Trinity Grace Fellowship

The Pauline Bootcamp

Session 5
Pauline Local Assembly Polity:
Its Infrastructure and Officers

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1.   INTRODUCTION

This module is the second under the general category of Pauline Ecclesiology. Herein we examine the particular structure of the local Pauline assembly, detail its infrastructure, officers, officer wives, role of male "non-officer" saints, and the role of female saints. We also examine the question of how a local assembly is started and the criteria are for such a testimony. Much has been taken from sources [1,2, especially 5], in particular the format of [5] has been closely followed.

Our English word "church" is an indirect derivation from the Greek word kuriakon, meaning "of the Lord" or "belonging to the Lord". We see our English word in both the German "Kirche" and Scottish "Kirk". However, the New Testament uses $\epsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\alpha$ for the local gathering of body saints. This is a compound word from $\epsilon\kappa$, meaning "out of", and $\kappa\alpha\lambda\epsilon\omega$ meaning "to call". The intent of $\epsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\alpha$ is "called-out-ones" - the idea that the "members" of the local assembly have been "called out" to join together for the purpose of "being edified into the body of Christ" (Eph 4:13). The word "assembly" is used to show that saints "gather together" for the primary purpose of maturation. An implication of this principle as defined in Eph 4:13 (and context) is that the primary purpose for the local assembly is for the edifying of the "professing Christian".

> Eph 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Where are "altar calls" in this passage? Where is the notion of the "evangelization of the lost" in this passage? Professing Christians rob themselves of Biblical maturity when they define their "gathering together" primarily for the purpose of "getting the lost saved" or the "preaching of the Gospel".[1] The fundamental purpose of the local church is for the "edification of the saved".

Paul was not given his ecclesiology in a vacuum. The Lord used the Synagogue and its infrastructure to provide a template[2] for the Pauline local assembly. The Normative Hermeneutic demands we understand the Scriptures within the context of the original audience. Much of Paul's audience would have been very familiar with the polity of the Synagogue, and as it will become clear, Paul by inspiration derived much of his local church polity from the local Synagogal infrastructure. Our study is essentially broken into three parts: (1) A look at the Synagogue, (2) Establishing the Pauline Algorithm, which Paul used to derive his inspired local assembly polity, and (3) the specifics of the Pauline local church infrastructure and polity.[3]

Suggested reading and sources for this study are listed in the REFERENCE section below.

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[1] By this phrase the author intends the purpose of this preaching to be for the salvation of the lost.
[2] Not an exact template, rather a "road map" that is to be "tweaked" to be consistent with Paul's Gospel.
[3] The next module in the Pauline Bootcamp will address more of the local assembly's behavoral issues, which are beyond the scope of this module.

2.   THE SYNAGOGUE DURING THE TIME OF CHRIST AND PAUL

Since the Synagogue came prior to Paul, the Normative Hermeneutic in particular the Law of Precedence[4], requires that we understand the Synagogue first. The Synagogal system was the Jewish solution to the problems arising from the Babylonian Captivity and Dispersion (circa 600 B.C.) thereby having no Temple in which to worship. In almost every city in which Jews lived they constructed Synagogues for central worship, Bible reading, and prayer. The synagogue provided an "infrastructure" for their daily religious activities, which included Bible study, observance of holidays, inviting guest rabbis (teachers, speakers), caring for the poor, ministering to Gentiles, etc. The Synagogues were well understood in the New Testament (Luke 4:14,15) and the main place of worship outside of the Herodian Temple in Jerusalem.

> Luke 4:14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. 15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

Some accounts contend that Jerusalem alone had some 460 to 480 Synagogues. Interestingly enough, the great city of Capernaum apparently had no Synagogue until the arrival of the Roman Centurion (a proselyte of the Gate) who provided at least the funding and perhaps the construction for the Capernaum Synagogue (Luke 7:1-10).

> Luke 7:1 Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.
> 2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.
> 3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.
> 4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:
> 5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.
> 6 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:
> 7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.
> 8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.
> 9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.
> 10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

If a Synagogue was unavailable the Jewish people would "synagogue in their homes" especially in the early days of the Synagogal practice. In a similar sense, Body saints met in homes as well (Philemon 2).

> Philemon 1 Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer, 2 And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house:

2.1.   The Personnel of the Synagogue

The persons making up the leadership of the Synagogue appear to fall into two categories:

    1. Ordained leadership, and
    2. Non-ordained functionaries.

2.1.1.   Ordained Leadership

2.1.1.1. Chazzanim (Ministers)

In the Synagogal service the Chazzan is responsible for the handling of the scrolls and the many physical tasks necessary for the proper functioning of the Synagogue. He plays an important role in the instruction of the Synagogal children. During the day, his pupils sit around him "as a crown of glory" as he imparts to them the facets of the Law with untiring patience. In this role the Chazzan is the Synagogue's "schoolmaster".

For this reason, and because the conduct of the Services may frequently devolve upon him, great care is taken in his selection. He must be not only irreproachable, but, if possible, his family also. Humility, modesty, knowledge of the Scriptures, distinctness and correctness in pronunciation, simplicity and neatness in dress, and an absence of self-assertion, are qualities sought for, and which, in some measure, remind us of the higher qualifications insisted on by [sic] Paul in the choice of ecclesiastical officers. [1, p.438]

The Chazzan is considered the "template" for the other officers of the Synagogue.[5]

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[4] Walsh, R.E., **Biblical Hermeneutics and Creation**, *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Creationism*, Creation Science Fellowship, Pittsburgh, PA, 1986, Vol 1., pp. 121-126.
[5] It is the author's opinion that had the Plymouth Brethren held to these same criteria for their Elders, they would still be a major force in Evanglicalism.

