

Church Work

1 Tim. 3:15

Introduction:

- A. Church has special place in the world -- "pillar and ground (foundation, mainstay) of the truth."
 - 1. Bought by blood. (Acts 20:28).
 - 2. Built upon Divine Revelation. (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:20-3:5).
 - 3. Effective in New Testament days. (Col. 1:23; Acts 4:35; Acts 6)
- B. Church has special work in the world -- Shall discuss that work under three topics.
 - 1. The work authorized for the church.
 - 2. The organization authorized to do the work.
 - 3. Church cooperation authorized for the work.

Discussion:

I. The Church Work Authorized In The Scriptures.

- A. Three-fold spiritual work of the church.
 - 1. Evangelism. (Acts 13:1-3; 14:27; Phil. 4:15,16; 2 Cor. 11:8).
 - 2. Edification. (Eph. 4:11-16).
 - a. Instruction -- "evangelists, pastors, teachers". (cf. 2 Tim. 4:1-5)
 - b. Discipline. (1 Cor. 5; Tit. 3:10; Rom. 16:17).
 - c. Public worship. (cf. 1 Cor. 14)
 - 3. Benevolence. (1 Cor. 16:1,2; Note: JOIMXMLA "that which is the outcome of fellowship, a contribution', e.g. Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8:4." -- Vine).
- B. Popular misconceptions of church work.
 - 1. Work same as individual Christians. (1 Tim. 5:16).
 - 2. Minister to "whole man".
 - a. To minister to man's social and recreational needs. (1 Cor. 11:22,34).
 - b. To minister to man's medical, psychological, economic, political, etc. needs.
 - c. To minister to man's diverse problems: marital, youth, singles, seniors, etc.
 - d. Note: Church should teach what Bible says about behavior in all areas of life, but it not equipped nor designed to function in all areas. It teaches spiritual truth affecting all areas of life, without functioning in those areas.

II. The Church Organization Authorized In The Scriptures.

- A. Local congregation only church organization in New Testament.
 - 1. Universal church not a functioning organization - a relationship.
 - 2. Local church independently organized. (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Phil. 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:1-5).
- B. Additional organizations violate New Testament principles.
 - 1. Sufficiency of the scriptures. (2 Tim. 3:16,17).
 - 2. Silence of the scriptures. (Heb. 7:11-14).
 - 3. Church fully equipped to do its work. (Eph. 4:11-16).
 - 4. Nature of authority: specific and generic authority. Organization specified.

III. The Church Co-operation Authorized In The Scriptures.

- A. New Testament churches had common:
 - 1. Doctrine. (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17).
 - 2. Mission in world.
- B. New Testament churches cooperated in common projects.
 - 1. The support of preachers. (2 Cor. 11:8).
 - 2. The support of poor saints. (1 Cor. 16:1,2).
- C. New Testament church co-operated concurrently - not jointly
 - 1. New Testament cooperation was concurrent action.
 - a. Evangelism. (2 Cor. 11:8).
 - b. Benevolence. (Acts 11:27-30; 1 Cor. 16:1,2; 2 Cor 8,9).

2. Join action an addition in cooperation- like instrument an addition in music.
- D. Much modern cooperation is joint action rather than concurrent.
 1. Joint control is either a board or sponsoring eldership.
 2. It infringes upon independence of local churches often completely destroying it.

Conclusion:

- A. All arguments in favor of other works, organization, and cooperation can be off-set with one simple argument
-- Where is the scripture for it?
- B. Once the gap is down as to work, organization or cooperation, where is the stopping place?