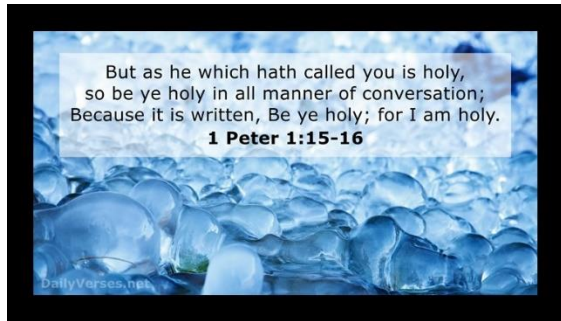


# Churches Under Christ Newsletter

December 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



**Pages 1-6: Highlighted November 2021 Ministry Activities**

**Pages 6-10: Featured Essay: God's Word Commands a Holy Separated Church**

## Highlighted November 2021 Ministry Activities

**Note.** Only the most important ministry activities, and activities which deal with important matters concerning Bible trust operation, are included below. Some of the matters dealt with in this newsletter include church Internal Revenue Code § 508(c)(1)(A) tax exempt status (does it have the same effect as § 501(c)(3)? tax exempt status?), IRS form 1041, transitioning from state corporate 501(c)(3) status to New Testament church status, conducting ministries separate from the church (is this consistent with establishing a Bible trust?), and the initial mailing sent every pastor interested in organizing a church under Christ and Christ alone.

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

**November 1-Present** Continued to work with a Kentucky church that started the process of transitioning from corporate 501(c)(3) status (fornication with the state and federal government) to church under Christ status months ago. The church constitution had to be amended so that the corporation could transfer the property to something other than to another corporate tax-exempt religious organization. State law did not have any limitations on transfer of the corporate property. The church also contacted the state attorney general and the county tax assessor about their plans and were given the go ahead. It is always wise to be proactive in all matters. The church also studied all matters concerning establishing a common law trust and transferring the property, including retaining a real estate attorney to help in transferring the title of real estate to property. The plans are to execute trust documents and transfer property in December!

Of special note in this situation. The church is also transitioning from pastor led to plurality of elders. Their rationale is explained in

**November 1-** I responded to an email from a wonderful pastor and friend received on October 27. The e-mail was a copy of the [REDACTED] Newsletter. The Newsletter explained that the church, a personal ministry, and a “parent” 501(c)(3) organization and ministry all of which were all related. The Newsletter briefly described the work and role of each.

He had organized the common law trust several years ago, with the help of the Biblical Law Center. I had not been involved with that matter, but have talked with him over the last few years and we had become good friends.

I sent him the following redacted email on **November 1**:

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 [REDACTED] Mustard Seed Missions, 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, you have a parent organization, [REDACTED] “Missionary Companion Ministries,” which is 501(c)(3). The work that [REDACTED] MSM 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. [REDACTED] MSM should, according to the Bible, be under [Name of church]. The [Name of church] should be the “parent organization” if you will. Since [REDACTED] MSM is the “parent organization,” The [Name of church] is an alter ego of [REDACTED] MSM and not a church under Christ and Christ alone [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.”

#### **He responded to me on November 5:**

Dear Brother Jerald,

I first want you thank you for your email letter in response to our newsletter. I know that it was written in love and was received as such.

I wanted you to know that I'm not ignoring you. I'm processing how to respond. I know that I have some questions and will need to have a phone conversation with you.

**Laura** and I both thank you for taking the time to write to us! I'm sure you'll hear from us after the weekend. Part of our delay with my communication is that **Laura** and I need to have time to sit down and talk. Being a nurse and with the shortage of staff, she's been working a lot.

I'm sure things will work out for His desires!

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#### **I responded to him:**

Dear Bro. **Kevin**,

I am just now getting caught up with my emails. Please forgive me for taking this long to get back with you. Yes, let us set up a time to discuss this. I do love you dearly. I would call you now, but it is already 6:58 pm here. I will try to call you in the morning to set a time. I will just have a minute to spare in the morning. We may have to play phone tag, but we will seek to get this matter taken care of in a way that honors our Lord. God bless.

Bro Jerald

#### **Received from him the following email on November 7:**

Dear Brother Jerald,

First of all, thank you again for your recent letter to **[his wife] a and myself** as a response to the newsletter we had sent out.