2.1.1.2. Zeqenim (elders)

The Zeqenim are men charged with overseeing all of the affairs of the Synagogue. They are known as the rulers (αρκοντης), Parnasim, or the shepherds (ποιμενες) and primarily responsible for the teaching ministry of the Synagogue.

All the rulers of the Synagogue are duly examined as to their knowledge, and ordained to the office [1, p.438].

From among the Zeqenim is selected the Archisynagogos (Chief Elder). The Chief Elder is viewed as "chief among equals" and among his many tasks is the selecting who should read from the Law, who should conduct prayers, namely act as the Sheliach Tsibbur (Messenger of the Congregation) [see below].

2.1.2.   Non-ordained Functionaries

2.1.2.1. Gerousia (elders)

The Gerousia are men that apparently are an unordained eldership who are in charge of outside affairs and act as a "committee of management". They as most of these Functionaries are temporary assignments.

However, from among the Gerousia is chosen the Gerousiarch or Chief Ruler of the Gerousia. This is more of a "political" role rather than a "spiritual" one.   Essentially the Gerousiarch is the "secular" analog to the Archisynagogos.

2.1.2.2. Darshanim

The Darshan is the "Preacher" of the Synagogue, and often the local Rabbi, or a distinguished visiting Rabbi. His main function is to "search out" the Law and the Mishnah (the second law) and expound to the people of the Synagogue.

2.1.2.3. Sheliach Tsibbur

The Sheliach Tsibbur is the Spokesman during the Synagogal service and selected by the Archisynagogos. His responsibilities include the reading of the Law and Prophets, leading the Synagogue in prayer, and conducting devotions. It is in this role that Christ played in the Synagogue of Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30).

> Luke 4:16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.
> 17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,
> 18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,
> 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.
> 20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.
> 21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.
> 22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?
> 23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.
> 24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.
> 25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;
> 26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.
> 27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.
> 28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,
> 29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.
> 30 But he passing through the midst of them went his way,

2.1.2.4. Methurgemanim

The Methurgeman (ʽερμενευτης) is the one responsible for "interpreting" the reading of the Law and Prophets, the sermons of travelling Rabbis, and explaining the texts being read during the Synagogal service. The language of most of the New Testament Synagogue attendees was no longer Hebrew, but Aramaic and it became necessary to "translate" or "interpret" the reading of the Hebrew Law and Prophets. When a visiting Rabbi is asked to speak to the congregation, if he did not understand the language of the people, his message is interpreted by the Methurgeman.[6] He is also known as the Amora. See 1 Cor 14:5,27,28.

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[6] By being ignorant of the Scriptures and the original Synagogal nature of the Corinthian church, today's Charismatic Movement has produced an incredible heresy regarding the so-called "speaking in tongues", including babbling and the absurdity of holy laughter.

1 Cor 14:5 I would that ye all spake with tongues (known languages), but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues (known languages), except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue (known language), let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.
28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

2.1.2.5. Sopherim

The Sopherim were Rabbis appointed by the Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem that traveled from city to city visiting the many Synagogues. They provided for communication between the Jerusalem Temple and Synagogues and the ones responsible for writing the Emendations to the Hebrew text - The Massorah.[7]

2.2.   The Service of the Synagogue

This section briefly outlines a typical service of the Synagogue and has heavily relied on references [2,pp.249-296] and [1] with some verification with [3].[8]

Beyond the standard Sabbath worship, the Synagogue held "services" on various days of the week, feast-days, and holidays. Each day required a slight alteration to the service - perhaps more from the Prophets was read, or more Midrash (sermon) was offered. What is discussed here is the "baseline" on which all services were founded.

The service of the Synagogue was essentially composed of "official" and "unofficial" parts. The "official" portions of the service were administrated directly by the "officers" of the Synagogue. We deal with the "official" portion first.

2.2.1.   The Official Meeting

Though "liturgical" in nature, the first portion of the Synagogal service was primarily for the "teaching of the people" (see Mat 4:23, Mk 1:21; 6:2; Luke 4:15; 6:6; 13:10; Jn 6:59; 18:20)

Mat 4:23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Mk 1:21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. 22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

John 18:20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

The first portion of the synagogal service comprises:

- **Two Opening Benedictions** - These Benedictions were "liturgical" readings concerning the Nature of God, God as Creator, the Love of God for Israel, the desire of Israel to be taught, etc.

- **Shema** - The Shema was a "creed" read aloud to the congregation and consisted of Deut 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Num 15:37-41. Thus, the Shema was also a sort of "liturgy".

Deut 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:
5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.
6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:
7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.
8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.
9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Deut 11:13 And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,
14 That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.
15 And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full.
16 Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;
17 And then the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

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[7] For details as to the **Emendations of the Sopherim see**, Bullinger, E.W., *The Companion Bible Appendices*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1974, App. 31, 32, 33, pp.31-33. See also, Ginsburg C.D**., Introduction to the Hebrew Bible**, Trinitarian Bible Society, London, UK, 1897
[8] Further analysis needs to be done on this entire section. We must be careful when studying the Synagogue, its infrastructure, and service because many discussions include later additions not applicable to the time of Christ and Paul. I have endeavored to the best of my ability and consideration of time to avoid such confusion.

