

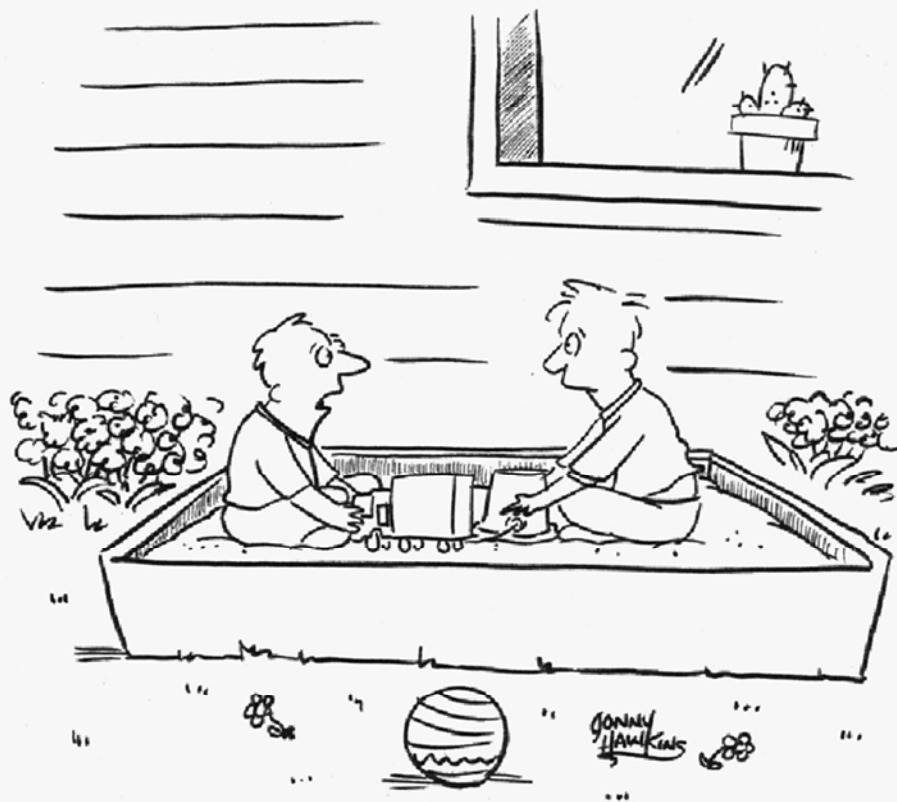


# THE CHURCH AND THE PARACHURCH

Dr. Jerry E. White

Navigators Collegiate Staff  
in Training Conference

October 31-November 1, 2007  
St. Louis, Mo



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"After much deliberation, I've decided to grow up to be an obstructionist."

# Key Questions to Address

- Why go to church?
- What is church?
- Is the parachurch (Navigators) biblically legitimate?
- How should The Navigators relate to local churches?
- How should I relate?
- What do I need for my fellowship and growth?
- Can I do whatever I wish regardless of the position of The Navigators?
- What should my attitude be?

# SOME HISTORY

## Historical Perspective

- OT and NT – Law and Grace
- 1<sup>st</sup> Century A.D.
- Up to 313 A.D.
- 313 A.D. (Constantine) to Reformation
- Reformation to 1900
- 1900 to Present

# SOME OBSERVATIONS

- The issue is not so much the church, but the Kingdom of God.
- Christianity has always been a lay or an Apostolic movement.
- Whatever the church was in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, there were not normative forms.
  - NT letters – to teach and correct doctrine and, to some extent, practice.
  - Leadership was key to this fledgling movement  
Col 1:2; Phil 1:2

# SOME OBSERVATIONS

(continued)

- 100 A.D.– NT Complete
- 100-313 A.D. – House churches & missions
- Spread along the trade routes
- Persecution
- Jews and Gentiles
- House (churches)
- Authoritative structures emerge
- # of Heresies – especially Gnosticism

# SOME OBSERVATIONS

(continued)

## ➤ Key events

- 313 A.D. - Conversion of Constantine and his mother.
- 379 A.D. – New Testament
- Council of Carthage
- Christianity becomes the official religion of the Roman Empire ( blessing or curse?)
  - Structure – Papal Authority
  - Buildings – Cathedrals
  - Heresy – Conflict
  - Struggle with control

# SOME OBSERVATIONS

(continued)

-313 A.D. to Reformation

- The Roman Catholic Church spread through the Empire.