**[Wife]** and I know that your letter was written to us in love and with our best interest in mind.

Let me first start by explaining the reason the events took place and our thought process behind it, which also shares our heart; as well as maybe help you to have a possible solution to our situation that we may not have come up with.

[The pastor then explained how the ministries and church organizations came about].

Again, I looked forward to talking with you soon. Thank you for pointing these things out to us. Please let me know when is a good time to call you to speak further about this matter and possible solutions to correct the error of my ways.

In Christ's Love,

**Kevin**

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#### **My response to him on November 8:**

Dear Bro. **Kevin**,

Again, just read this email. God bless, dear brother. We will work this out in a manner in which you believe the Lord will be glorified. We both wish to honor the Bridegroom.

**Ephesians 5:23-27** "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 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."

God bless,

Brother Jerald

**November 10** Call with Bro. Kevin. He agreed with my position and is correcting the problems.

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**November 2 through the present:** Continued working with an Ohio pastor who desires to organize the church according to New Testament church doctrine. He is cancelling the 501(c)(3) status of a ministry. Received email from Bro. Kevin with Sec. of State Cancellation of ministry corporation. He is setting up a webpage. On November 12, I talked with him and two of his key men on a conference call. I explained the Bible trust and related matters and answered questions. On November 14, I received an email stating that one of the men who took part in the conference call and his wife were very offended that his wife was not included in the conference call. The pastor had informed them in advance that the call was a "Men in leadership Call." The pastor said that this was the third time in three weeks that they had become "Prideful & Pushy." He notified them saying, "It is time to say good-bye!" Both he and his wife agreed that it was time for the man and his "Pushy/Controlling Wife" to be gone. The pastor and church has also dealt with other obstacles.

They started having church meetings on November 28. Trust documents were drafted and edited on November 17 and 18.

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**November 2-Present;** Call from [redacted] referred by Bro. Greg Dixon and the BLC. He started a home church. .... He was alerted to 501c3 problems through Mark Taylor. He is planting a home church in Ohio. They have no real estate. Operating out of their home. Only 3 families now. Only have had a few services. We talked for a long time. He wants to start the process. He works nights. Sleeps until about 6 pm Eastern time. I emailed him the initial mailing on November 3. The initial mailing, sent to all those who wish to proceed to establish a Bible trust, reads as follows:

Dear Brother [redacted],

PLEASE RESPOND TO THIS EMAIL TO LET ME KNOW YOU RECEIVED IT. CALL ME ANYTIME FOR ANY REASON.

It was a great blessing to talk with you yesterday.

Attached are the following documents:

1. Initial letter
2. Policies, Procedures and Guidelines
3. Questionnaire 1

Please read the docs carefully. The initial letter gives some information concerning the freedoms provided by the First Amendment, and also the Texas Declaration of Independence and the Texas Constitution. It also summarizes the steps and procedures utilized by this ministry.

You can download Q1 and fill in your answers in Word, if you like. Or, you can print it out and fill in by hand. If the former, you can then attach it to an email to me. If the latter, you will have to either mail me a copy of scan it and attach it to an email.

By the way, if you preview a document from the email, you will be able to go directly to any linked resource by left clicking.

Feel free to call me at any time for any reason. Again, if you get a VM, I will return your call asap.

God Bless,

Brother Jerald Finney

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On November 8, I called Bro. Kevin. We discussed his concerns. I still have not received the completed questionnaire 1 as of December 1.

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**On November 3** I received a call from a trustee whom the ministry helped in establishing a Bible trust. I returned his call on November 4. Advised him about name change of church—advised him not to do it, and my reasons for that advice. Also advised him on obtaining a lease for a meetinghouse.

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**Nov 16** Text from Pastor Kevin, Kevin Baptist Church, Kevin Iowa. He wants to get some insights from me. Called him and we talked a long time. He said we talked about 1 year ago. He is talking to a ... pastor about unincorporating church in Nebraska and is going to preach in that church on Nov 17 on the matter. Kevin Baptist Church adopted DOT in 2015 with help of Barbara Ketay.

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**On November 16 and 17**, I received the 2 e-mails concerning 508(c)(1)(A). One read as follows:

Hello sir. Can you clarify this for me? I believe I know the answer.

Is a 501C3 and a 508 the same? Some churches and prophets are saying they are 508's not 501's. I thought the organizations were the same and were afforded the same benefits by the government; i.e., tax-free, etc. However, they are also bound and cannot speak against government policies, etc.