18 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.
19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.
20 And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:
21 That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

- **Final Benediction** - The final Benediction was immediately after the Shema and composed of about eighteen eulogies prayed by the one ordained by the Archisynagogos.

Often the individual asked to read in the Synagogue was also expected to perform each of the items above. This person would have been the Sheliach Tsibbur. Finally the "liturgical" portion was closed with a priestly descendant of Aaron, by reading Num 6:23,24.

Num 6:23 Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them,
24 The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:

If there were no Aaronic descendants in the Synagogue, the "legate of the Synagogue" would take his place. Accordingly, the most important sections of this "liturgical service" were the Eulogies within the Final Benediction and the priestly closing.

The next part of the "official" service was perhaps considered most important, since it was the main teaching of the Synagogal service. This consisted of:

1. The reading of the Law and Prophets
2. The Derashah (Sermon or Midrash)

At least seven persons were called upon to read, and with them of course the Methurgeman to interpret into the tongue of the congregation. No less than three verses were to be read by each reader.

Following the readings was the Derashah (Sermon/Midrash). Usually this was the responsibility of the Darshan, unless a visiting dignitary or Rabbi was in town. The Methurgeman played a large role in this sermon. In the "official" setting only those ordained to directly participate could speak. Luke 4:15-30 contains one of the most remarkable passages in all of the New Testament regarding Christ's role in His own Synagogue, how the Synagogues operated, and how Israel was about to reject their Messiah. Here Christ is being asked to both read from the prophets (Isaiah) and also provides His own Midrash (sermon) to exegete this wonderful passage. Here Christ is acting as the Sheliach Tsibbur.

Luk 4:15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.
16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.
17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,
18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,
19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.
20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.
21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.
22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?
23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.
24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.
25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;
26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.
27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.
28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,
29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.
30 But he passing through the midst of them went his way,

This ended the "official" portion of the service.

2.2.2.   The Unofficial Meeting

Many larger Synagogues had additional space, were the congregation could afterwards gather for discussion and meals (see 1 Cor 11:18-34 .cp. Acts 18:7,8).

> 1 Cor 11:18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.
> 19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.
> 20 When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper.
> 21 For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.
> 22 What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.
> 23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:
> 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.
> 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.
> 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.
> 27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.
> 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.
> 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.
> 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.
> 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.
> 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.
> 33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.
> 34 And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.
>
> Acts 18:1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;
> 2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.
> 3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.
> 4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.
> 5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.
> 6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.
> 7 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.
> 8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

During this "unofficial" time all were encouraged to discuss the day's sermon and readings, ask questions, and challenge the teachers. This included men and women. In the "unofficial" setting of the Synagogue all were cordially invited to participate in the Synagogue (recall the "official" principle in 1 Cor 14:40).

1 Cor 14:40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

3.   GENERATING THE PAULINE ASSEMBLY FROM THE SYNAGOGAL SYSTEM

The Lord obviously did not object to the "general" Synagogal system. By inspiration Paul used the Synagogal system and "cleaned it up" and developed his local Assembly (church) polity. The following table illustrates how Paul took the Synagogal offices and roles of its officers and brought them into the Pauline assembly [amended from 5, p.4].

Synagogal Offices / Officers	Pauline Equivalent
Zeqen	**Bishop**
Archisynagogos	
Sheliach Tsibbur	
Methurgeman	
Darshan	
Zegen	**Deacon**
Chazzan	
Sheliach Tsibbur	
Methurgeman	
Gerousiarch (Gerousia)	
Sopherim	**Evangelist**
Rabbi	

Table 1. Synagogue to Pauline Assembly Comparison

In light of the table above, by what principle did Paul modify the Synagogal infrastructure in order to design the local Pauline assembly?

!!! NO PLAY THE GAME, NO MAKE THE RULES !!!

The Synagogal rulers in charge of the teaching ministry of the Synagogue never or rarely taught, especially the Archisynagogos, who was "officially" charged with overseeing the teaching. In other words, he was in charge of the teaching, but NEVER taught himself.

The Synagogal rulers in charge of the physical duties of the Synagogue, rarely or never participated in the work. The example is the elder responsible for the handling of the scrolls. He himself did not handle the scrolls, but oversaw those that did.

Thus, the principle is:

one must PARTICIPATE in what one ADMINISTRATES

So that under the Pauline assembly, (1) those RESPONSIBLE for the physical duties of the assembly (the Deacons) also PARTICIPATE in performing these duties, (2) those RESPONSIBLE for the teaching ministry of the Assembly (the Bishops) also PARTICIPATE in its teaching.

The obverse or complimentary principle is:

if one is regularly performing a service in doctrine or in deed,
then he [sic] ought to be given the authority in that area.

