.](https://www.academia.edu/3568421/On_the_Origin_of_the_Uses_and_Trusts?email_work_card=view-paper.))

Scholars have not considered all historic evidence. Had they done so, they would have discovered that the concept of trust was originated by God in the manner in which He ordered things. The concept started in the beginning, in the Garden of Eden, and is evident throughout the Word of God. In the Bible one finds, by implication, “trust” (also explicitly stated), “trust estate,” “trustor,” (or “grantor” or “settlor”), “trustee,” “beneficiary,” and “fiduciary.” Actually, the concept is just part of the way things work, the way God arranged things, as He explains in His Word. “Trust” is recognized by American law as will be explained in a future lesson. American law labels the relationship, “common law trust.” One who studies these lessons will learn why I call it, “Bible Trust.”

The Roman Catholic “Church,” with all its heresies understood the this matter, although with some distortion, a long time ago:

- “Trust-like devices were popular in the Church [speaking of the Roman Catholic ‘church’], since they allowed this institution to accumulate the necessary means to discharge its tasks. At the same time, these devices preempted the criticism that the Church was not practising [sic] its own teachings on the spiritual dangers of wealth. The wealth accumulated by the Church was not regarded as property owned by the Church itself. According to S. Herman, it was said to belong to God the Father as sovereign Lord, the Pope and his clerical lieutenants acting as His stewards. In trust terminology: God acted as ‘settlor’, while the Pope and his clerical lieutenants acted as trustees. Christ, the meek, the poor and the congregation were usually designated as ‘beneficiaries’. God, as the settlor, also figured as the ultimate beneficiary of creation. In this way, the wealth of the Church could be justified, since the Church simply acted as a depository of goods created for all. Church officials were charged with managing the goods entrusted to them as ‘trustees’ and with using them for the good of the community. ” See [Trusts, Trust-Like Concepts and lus Commune...;Op Cit.](#)

Of course this Catholic misunderstanding allowed the Institution of the Roman Catholic “Church” to prosper and the clergy to live a luxurious life (the “beneficiaries” in practice although not in name) because the trust estate was not used for the benefit of God, the true owner of all things, and for mankind. The Catholic Church, accordingly, has stored up tremendous wealth and actually worships mammon. Nonetheless, even though misapplying the concept, Catholicism recognized it.

Most contemporary “Bible believing Christians” in America have no idea of the concept. Rather, most prostitute their churches through the use of various legal entity devises such as church incorporation and Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) or 508(c)(1)(A) tax exempt status.

These lessons will examine the Bible doctrine of trust and its proper application by churches. A church can operate according to the principles of the New Testament only should she apply the concept of trust; please do not summarily discard this statement until you have studied the matter out.

God entrusts a church to her members. He wants each church to operate and organize according to His precepts as laid out in the Bible. According to the New Testament, a church is to be a spiritual entity only. A spiritual entity cannot hold property or money, sue, be sued, enter into contracts or act legally in any way. Only a temporal entity can do those things. Of course, these statements raise many questions about the trust relationship, such as, "Is not the trust then a legal entity?" The answer is no. This will be explained in these lessons.

God wants members of His churches to give to Him, not to their church or church, inc. By the way, the members of a church corporation, not God, own the church, inc. If church members give to a church or to the church, inc., that church gives to herself since the members of the church are the church body, Christ being the Head. Of course, many believers in non-NT churches while giving to the churches they are members of, not to God, believe in their heart they are giving to God. I believe God will honor their giving, even though not according to knowledge, understanding and wisdom. However, when one grows to understand the truth about giving to God, he has a responsibility to begin to do things God's way.

These lessons will answer the question, "How can a church organize such that the church complies with Bible principles?" The answer in a nutshell is by complying with Bible teaching on the matter. There is only one Bible way to do so. That is by establishing an irrevocable trust relationship with property and remaining true to the Lord thereafter by making sure not to act legally (this will all be explained and all questions answered. Should you show me where I am wrong, I will publicly repent of my error.).

These lessons will explain all aspects of the Bible trust. As an appetizer, let me briefly explain the concept. When church members give to God, they should entrust their gifts and offerings to someone who holds and manages God's property solely for the benefit of the true owner, the Lord Jesus Christ. With an irrevocable common law trust, all property held in trust (the trust estate) is to benefit the Lord Jesus Christ according to His will as given us in the Bible. No property placed in the trust estate is to be returned to the person who gave it or to any inure to the benefit of any person, except, of course for helping the poor or those in need as the Lord leads and consistent with Christ's will.

These lessons will explain the trust relationship in some detail. They will cover the following, and more:

1. **The basics of the Bible Trust and how a Church which has established a Bible trust can become a legal entity thereby nullifying status of the church as a spiritual body under Christ and Christ alone**
2. **Holding property in trust is a Bible concept**
3. **The Trustor**
4. **The Trustee**
5. **The proper term: “Trustee” or “Steward”**
6. **The Beneficiary**
7. **A Church Bible Trust agreement and estate**
8. **The wisdom of a Declaration of Trust**
9. **American law recognizes and applies the concept of trust**
10. **Many churches in America are establishing Bible Trusts**
11. **Documents establishing the Bible Trust**
12. **Whether donors to the trust estate can claim deductions for their gifts on their income tax returns**
13. **Property Tax Exemptions on the Lord’s Property held in the trust**
14. **Opening a trust bank account: Is it OK to get in EIN for the trust bank account**
15. **Income taxes on gifts to the support the pastor and his family**
16. **Etc.**

In short, the New Testament covers both church doctrine (the heavenly calling of a church) and application (the earthly conduct of a church). These lessons cover the application of the Bible Doctrine of church organization. The course is for those who understand New Testament Church doctrine and agree that God desires a church to be “an holy temple in the Lord” ... “built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:21-22) built solely “upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone” (Ephesians 2:20); that a church should not seek legal (temporal, earthy) status under man created laws, rules, and regulations; and that a church should choose to make sure that Christ is “head over all *things* to the church” (Ephesians 1:22).

Go to the following webpage for links to additional lessons as they are added: [Lessons on the Bible \(Common Law\) Trust.](#)