- Islam and Orthodox Movements

-800 A.D. – Holy Roman Empire

- Lay movements and “orders”

- Mix of religion, politics and kings

-1095-1291 A.D.

- The Disaster of the Crusades and the Political Popes.

- The loss of the Gospel – Remnants and rebels kept it alive.



# SOME OBSERVATIONS

(continued)

## ➤ The Turning Points

- Bible in language of the people.
- The Reformation
- The beginnings of the Pietistic movements – the birth of the parachurch.
- 1722 Moravian Brethren

## ➤ Early Missionary Movements

- Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign parts (Church of England).
- Society for the Propagation of Christian knowledge.

# SOME OBSERVATIONS

(continued)

- Haystack Revival - 1806
- Student Volunteer Movement – 1886, 1910
- John Mott – World Missionary Conference - 1910
- Missionary Societies
- 1930 Onward – the explosion of the Parachurch movement. WWII – a turning point.

# THE THEOLOGY OF THE CHURCH

## My Conclusions:

- Form is ambiguous & situational.
- Function is relatively clear.
- Leadership is primary, but variable in form.
- All church ultimately local.
- Gospel & Kingdom must predominate or atrophy and heresy destroys the message and the expression.

# THE THEOLOGY OF THE CHURCH

Is the gospel and its' church expression primarily to:

- Change culture?
- Change individuals?

Your answer is determined by how you view Scripture:

- Literal versus allegorical.
  - Israel has a place.
  - Church is Israel.

# THE THEOLOGY OF THE CHURCH

Howard Snyder

Problem of the Wineskins

Temple



Place

Priest



Hired Mediator

An Alter



Sacrifice

# WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

- Scripture alone
- Scripture and church history
- Scripture and church history & tradition  
(our church denomination).
- Scripture and church history & tradition  
and current human authority.

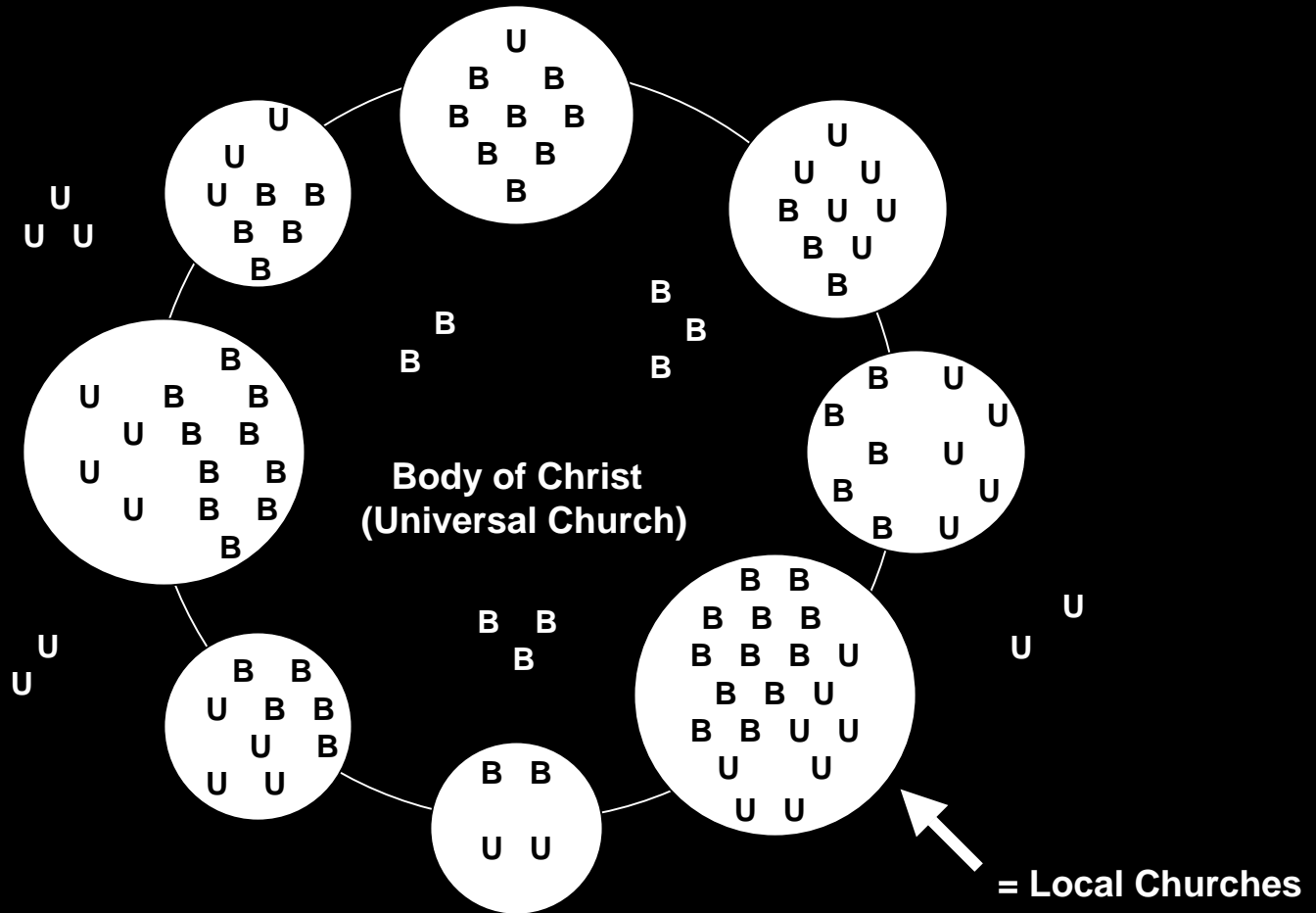
# WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