The following figure graphically illustrates the "Pauline Filter" Paul might have used to generate local Assembly Body polity.
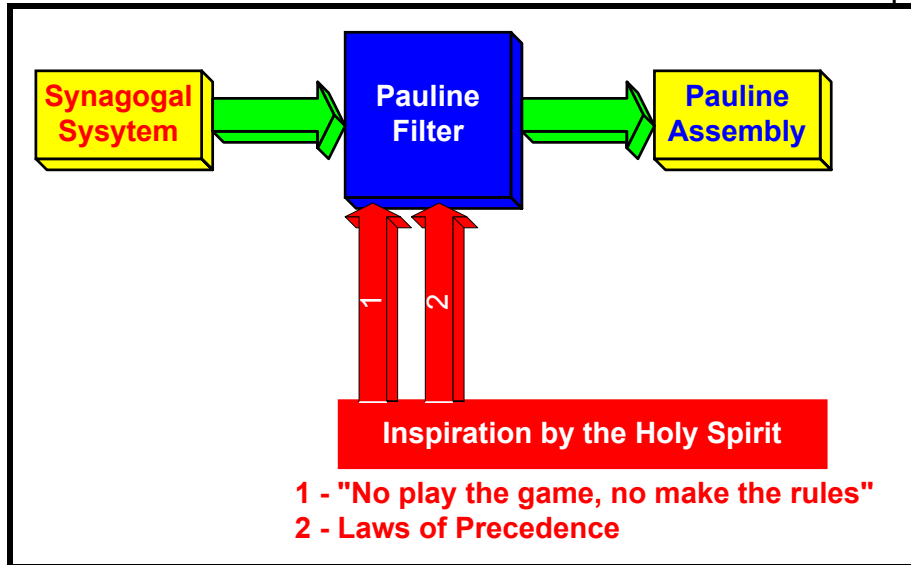
Figure 1. The Pauline Local Church Polity Filter

4.   THE PAULINE ASSEMBLY

4.1.   The Purpose of the Pauline Assembly

The assembling together of Body saints is imperative as Eph 4:11-16 clearly states.

> 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;
> 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:
> 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:
> 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;
> 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:
> 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

General Edification of the Saints
1. The maturing of the saints - Eph 4:12a
2. Edification of the saints - Eph 4:12c
3. The striving of the unity of the faith (in context the mastering of the 7 ones) - Eph 4:13a
4. To bring each saint to a detailed knowledge of Christ - Eph 4:13b
5. To bring each saint to the fullness of Christ - Eph 4:13c

To Teach Others to Teach Others
1. **To teach the faithful men of the assembly on how to teach others** - 2 Tim 2:2

   > 2 Tim 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

2. **To teach men to teach their wives** - 1 Cor 14:35

   > 1 Cor 14:34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.
   > 35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

3. **To teach men to rule and teach their children** - 1 Tim 3:4,5,12

   > 1 Tim 3:4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;
   > 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)
   > 12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

4. **To teach the elder women to teach the younger women** - Tit 2:4,5

   > Titus 2:4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,
   > 5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

The primary purpose for the assembling together of the saints is for "education" - education in the faith and the mastery of Christ the Lord as He is the Head of the Body. This means, as the context of Eph 4 dictates, the primary purpose of gathering together is to establish the individual saint in the Unity of the 7-Ones.

> Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,
> 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;
> 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
> 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;
> 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
> 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

All other activities of a local Body assembly flow from this purpose. The Body's Unity as a whole, as well as, the individual Body Member's peace center around the 7-Ones and their mastery, both doctrinally and practically.

4.2.   An Overview of the Infrastructure of the Pauline Assembly

4.2.1.   Its Three-fold Division: Bishops, Deacons, and Saints.

The stand alone reference for a complete and mature local Pauline assembly is seen in Philp 1:1.

> Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

The three categories are Saints, Bishops, and Deacons. The details of these divisions are articulated below. Further proof of this three-fold division is seen in 1 Tim 3:14,15 were Paul clearly states that Bishops and Deacons are given to the Saints in the very context of discussing the qualifications of Deacons and Bishops.

> 1 Tim 3:14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:
> 15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Here Paul states that he purposefully wrote the summary of the Eldership Criteria specifically for Timothy himself and also so that he might teach the Assemblies how they ought to formally meet. Paul calls the the local Assembly of Saints the "house of God". Unlike most of Christendom, it is fundamentally important that we do not confuse the "Assembly of Saints" with a "church building". God does not live in buldings,[9] rather he works among the people, and the formal gathering for the maturation of the Body of Christ is in fact the local Assembly. To this Assembly of Saints are given individuals charged with the responsibility of adjudicating the affairs of the assembly - these are Deacons and Bishops.[10]

4.2.2.   The Floating Office: The Evangelist

Unlike today's definition of Evangelist, the New Testament teaching regarding the office of Evangelist, is one who essentially "establishes" Pauline Assemblies. In this sense, the Evangelist is the Biblical equivalent of our modern-day "missionary". Eph 4:11; 2 Tim 4:5.

> Eph 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

> 2 Tim 4:5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.
> 6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

First, note that one of the offices given to the local Assembly is the Evangelist - one who is essentially a "traveling Bishop" establishing Pauline Assemblies and bootstraping the saints' road to maturity in the 7-Ones. Finally, note also that Timothy who was also part of the Pauline Apostleship is exhorted to "do the work of an Evangelist". Why? Because the Pauline Apostleship is about ready to cease with the parting of Paul, and the once "charismatically" empowered gifts will cease. This is supported by the grammar of Eph 4:11, with the Figure of Parallelism.

> Apostles => Evangelists
> Prophets => Teaching Pastors

The charismatically empowered offices cease and the non-charsimatically[11] empowered offices take over. For the charismatically empowered Apostle becomes the Evangelist (a traveling Bishop) and the Prophet becomes the Bishop. As will be seen below, each of these offices are founded upon the office of the Deacon - the very template for all Saints to seek.

We now take up discussion of the Assembly Infrastructure beginning with the Saints, Deacons, and finally Bishops.