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I answered both as follows:

Dear Brother **Kevin**,

The only difference is that churches are exempt from filing for 501(c)(3) status because of 508(c)(1)(A). However, 508 churches are subject to the same IRS rules and regulations. The complete explanation is at:

[Church Internal Revenue Code § 508\(c\)\(1\)\(A\) Tax Exempt Status](#)

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**On November 16**, I received an e-mail from a trustee of a Bible trust concerning the IRS letter granting an EIN which he applied for as trustee “for banking purposes only.” The IRS letter also informed him that he, as trustee, has to submit yearly form 1041. I told him that I will draft a letter to the IRS explaining that form 1041 is not appropriate. I explained that I usually have to do this for the trusts now as a matter of routine, that the first one I did was in 2017, and that after sending the letter, the matter is settled and the IRS does nothing further.

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## **Featured Essay: God’s Word Commands a Holy Separated Church**

**Jerald Finney**

**May 2, 2021**

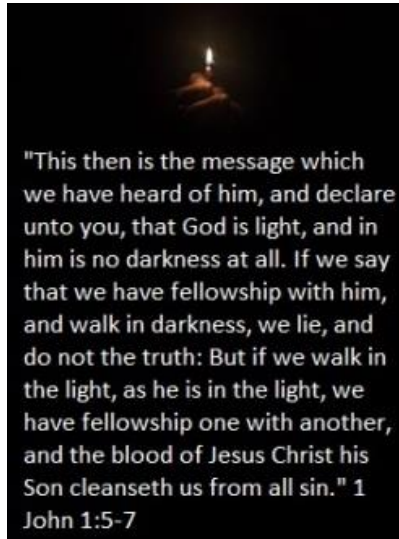
*“Christ ... loved the church and gave himself for it” (Ephesians 5:).*

*Christ purchased the church with his own blood (Acts 20:28).*

“The biblical doctrine of separation is based upon one of God’s essential attributes—His holiness.” *“God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth”* (1 John 1:5-6). “The perfect will of God is always the same: ‘[B]e ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”

God’s Word lets us know “what fellowships are permissible, as well as which ones are not.” Separation from error and the errant is for a believer’s spiritual well-being,” that of others, “and usefulness in service.” Separation glorifies God. Union with the worldly, the profane, false teachers, and disobedient brothers displeases God.

Most believers agree that God's Word proclaims the principle of separation, but few are concerned with personal or church application; fewer even want to open their minds and heart to the principle as applied to the relationship between church and state. The Bible teaches separation of church and state. "Separation from evil and every false way is always God's order. We are called to be separated unto Christ and declared positionally sanctified 'in Him' the moment we believed and were saved.... Separation is a Biblical truth—past, present, and future."



Christians find it "a problem to understand why" God commands churches to be solely under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, even if this means they must separate, not only from civil government (incorporation, 501(c)(3), 508(c)(1)(A), etc.), but also from compromised Christian organizations, ministries, and churches. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11). False teaching from within (1 Co. 5:6-8) or without (Lk. 12:1) taints or corrupts. An established church, a church who has combined with the state, has false teaching from within the church, and has invited false teaching from without the church.

Churches are to separate from worldliness. The influence of worldliness through man's law—incorporation, federal tax exempt status, legal status of any kind—"destroys sensitivity to what is truly acceptable to God and what is not." God commands:

*"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:15-17).*

Churches are to separate from false teachers. They should not enter into fellowship with churches, ministries, and organizations "which have rejected God's infallible and final Revelation:"

*"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).*

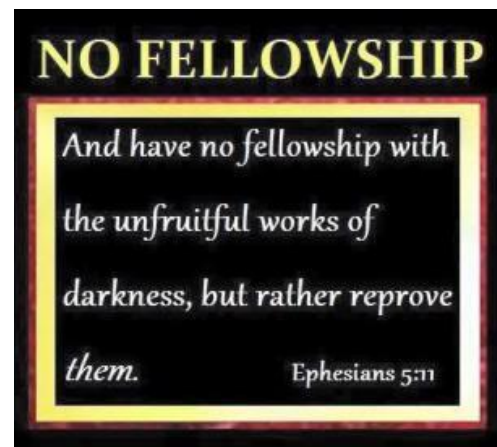


God's desire is that a church never join with civil government and any man-ordained and -created organizational scheme or any organization not in "strict adherence to the truth of the Word of God." "Any common religious or spiritual endeavor (worship, evangelism, prayer, education, relief, etc.) with those who have rejected Bible truth is in direct conflict with this Biblical commandment of separation if [a church] participates with them."