➤ Basic Definition – Ekklesia  An Assembly

➤ Called Out Ones

- Universal – All Believers of All Time  
(Col 1:18, Heb 12:23; Eph 1:22,23; 3:10, 21)  
Also “body” – Eph 3:6, 4:4, 11-12, 16
- Local – A Congregation (90 of 114 occurrences)
  - Church we see
  - Mixed believers & nonbelievers
  - Imperfect
  - Structure – differing with context
  - Age Mixture

# The Relationship of Local Churches to the Body of Christ



**B = Believers**  
**U - Unbelievers**

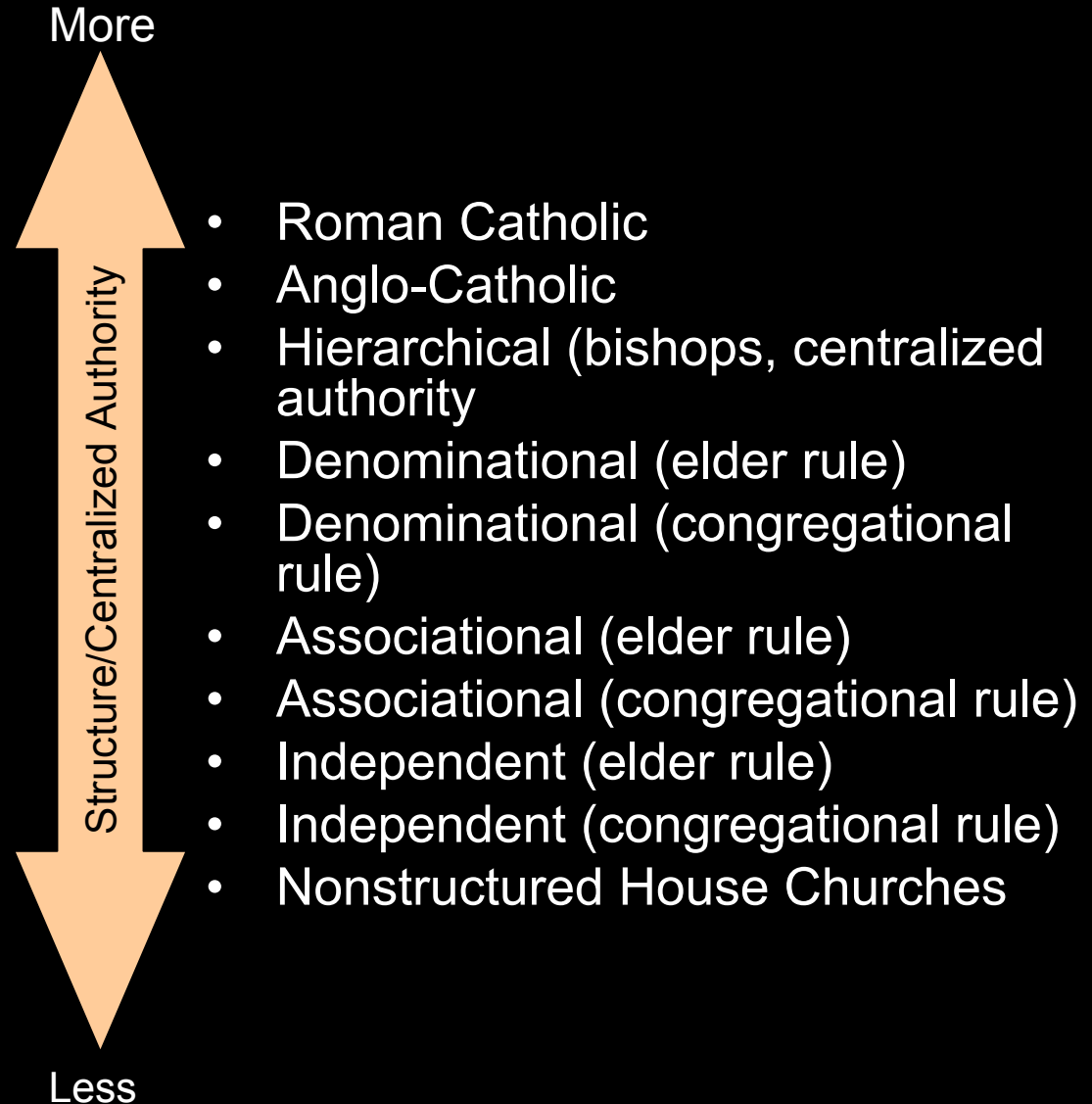


# WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

## Instructions Regarding Local Congregations

- Not many guidelines and details.
- No formal membership.
- Great freedom on how to organize and how to function.

# Local Church Structure and Authority



# WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

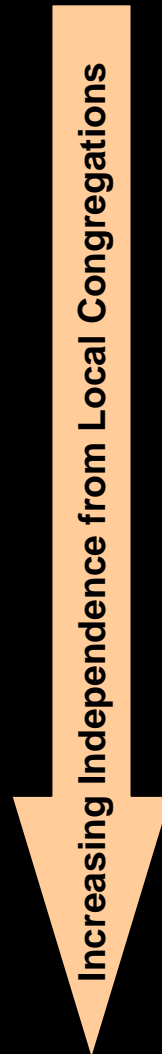
The Purpose of the Local Congregation is:

To Help Believers...

Grow to Maturity  
Teaching of the Word  
Worship – a Corporate experience  
Fellowship  
Prayer  
Discipling/Equipping  
To Reach the Lost

Note how many are performed by church and Para-local Church

# Para-local church structures in relationship to local congregations



## **The Local Congregation**

### **Direct**

Denominational Structures  
Associational Structures

### **Church Supplying**

Denominational Seminaries  
Independent Seminaries  
Christian Schools (College and below)

### **Church Planting**

Denominational Mission Agencies  
Independent Mission Agencies

### **Church Renewal and Service**

Denominational Evangelists  
Interdenominational Evangelists  
Church Service Organizations

### **Specialist**

Independent Evangelism/Discipling Agencies  
Special Focused Agencies (Jews, Youth, etc.)  
Publishing Houses  
Hospitals and Relief Agencies

# WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

## **The Place of the Para-local Church**

- Biblically there are no restrictions.
- The missionary teams of the N.T. were parachurch, i.e. Paul, Phillip.
- Specialist functions.
- Multiple authority structures.
- Priesthood and call of individual believers.