4.3.   The Saints of the Pauline Assembly

The Greek word for saint is ἅγιος, and means "sanctified one" or one who has been "separated from something to something". Biblically, it is used of people, who have been regenerated by God and almost exclusively used for Body members (search and see). The overwhelming Pauline usage is not to be understated. The Lord Himself is labeled by the Father as "His Beloved Son" (Mat 3:17; 12:18; 17:5; Mk 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35).

> Luke 3:22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

The Saviour is labeled with the appelative "Beloved" by the Father. Paul uses this awesome thought with regard to the Body's distinct redemptive eternal position.

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[9] This also is a Pauline Distinctive because God's presence for Israel was seen in both the Tabernacle and Temple.
[10] An obvious question might be "where are the Priests, Monsignors, Cardinals, Popes, Youth Pastors, Music Ministers, Choirs, etc? These concepts are foreign to Pauline Polity.
[11] Ignoring the plethora of heresies and blasphemies within the so-called "Charismatic Movement", the very notion of "charismatically empowerment today is anti-Pauline and therefore demonic in the sense of Ephesians 6:12, not in the sense seen in the move "The Exorcist".

Eph 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

The Body has been redeemed to a position, whereby the Father considers us to be His Beloved Sons and Daughters "in Christ" as members of Christ's Body (the righteous extension of His non-Incarnate Humanity). This is the fundamental reason for the Body being the inheritance of the Father.

Eph 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

Tragically, verse 11 has been butchered by the KJV translators. It is better translated as,

"In Whom we have been made an inheritance..."

Namely, the Inheritance of the Father. In fact, those who have been accepted into the Beloved (Eph 1:6) are specifically called Saints (Rom 1:7).

Rom 1:7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

All "truly-professing Christians" (which equals "possessing Christians") today have been accepted into the Beloved and therefore called Saints, and because the Body has been accepted into the Beloved, the phrase "In Christ" is almost exclusively a Pauline term. There is no Biblical notion at all regarding the medieval idea of "canonization of saints". This is utterly heretical and flies right into the face of the work of Christ for His Body.

Those who have been regenerated into the Body, and accepted into the Beloved are compelled by regeneration to assemble themselves together and to be "officially" built up in the Body of Christ, for Christ is indeed the Beloved. Recall Mat 3:17 "This is Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased", and yet, we are the Body of Christ, His non-incarnate extension. So we are said to be "accepted into the Beloved" as Christ's non-incarnate human extension. Eph 4 clearly indicates that ALL saints are to strive to "fellowship together" for the purpose of understanding and mastering the 7-Ones.

Thus, the "Saints of the Assembly" are ALL regenerated people of the assembly, including men, women, and children.

4.4.   The Deacons of the Pauline Assembly

8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;
9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.
10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.
11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.
12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.
13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

4.4.1.   The Character of Deacons

As quoted above, the fundamental reference describing the character (hence characteristics) of the Deacon is found in 1 Tim 3:8-13. The Greek word for Deacon is διακονος and means "servant" or "one who serves". The Deacon must progress and satisfy all of these characteristics, not merely a "specialist" in one particular item.

1. **Grave (σεμνος) honorable.**
2. **Double-tongued (διλογος)** Literally, double-speak. The idea is that the deacon does not tell someone one thing, then tell another something else.
3. **Not given to much wine.** The Greek word for given to is (προσεχω) and means "beholding to" (i.e., under the bondage of).
4. **Not given to filthy lucre (αισχροδερος).** Does not desire or require unreasonable profit.
5. **Hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.** "pure" is from the Greek word (καθαρος) meaning "clean, good, or pure". The word "conscience" is from the Greek word (συνειδησις), a compound word from (συν) meaning "with" and (οιδα) meaning "knowledge" or "perception". Thus, the intent is that the deacon must have a clear perception, a clear understanding of Paul's gospel, meaning that he can articulate and defend it.
6. **Not more than one wife**.
7. **Ruling their children and houses well.** The Greek word for "ruling" is (προισταμενον) and means to "stand before". The intent is that the Deacon is a good provider and good protector of his children and household. The secondary notion of "ruling his children well" is also carried with this word. For one can not provide for his home if there is not "loving discipline". The Deacon must be a "loving" and "wise" dispenser of household discipline.

4.4.2. The Character of the Deacon's Wife.

The wives of the Deacons must also satisfy essentially the same criteria as their husbands. Paul lists a few.

1. **Grave (σεμνος)** honorable.
2. **Not slanderers (διαβολος)** meaning "not casting against".
3. **Sober (νεφαλεος)** Calm, cool, collective.
4. **Faithful.** Dependable, trustworthy with respect to Paul's Gospel the Gospel of the Great Mystery.

It should not seem strange that the wives of the Assembly officers be held to a similar standard. Why? By the very nature of the marriage relationship, and its integral impact on the assembly. Hosting Saints, teaching, edifying often includes the Deacon's wife. Also, in privacy matters the Deacon's wife may be privy to certain personal information and therefore must be held to a higher standard. The implication is that if the wife of a potential Deacon is disqualified by Pauline standards, then the man is also disqualified from holding the office of Deacon.

4.4.3. The Role of Deacons

The fundamental role of the Assembly Deacon is to serve and administrate the affairs of the Assembly. While it will be seen below that the Bishop is the office specifically charged with the public teaching ministry, the Deacon by default also plays a general role in the Assembly's teaching ministry.