Rejection of Bible truth is wickedness, and "it is His will for His own to separate from all such evil." God says He will *"be a Father"* unto those who separate from apostasy (2 Corinthians 6:18). *"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God"* (2 Corinthians 7:1).

Churches must not only separate, but they must also *"have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them"* (Ephesians 5:11). We should vehemently sound a warning to all groups "riddled with unbelief ... but we must also vehemently sound a warning to all believers who might be drawn subtly into complicity with" heresy and apostasy.

Churches are to separate from spiritual fornicators—those who fornicate with civil government and justify it through false teaching, heresy. A heretic who denies Bible truth is to be rejected, not embraced: *"A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject"* (Titus 3:10). A Bible believing and practicing believer, and church by extension, must not find himself in common cause with such:



- "whether it is by ecclesiastical affiliation, or by any form of joint ministry or worship. The clear call is for everyone who names the name of Christ to separate himself from every dishonorable vessel; that is, those who have turned away from the truth of the infallible Word. Only then will a vessel be *'meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work.'* Only when a believer has *'depart[ed] from iniquity'* and has separated from those *'who concerning the truth have erred'* can he truly have fellowship *'with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.'*"
- *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth.** But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; **Who concerning the truth have erred,** saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, **Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.** But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. **If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.** Flee also youthful lusts: but follow*



*righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them **that call on the Lord out of a pure heart***" (2 Timothy 2:15-22).

On this point, most churches "turn away from the plain teaching of God's Word because of "their refusal to separate from false teachers and ... affiliations as previously mentioned. For them, the desire for visible unity, respectability, popularity or success; or the avoidance of appearing to be schismatic or 'too negative' takes precedence over simple obedience to the Bible. They may even justify their disobedience on the basis of love or opportunities to witness. But it is still disobedience, and God says we are not to walk in fellowship with disobedient brethren:

*'Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother'* (2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15).

"There is no such thing as so-called 'first and second degree separation,' just Bible separation, plain and simple."

*Refusing the call to be separate is sin. No matter how impressive are their "numbers and far-reaching influence, if they do not hold to sound doctrine" and warn of against union with the world, God's Word is slighted.*

Many brethren in state-affiliated churches say and do many commendable things. But, "by their very church association ... they are repudiating Biblical separation." Refusing the call to be separate is **sin**. No matter how impressive are their "numbers and far-reaching influence, if they do not hold to sound doctrine" and warn of against union with the world, God's Word is slighted. "It cannot be pleasing to God when there is not, first of all, an agreement on—and then practice of—the Truth. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed" (Amos 3:3)? "All who support and thereby join in the fellowship with compromising ministries are partakers with that error. Loss of reward awaits all who thus identify themselves with those who do not hold to the 'doctrine of Christ"—all of it, from Genesis through Revelation.

*"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them"* (Romans 16:17). "One who practices Bible separation is not the one who causes divisions between believers. Divisions are caused by those who do not practice sound doctrine." What is more important than the purity of the church? *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it"* (Ephesians 5:25).

Reasons for Bible separation include:

1. It maintains church purity.
2. It promotes spiritual well-being.

3. Full reward at the judgment seat of Christ. *“And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully”* (2 Timothy 2:5); See also, e.g., 1 Corinthians 3:13-15 and Revelation 3:11). God is a jealous God and He wants our undivided loyalty. “He is not pleased when His children are identified, even in the slightest, with compromise or error. Such doublemindedness prevents our fellowship with Him (1 Corinthians 10:16-21).”
4. “Finally, separation from disobedient brethren is necessary in order to maintain a strong, consistent testimony in the midst of theological turmoil and confusion. Compromised fellowship clouds the issues, dulls the spiritual discernment and silences Scriptural reproof.

*“Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners [right conduct]”* (1 Corinthians 15:33). Only a separated Bible believer is able, in obedience to God’s clear command, to sound a faithful warning concerning the deception that Satan is sowing in the Church today (Acts 20:28-31). Always remember that our God is HOLY, and He calls us to be holy. In order to be obedient to His command, we must endeavor, but the grace of God, to be separated wholly unto Him, regardless of the cost or the scorn of man.”

Note. The unattributed quotations are from the tract, “What Does the Bible Say about SEPARATION?” Fundamental Evangelistic Association; P.O. Box 6278—Los Osos, California 93412.