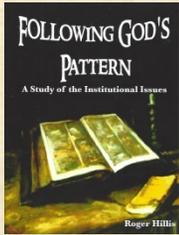


## Lesson 3 - The Silence of the Scriptures

# CONCLUSION

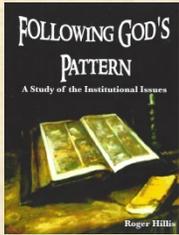
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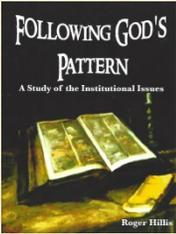


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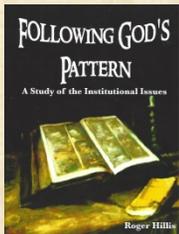


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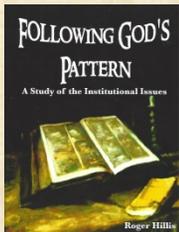


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The real question is: are we going to be satisfied to do just what God *tells us to do* in the Bible? Or are we *going to assume, without biblical evidence*, that a particular practice is alright, just because *we happen to want to do it?*

# FOLLOWING GOD'S PATTERN

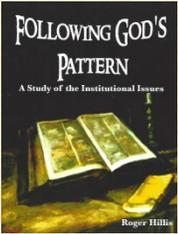
A Study of the Institutional Issues



Roger Hillis

## Lesson 4

# The Church & the Individual

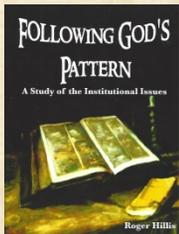


## **Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual**

# **Exploring the Biblical Distinction between the church & the Individual**

There are many people who do not comprehend the **biblical distinction** between:

- *The corporate body (**church**) of Christ*
- *And the **individual Christians** who comprise that body*
- *Many voice the slogan “Anything the **individual** can do, the **church** can do”*



## **Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual**

### **Illustrating the Biblical Distinction**

#### **Matt 18:15-17**

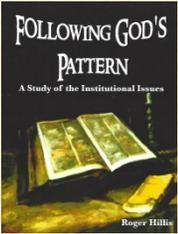
*15 "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.*

*16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.'*

*17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.*

NKJV

**How does this passage illustrate the distinction between the church and the individual?**



## **Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual**

### **Illustrating the Biblical Distinction**

#### **Acts 5:1-4**

*1 But a certain man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property,*

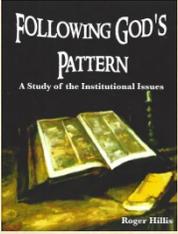
*2 and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet.*

*3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back some of the price of the land?"*

*4 "While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God."*

NAS

**How does this passage illustrate the distinction between the church and the individual?**



## **Lesson 4** - The church & the Individual

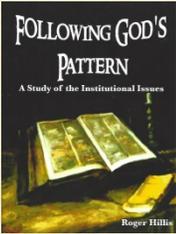
### **Illustrating the Biblical Distinction**

#### **1 Cor 12:14**

*14 For the body is not one member, but many.*

NAS

**How does this passage illustrate the distinction between the church and the individual?**



## **Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual**

### **Illustrating the Biblical Distinction**

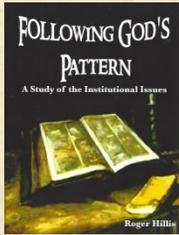
#### **1 Tim 5:8-16**

*8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

*16 If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.*

NKJV

**How does this passage illustrate the distinction between the church and the individual?**

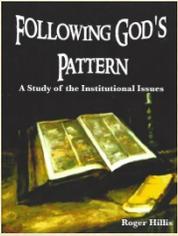


## **Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual**

# **Illustrating the Biblical Distinction**

### Other Illustrations

- 1. I am a member of a family*
- 2. I am a citizen of a nation*
- 3. As a Christian, I am a member of the family of God*



## **Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual**

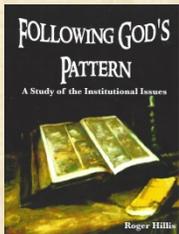
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### An Important Point

It is important for us to realize that an inspired letter can be written and sent to a church and, **at the same time**, contain instructions **for individual Christians** to fulfill



## Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual

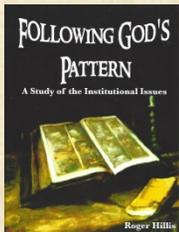
### Illustrating the Biblical Distinction

1. 2 Thessalonians was written to the church at Thessalonica
2. But it also contains instructions to individuals
3. Note 2 Thess 3:11-12

11 For we hear that there are **some who walk among you** in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are **busybodies**.

12 Now **those who are such** we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that **they** work in quietness and eat their own bread. NKJV

Instructions to individuals within the church



## Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual

# Illustrating the Biblical Distinction

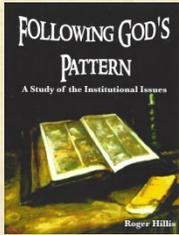
1. I Corinthians was written to the church at Corinth
2. But it also contains personalized instruction to husbands and wives
3. Note 1 Cor 7: 1-3

*1 Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.*

*2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let **each man** have his own wife, and let **each woman** have her own husband.*

*3 Let the **husband render to his wife** the affection due her, and likewise also **the wife to her husband**. NKJV*

Instructions to individuals within the church



## Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual

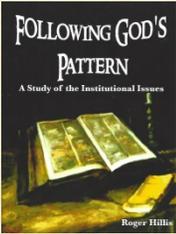
# Two Applications of this Distinction

### Running a business

- The **church** is taught to raise funds by a **freewill offering from the members** on the first day of the week (1Cor 16:1-2)
- An **individual** can raise funds anyway he wishes as long as it is honest (Eph 4:28)
- But the **church is limited** to God's plan for giving (funding)

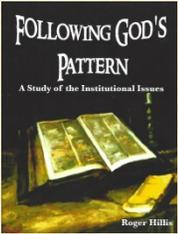
### Social Activities

- Social activities are a **duty of the home and family**, not the church
- Christians in the first century spent time together socially – but it **was always separated** from their worship assemblies
- There was an effort to eat together in a social way, as the church, **but was condemned**; they were told to eat at home (1 Cor 11:17-34)



## **Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual**

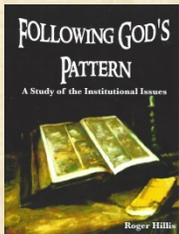
**There is no passage in the New Testament in which social activities, even between Christians, are called **“fellowship”****



## **Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual**

**There is no passage in the New Testament in which social activities, even between Christians, are called **“fellowship”****

- In the New Testament, there are **15 passages** (depending on version) that contain the word **“fellowship”**
- Not a single one of them is used in a **“social activities” context**



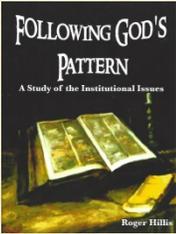
## **Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual**

### **Conclusion**

Failure to understand these distinctions have led to serious apostasy. Sincere Christians, who have unwittingly abandoned these scriptural principles, have accepted all kinds of unscriptural innovations.

This lack of understanding can lead (and has led) to some rather unbelievable practices among churches of Christ. We now have:

- Church widows homes
- Church hospitals
- Church gymnasiums
- Family life centers
- Church sponsored ball teams
- Church choruses
- Quartet entertainment singing
- Fellowship halls
- Bake sales
- Car washes
- Chili suppers
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**All justified by the argument that there is no distinction between the church and the individual**