4.4.4. The Ordination of Deacons

"And let these be first proved" (vs. 10). The word for "and" is actually the Greek word (δε) meaning "but" as the contrasting particle. The Greek word for "proved" is from (δοκιμαζω) and in the Passive voice. The word literally means to "document". The man must FIRST document himself as to Pauline character BEFORE being considered for the Deaconate. The fact that this word is in the Passive voice speaks much to the process of men becoming Deacons. The Passive voice implies that the man is "officially" documented from an outside source, namely the current Eldership of the Assembly. Men being considered for the Deaconate do not hold any office. How is this known? Because the only other "official" office is that of a Bishop and his criteria is essentially the same as that of a Deacon (with a few exceptions-see below), and so since he does not yet satisfy the criteria of a Deacon the man must not yet be part of the Assembly's Eldership. This clearly indicates that the candidate for the Deaconate is from among the "non-elder" men of the assembly. It is in this sense that ALL men (and indeed women in their own sense) OUGHT to have the desire to fulfil these Pauline Deacon criteria. It is the character of the Deacon that provides the template for which we MUST ALL strive, and in this sense the Deacon defines what means "membership" of an Assembly. Today, we have watered down the meaning of the word "member", that it means anyone that "says" he/she attends the meeting of an assembly.

Now some have said, "...that that makes all non-elder saints non-entities or at best 'second-class citizens' ". Indeed not!!! Quite the opposite!!!

Consider Israel the priestly nation in authority over the Gentile Nations. The Gentiles are not considered "less" or "second-class citizens", rather it IS the Gentile nations that provide Israel the "practical" reason for existing. It IS the Gentiles Nations that provide Israel's purpose. Therefore, it is ultimately the saints, that provide for the elder's (Deacons and Bishops) purpose, position, and authority. For if there are no soldiers there is no need of generals - No 3rd Army no General Patton!

Permit me to make my point above as clearly as I can. Because the character of the Deacon IS **THE** TEMPLATE for authority in the Assembly, EVERY man ought to strive for mastery of the Pauline Deacon Criteria.

It is in this context and thought that Paul says to Timothy "lay hands on no man suddenly" (1 Tim 5:22). Let the men manifest themselves BEFORE they are given responsibility over God's Assembly. A Deacon is not a neo-phyte.

4.5. The Bishops of the Pauline Assembly
1 Timothy 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.
2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;
3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;
4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;
5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)
6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.
7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

4.5.1.   The Character of Bishops

As quoted above, the fundamental reference describing the character (hence characteristics) of the Bishop is found in 1 Tim 3:1-7. See also 1 Tim 5:17-22; Titus 1:4-9; 2 Tim 2:2. Notice that the Bishop must progress and satisfy all of these characteristics, not merely a "specialist" in this one item or that item.

1. **Blameless (ανεπιλεπτος).** Literally, "not received upon" - no accusation can be made against - Irreproachable
2. **Not more than one wife**.
3. **Vigilant (νεφαλιος).** Temperate - Calm, cool, collective.
4. **Sober (σοφρον).** Literally, of a sound mind.
5. **Of good behavior (κοσμιος).** Literally, "well ordered".
6. **Given to hospitality (φιλοχενος).** Literally, "lover of strangers".
7. **Apt to teach (διδακτικος).** Literally, "talent for teaching".
8. **Not given to wine (παραοινος).** Literally, "not beside wine" - not "in need" of wine - not under bondage to wine.
9. **No striker (πλετης).** Quarrelsome, apt to strike - 1st move is not to go to "fisticuffs".
10. **Not given to filthy lucre (αισχροδερδος).** Does not desire or require unreasonable profit.
11. **Patient (επικετες).** Literally, "super-patient".
12. **Not a brawler (from μαχη).** From which we get the English-Spanish word "macho". Not violent or overly aggressive.
13. Not covetous (αφιλαργυπος). Literally, not a "lover of silver" or "lover of money".
14. Rules well his house (προισταμενον). Meaning to "stand before". The intent is that the bishop is a good provider and good protector of his children and house - just like the Deacon.
15. **His children in subject with all gravity.** Having his children revere and honor him.
16. **Not a novice (νεοφυτος).** Not a neo-phyte or "young sprout". Experienced.
17. **Having a good report with those outside**.

Each of these charactersitics can be related to the Bishop's teaching role - having patience, loving to host people over and discuss the Scriptures, not apt to strike at the the first disagreement, not a drunkard and out of control.

All of these characteristics play a fundamental part in the Bishop's role as a "teacher".

4.5.2.   The Role of a Bishop

The Greek word for Bishop is επισκοπος, and means "over-seer", one who exercises guardian-ship. An examination of the Bishop's characteristics quickly shows that these are items for the most part items that aid the Bishop in "public" matters. The reason for this is that the primary role of the Bishop is the over-sight of the Assembly in every aspect of teaching (i.e., doctrine, behavior, music, etc.).

The Bishops as "teaching Pastors" (Eph 4:11) are given to the local Assemblies for the express purpose of building up the Body of Christ in doctrine, faith, and practice.

4.5.3.   The Evangelist (Traveling Bishop)

The Evangelist is one "given" to the Assembly (Eph 4:11). The Evangelist is analogous to the Jewish traveling Rabbi, traveling from Synagogue to Synagogue proclaiming the Kingdom Gospel. The Pauline Evangelist is a "Traveling Bishop" who establishes local Assemblies and visits Assemblies on a regular basis. Thus, he is "ordained" (officially recognized) by an Assembly sent to other Assemblies for the purpose of edification and the perfecting of the saints. An established Assembly may send an "official" emissary to another Assembly to provide instruction in Paul's gospel, doctrine, faith, and practice. In this context, the Evangelist may also form new Pauline Assemblies, by "spending time" teaching men to fulfil the character of Deacon and Bishop. Both Paul and Titus performed this function in Crete (Tit 1:5-12). Notice, that there is very little (if any) sense that the Evangelist "gets people saved" as his primary function and role. His main function is to provide a "Bishop" role outside of his "home" Assembly for the purpose of other Assemblies. In this way he may be thought of as a "traveling Bishop". Steve Rodabaugh likes to refer to the Evangelist as a "traveling seminary" - the Author agrees.