# WEAKNESSES OF BOTH STRUCTURES

## CHURCH

Focus on Buildings  
Lack of Accountability  
Lack of Impact on Lost  
Internal Focus

Duplication, Party Spirit  
Lack of Clarity

Focus on a person

Few deaths

## PARA-LOCAL CHURCH

Focus on Structure  
Lack of Accountability

Disconnected/nonsupport of local  
congregation

Duplication and Lack of Coordination

Focus on a person

Lack of balance

Few deaths

# WEAKNESSES OF BOTH STRUCTURES

## Summary of Issues

Theology (Legitimacy)

Finance (Money)

Authority (Loyalties)

# WEAKNESSES OF BOTH STRUCTURES

## Contribution of Para-Local Church

Missions

Mobilization of Laity

Place for Women

Evangelism

Instruction and Training in Ministry Skills

Discipleship & Personal Growth

Small Group Concepts

Education (Bible Schools and Seminaries)

Innovation



# THE PRATICAL OUTWORKING AND IMPLICATION OF OUR VIEW OF CHRCH IN OUR NAVIGATOR COLLEGIATE MISSION

## The Stark Realities

- The vast majority of the fruit from our campuses (95%) will connect with some local church expression.
- There will always be local churches – increasing diversity.
- There will always be some measure of conflict.
- Our fruit will always be controlled by and live in multiple loyalties.
- We do not and must not, control the people in our sphere of ministry. They will ultimately choose.

# THE PRATICAL OUTWORKING AND IMPLICATION OF OUR VIEW OF CHRCH IN OUR NAVIGATOR COLLEGIATE MISSION

Given these realities, what should be our part in preparing people for their future?

- Teach them Kingdom and world thinking.
- Serve them with our core values.
- Keep Gospel and Discipleship clear.
- Prepare them doctrinally – use of Bible.
- Help them think and act like insiders.
- Connect them (metro – church – mission).
- Give them a vision for the world – prayer, giving, going.

# SUGGESTIONS

- You are “church” in their world.
- Don’t become an exclusivist or an isolated person.
- Be connected as a leader:
  - other ministries
  - a local church or churches
- Consider your family – especially children.
- Never speak badly about other ministries or churches





The church board voted unanimously to approve the Tuesday morning aerobics class as long as any music used came from the blue hymnal.



Strategic planning.



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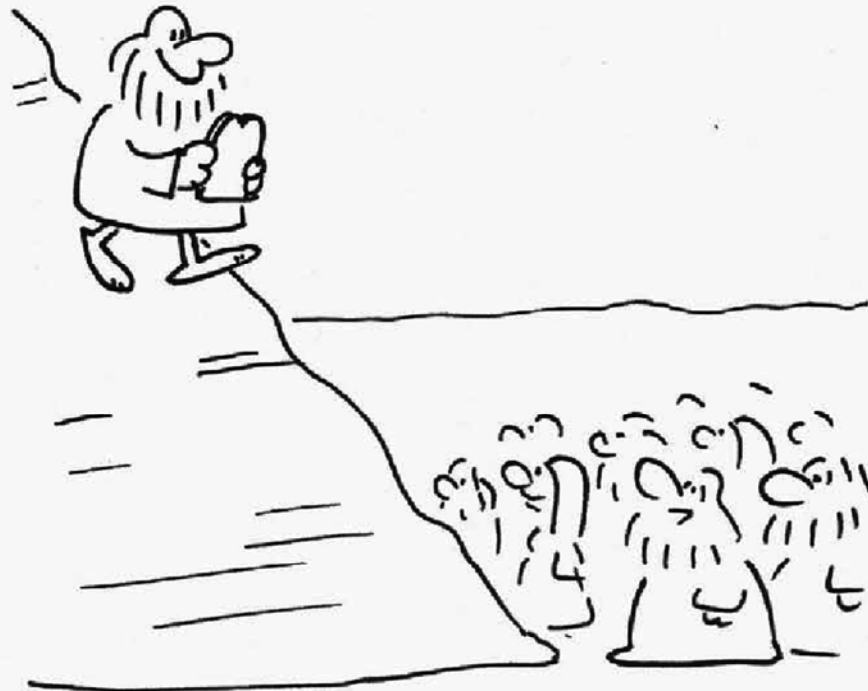
It quickly became clear that retired General George "No Surrender" Summers was the wrong choice to teach the new members class.



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"Hey, I'm all for outreach, but I'm uncomfortable with the cigar night services."





Boba

"I was afraid of this—a paradigm shift!"

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"Will the ushers please come forward  
for this morning's offering."



"Start another service?  
If we do that, we won't know everyone!"