

## Functional Structure

The Scripture of Good Hope Church and biblical principles with consideration of culture, tradition, and common sense should guide the structure of the church. The nature of the church is key in determining its structure.

### THE CHURCH IS A FELLOWSHIP

Acts 2:42

"They continued steadily learning the teaching of the apostles, and joined in the fellowship..."

Top priorities in a fellowship are harmony and unity.

Ephesians 4:3

"Make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit thorough the bond of peace."

Romans 14:19

"So let us concentrate on the things that make for harmony and the growth of our fellowship together."

Any attitude that causes disunity is sin.

Col. 3:15, I Cor. 1:10, 2 Tim. 2:14, Pr. 17:14, 2 Cor. 13:11, Phil. 1:27, 2:1-3; Col. 2:2, Phil. 4:2, I Pet. 3:8, I Cor. 14:33, John 13:34-35, 2 Tim. 2:23, Rom. 15:5-6, Rom. 12:16-18, Col. 3:13-14, Ps. 133:1

1 Corinthians 11:17-18

"(Often)...your meetings do more harm than good because I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you..."

IMPLICATION: A good structure promotes unity and downplays differences.

### THE CHURCH IS A FAMILY

1 Peter 3:8

"You should be like one big happy family, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds." (See also Gal. 6:10, Heb. 2:10-12, I Pet. 4:17)

1 Timothy 5:1-2

"Don't reprimand a senior member of the church, appeal to him as a father. Treat the young men as brothers, and the older women as mothers. Treat the younger women as sisters..."

1 Timothy 3:4-5

"(A Pastor) must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. If anyone does not know how to manage his family, how can he take care of God's church?"

IMPLICATION: A good structure operates on the basis of relationships not rules.

## THE CHURCH IS A BODY

1 Corinthians 12:27, Ephesians 5:23, Ephesians 1:22-23, Colossians 1:18 and 2:19

We are a body - a living organism. Something much greater than an organization.

Romans 12:4-6

"Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many from one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We each have different gifts according to the grace given us."

In an organization, "maintenance" becomes the focus, but in a living organism, "ministry" is the focus.

Ephesians 4:11-12

"God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up..."

IMPLICATION: A good structure empowers people to use their God-given gifts to fulfill His purposes.

## THE CHURCH IS A FLOCK

Jesus' favorite description of the Church: John 10:1-30, Matthew 26:31, Matthew 25:33

Those who care for the Church are like shepherds.

John 21:16-17

"Jesus asked Simon Peter, 'Do you really love me?'" "Yes Lord", said Peter. Then take care of my sheep."

1 Peter 5:1-2

"To the elders I say...Be shepherds of God's flock, serving as overseers..."

Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the same church leaders:

"Poimen": Pastor or Shepherd

"Presbyters": Elder

"Episcopos": Overseer or Bishop

Acts 20:17-18, 28 "Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived he said to them...Guard yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be pastors of the church of God..."

**IMPLICATION: A GOOD STRUCTURE RECOGNIZES SOME INDIVIDUALS HAVE A GOD-GIVEN CHARGE TO OVERSEE THE CHURCH AS SHEPHERDS.**

Accountability

A called, appointed, and congregational ratified board of elders, led by the Senior Pastor, and with mutual accountability oversees Good Hope Church. Both the church and its Senior Pastor are accountable to both the congregation and the church's parent organization, Open Bible Churches. All leaders are subject to term limitations and periodic congregational ratification.