"Philip the Evangelist" was one of the Seven men ordained by the Jerusalem Apostleship to the position of the Chazzanim (Act 6:1-7).   Apparently, he later became a traveling Jewish Rabbi (probably as a result of the diaspora of Acts 8) preaching the Kingdom Gospel to ends of the earth (land) and finally settled in Caesaria (Acts 21:8).

4.5.4.   The Ordination of Bishops

The Bishops come from among the Deacons (men who have already established themselves as having Pauline honor and holding fast to the Pauline mystery). However, there is one additional requirement for the Bishop not found in the criteria for Deacon. The Bishop MUST be a man (Deacon) that "desires" the office or work (1 Tim 3:1). He must be one that desires to labor in the "official" teaching ministry of the Assembly. Titus 1:5 shows that Titus was responsible both as a Bishop and Apostle to "charismatically" ordain the Bishops of Crete. It is also clear that these men came from among the Deacons, who had already established themselves as honorable Pauline men. Today however, we have no "charismatic" empowerment (contrary to heretics today) to establish those responsible for the teaching ministry (because the Pauline apostleship no longer exists [SER-Module 4]). However, Titus still provides us the example, since he was also an Elder in the Cretian Assembly. When a Deacon indicates that he desires to be part of the Assembly "Bishopric" then the Eldership ordains him to that position, if he satisfies the Pauline criteria[12] of the Bishop. All Elders (Deacons and teaching Deacons) cast their vote for or against the man. This provides a "due process" necessary for establishing and evaluating men for the office of Bishop.

4.6.   Equivalent Terms for Deacon and Bishop

- **Teaching deacon (διακονος)**

Both Epaphras and Paul are considered teaching Deacons (Col 1:7,23,25) and Timothy is considered a teaching Deacon (1 Thes 3:2; 1 Tim 4:6).

> Col 1:7 As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; ...
> 23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;....
> 25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

- **Teaching elder (πρεσβυτερος)**

There are elders that teach (teaching Elders) and Elders that don't (1 Tim 5:17).

> 1 Tim 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine

- **Teaching pastor (ποιμεν)**

Teaching Pastors are given to the Body Assemblies for the maturation process (Eph 4:11). The Greek phrase is a Figure of Hendiadys,[13] where the second noun (teachers) becomes a superlative adjective of the first (Pastors), hence teaching Pastors.

Summary

It is clear that there are two sets of equivalent terms for Deacons and Bishops. The first equivalent set is for the Deacons.

<div align="center">

Elder == Pastor == Deacon

</div>

The second equivalent set is:

<div align="center">

Teaching Elder == Teaching Pastor == Teaching Deacon == Bishop

</div>

I believe that most commentators have failed at the proof, often stating that 1 Thes 5:17 states the Elder == Bishop. But the text clearly distinguishes between "elders" and "teaching elders". "Elders that rule well...especially those that teach (distinguishing from the whole Eldership). This proves that there are "Elders" and "teaching Elders". Hence, Elder and Deacon are the basic terms.

The Deacons form the foundation for the character of the Assembly, and out of the Deacons come the "teaching" Deacons or Bishops. So that which distinguishes the Bishops from the Deacons is primarily the "official" responsibility of public teaching (i.e., the additional requirements of "being apt" or "having the talent to teach" AND "wanting the job").

The Pauline local Assembly contains these three categories (Saints, Deacons, Bishops). We are all one in Christ, yet many members. Like the supreme court, all are justices, but the Chief Justice is viewed as "chief among equals". In the Pauline Assembly there is this same notion, as illustrated by comment on the figure below.

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[12] Specifically the ability and talent of teaching, since he already satisfies the criteria of the Deacon.
[13] This phrase is a wonderful example of the so-called Granville Sharpe Rule, stating that when two nouns joined by the copulative (AND), and both modified by only ONE definite article, then a Hendiadys is always intended. I know of no exception!
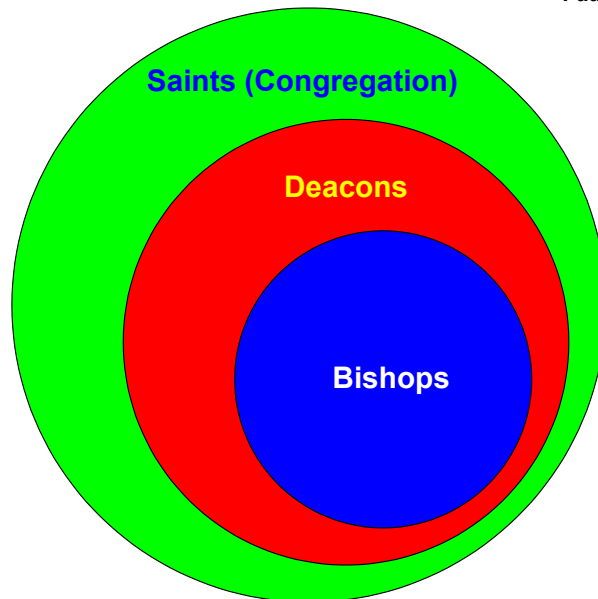
Figure 2. The Venn Diagram of the Pauline Local Assembly

