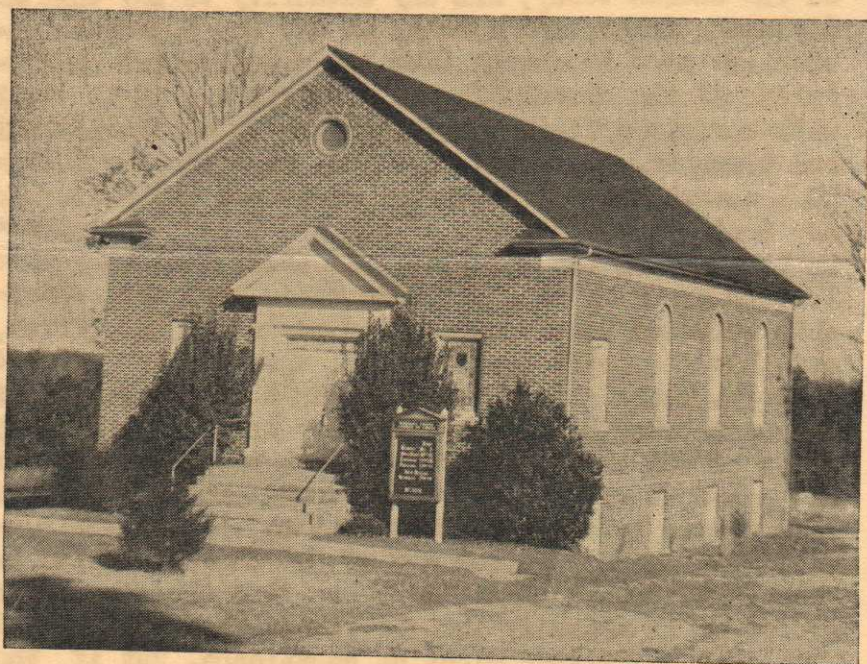


BULLETIN OF THE
CHURCH OF CHRIST
AT
WARNERS CHAPEL

CLEMMONS, N. C.



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| I. You may read about it in the Bible.
Rom. 16:16 | III. Its acts of worship are patterned after the New Testament.
John 4:24 |
| II. It speaks where the Bible speaks, is silent where the Bible is silent.
I Pet. 4:11 | IV. It exalts Christ as the <i>only</i> head of the church.— Collossians 1:18 |
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YOU ARE WELCOME AT OUR SERVICES

Weekly Publication
of
The Church of Christ
at
Warner's Chapel

Services held weekly
Sunday A.M. 10:00 & 11:00
Wednesday 2:00 & 7:30 P.M.
Radio Service Sunday 9:30
Sunday P. M. 7:30

The Eldership

Its Perpetuity

It is important that we teach and contend for the New Testament order of the organization of the church as is to teach and contend for the faith and worship of it. One phase of the New Testament is as important as another. No member of the church and surely no one out of the church today, has any authority to say that the doctrine, faith, and worship of the New Testament church are more important than the organization and discipline of the church. The Holy Spirit set up the church with certain definite organization. We should know that and teach it. We should know just what the New Testament church has in its organization and discipline. No one denies the eldership of the New Testament church in the days of the apostles. All admit that there were "elders in every church." Some claim that the eldership belonged to the miraculous period of the church, and that it passed away with all spiritually gifted members. Those who make this claim deny the right of a church today having elders. They rebel against any class of men in the church who have been appointed or set apart as elders. They have caused much trouble and disturbance by their contention that the eldership ceased with the miraculous age of the church. If it be true that the eldership did cease then these brethren are right in opposing the eldership. Their manner and method of opposition might be questioned. But if the New Testament teaches that the eldership ceased, they should stoutly contend with meekness and humility for the pattern of the permanent state of the New Testament church. But if the New Testament does not teach that the eldership ceased; if the New Testament teaches the permanent perpetuity of the eldership, then those radical brethren are wrong and in open rebellion against God's order. The Church is a body; it has many members. This implies organization. "For even as we have many members in one body, and all members have not

the same office: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another. Rom. 12:4, 5. And again, But now they are many members, but one body. 1st. Cor. 12:20. A body cannot exist without members at least, the Holy Spirit declares the church is like a body and has its different members. Such can't exist without a harmonious functioning of the members. This implies organization. What is it to organize a church? Those who oppose the eldership ought to be able to tell when a church is organized and just when its organization is complete. If a church does not have elders and deacons what is there about a church that constitutes its organization? The New Testament clearly teaches the work and duties of the elders. The elders are to "feed the church of the Lord" Acts 20:28. They are to "take heed to all the flock"; they are to govern, or rule, the church; they are to watch in behalf of the souls of its members. Heb. 13:7; they are to take the oversight of the flock and guide the church in its activities. These with many other duties were imposed upon the eldership in New Testament times. No one disputes these simple declaration of the church must either affirm that all of these duties or work ceased or that this work has been placed upon another class of men. I see no escape from this dilemma. If they claim that the work has ceased and there is no such duties or work needed in the church today, then what are the duties or the work of a church today? Will they claim that no one shall take the oversight of the church, that no one is to govern or rule the church, that no one should take heed to all the flock and guide the church in its activities? If they take the other horn of the dilemma and say that all of this work is to be done but another class of members has been designated, by the New Testament to do this work, then we ask with deep earnestness, where do we find such instructions in the New Testament? We must know as they know that there is not any passage of scripture in all the New Testament that teaches that the work and duties that the elders in New Testament times did have been transferred, to another class of members and that the New Testament church today has no eldership. Those who make the claim that the eldership has ceased base their claim on the

assumption that all elders in the New Testament church were inspired men. This claim is made with great boldness; and since all inspired persons have died and inspiration in its miraculous form has ceased, then all elders have ceased. Is the claim that all elders in the New Testament were inspired true? Where is there any such scripture for such a claim? No one can find such a scripture. In the list of qualifications of elders as mentioned by Paul to Timothy and Titus, inspiration is not mentioned as one of the qualifications. Again, in the list of miraculous gifts mentioned by Paul to the church at Corinth, elders are not mentioned among them. Why the omission of inspiration as a qualification if it was one of the requirements? The qualifications of elders were mentioned or given to guide in the selection of elders. The selection was to be based upon the qualifications. Since inspiration or a miraculous gift is not mentioned as a qualification, then we conclude that such is not a requirement. God's form of government in the church was vested in the eldership. The elders were to rule well and oversee the church. If elders have ceased or did cease with the miraculous age, did God's form of government for the church cease? If the early form of government for the church ceased, what form of government has been perpetuated, or what form of government does the church have today? Who is divinely appointed to administer this form of government, if, indeed, the eldership, has ceased? As spiritual gifts were about to disappear we find the eldership was fully established. As the miraculous age was passing, the eldership was established the more firmly, or the inspired writers gave instruction as to the kind of men who should be selected to do this work. If the eldership has ceased, then all of the qualifications of elders mentioned in the New Testament are of no use to us. That portion of the New Testament which describes the qualifications of the elders might as well have been omitted from the New Testament. The Holy Spirit never ordained or instructed us that the elders should be discontinued. To discontinue the work of the elders or to discontinue eldership means to change God's order. One might as well pervert the doctrine and worship of the church as to pervert its organization. One teaching or believing contrary to this is guilty of heresy. And Paul told Titus of the first and second admonition to reject such. Tit. 3:10