

## The Local Church

### Introduction :

- A. Those who espouse a “new hermeneutic” deny that local churches of Christ must conform to the New Testament pattern for the local church; in fact, they deny there is such a pattern. “There is an exemplar and paradigm, but it is not a particular institutional form of the church in history. It is Jesus Christ himself” (Rubel Shelly and Randall J. Harris, **The Second Incarnation**. 78-79).
- B. The church of the New Testament, correctly studied, is indeed the perfect pattern for local churches today. - Philippians 3:17
- C. What are the scriptural characteristics of a local church of Christ?
  - I. It is composed of saints who agree to work together. - Acts 9:26-28
  - II. It is local. - 1 Corinthians 1:2; Romans 16:5
  - III. It assembles regularly. - 1 Corinthians 11:18; Hebrews 10:24-25
  - IV. It functions collectively. - 1 Timothy 5:16; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2
  - V. It is organized. - 1 Timothy 2:11-12; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1; Acts 14:23
    - A. bishops - Acts 20:17,28
    - B. deacons
    - C. saints
    - D. supports evangelists - Philippians 4:15-16
  - VI. It is independent, autonomous. - 1 Peter 5:1-2

### Conclusion:

- A. The local church, as revealed in the New Testament, is a group of Christians in a given locality who agree to worship together regularly and to do the Lord's work collectively through the use of pooled resources as an organized, functional body independent of all other organizations, human or divine.
- B. This simple pattern for the local church is to the glory of God. - Ephesians 3:8-12, 20-21
- C. We dare not violate this pattern. - 2 John 9