The figure above, is called a Venn diagram and illustrates the relationship among the Saints, Deacons, and Bishops as outlined in Phil 1:1. From among the saints (all of whom are equal) come the Eldership (the chiefs among equals). From among the Deacons (all whom are equal) come the Bishops (all whom are equal). In some sense, we see this in other arenas of life. The President of U.S., is no more "American" than an average citizen, yet he holds a positional authority. In this regard there is no "one-man-ministry" as abounds today. The notion of the Archisynagogos was NOT carried over into the Pauline assembly. In this sense, the Pauline assembly is a sort of "oligarchy".

4.7.   The Role of the "Non-Elder" Male of the Pauline Assembly

1.   Progressing in maturity as above
As stated in above, the Deacon is the goal for every Christian male. Please examine the criteria. Can true Christian males say that he would not wish to satisfy these honorable items? I should think not! Notice that Paul tells Titus that "sound doctrine" produces proper behavior and a "lifestyle" that honors Christ as Head of the Body (Tit 2:1,2,6).

> Titus 2:1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:
> 2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience...
> 6 Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

2.   Honorably operating in a unofficial capacity when called upon by the eldership
Like Philip the Jewish "Deacon", all men ought to the best of their ability and within reason, seek to be a working part of the Assembly. In this way they manifest and document themselves as worthy of the office of Deacon (1 Tim 3:10).

3.   Satisfying the characteristics of a deacon above and progress to the diaconate
See Deacon criteria above.

4.8.   The Role of the Women of the Pauline Assembly

- **Progressing in maturity**

Every Saint including women are compelled to mature in doctrine, faith, and practice. Eph 4 does not just apply to men. Many women think that they are not under the same obligation to master the Scriptures as men. Notice that Paul tells Titus that "sound doctrine" produces proper behavior and a "lifestyle" honoring Christ as Head of the Body (Tit 2:1,3-5).

- **Honorably operating in an unofficial capacity when called upon by the eldership**

This of course ought to be the desire of every Saint.

- **Older women teaching the young women**

The mature women have the responsibility of teaching the younger women. Apparently, this responsibility fall outside of the "official" assembly meeting, when in the normal course of life brings the women together. As a matter of life this responsibility is carried out.

- **Women teaching their children at home**

In the early years of parenting moms have a very large impact on the "kids". Moms are commanded to teach their children the scriptures, and in light of Eph 4, this includes Paul's gospel. See 1 Tim 2:15; 5:14.

- **Women teaching in the assembly and Phoebe the deaconess**

No greater account and misunderstanding than that of Phoebe the deaconess has caused a "feminization" of "professing" Christendom (Rom 16:1,2). Phoebe was a Body saint and in fellowship at the Cenchrea assembly and a deaconess of that testimony. Now in what sense was Phoebe a deaconess?

We have seen that the Assembly officers (Deacons and Bishops) are all male as the above the scriptures have shown. Moreover, we see also that women are to be silent in the assembly (1 Cor 14:34,35; 1 Tim 2:9-15). The apparent problem is this, how can Phoebe be acting as a "deaconess" and not be committing usurpation?

The problem is resolved by recognizing the distinction between the "official" and "unofficial" aspects of assembly life. Within the "official" setting of the assembly, the ladies are not permitted to teach and thereby usurp authority over the Eldership. However, like the "non-elder" males of the assembly, ladies may operate under the authority of the Eldership in a capacity for the Eldership (and therefore the Assembly as a whole). No doubt this happened constantly during the Corinthian meals and such. Here Phoebe was acting on behalf of the Cenchrea Eldership and by their request to take care of business with the Roman saints. The so-called contradiction is solved by the recognition of the "official" and "unofficial" operation of the assembly, very much like that of the Synagogues.

4.9.   Starting (Booting-up) a Pauline Assembly

Assembly Bootstrapping is not so trivial a question. The criteria for the formation of a proper Pauline assembly is the doctrinal creed provided in Eph 4:4-6. The people involved must have this as their goal - to master the 7-Ones in light of the infrastructure that Paul lays out in Eph 4:7-16. The Talmud talks about the "numbers" of men necessary to start a Synagogue, but upon little reflection there appears little to be offered that can be utilized for the Pauline assembly. There is no record of how to form a Pauline Assembly.except that it would seem that most Pauline Assemblies grew out of the local Synagogues or "people" disassociated from any local Synagogue were meeting in their homes. History teaches that after time, the majority of early "Christendom"[14] was meeting in homes.

It would seem that one solution to this problem is to examine the Cretian account of Titus and his activity. People had "naturally' come together to fellowship around the scripture, and men eventually "manifested" themselves as "leader material" - those satisfying 1 Tim 3:1-13. In Titus' case he ordained the Bishops from among the honorable men (Deacons). Since, we have no "charismatic" empowerment today, the casting of votes would seem to provide a proper "due process" for the "official" starting of the Assembly. The males decide by vote upon the selection of the Deacons, and then the newly "ordained" Deacons select from among themselves the Bishops (those apt to teach AND desiring the office).

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[14] By no means do we believe these accounts of ancient Christendom to be reliable. Paul's gospel was perverted even during his own time (2 Tim 1:15), so to trust 100% these accounts would be dangerous.

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