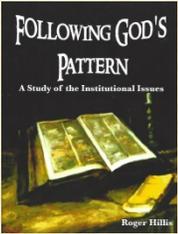


Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual

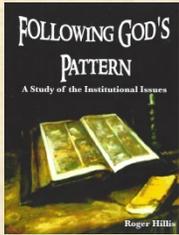
There is no passage in the New Testament in which social activities, even between Christians, are called **“fellowship”**



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**



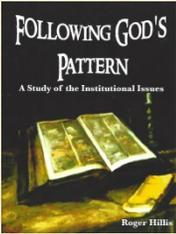
Lesson 4 - The church & the Individual

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**
- **Boy/Girl Scout sponsorships**



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All justified by the argument that there is no distinction between the church and the individual

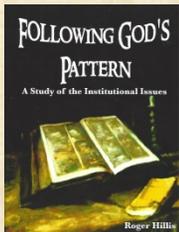
FOLLOWING GOD'S PATTERN

A Study of the Institutional Issues



Lesson 5

The Work of the Local church



Lesson 5 - The Work of the Local church

The Work of the Lord's church is Spiritual in Nature

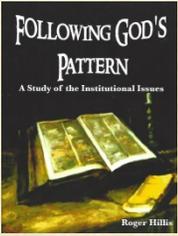
Paul wrote to Timothy (1 Tim 3:14-15)

14 *“These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly;*

15 *but if I am delayed, I write so that **you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God**, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth”.* NKJV

Roy Gogdill, in his book “Walking By Faith”, Page 9, stated:

*“**No man has the right** to prostitute the energy, strength, zeal or resources of the church of our Lord to serve human aims or purposes. The church should be **kept faithful to the divine mission** that was **God's purpose from eternity** for her to serve.”*

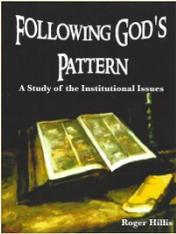


Lesson 5 - The Work of the Local church

What the Work of the church is Not

Modern churches are involved in activities that have *nothing to do with the work God has given His people to do.*

Churches sponsor or engage in such things as:



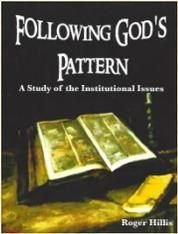
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- softball, basketball, soccer leagues
- build gymnasiums, exercise classes
- provide weight lifting equipment
- sponsor craft fairs
- hold chili and pie suppers
- hold Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter banquets –raise \$ or feed members
- involved in Easter & Christmas plays drawing large crowds



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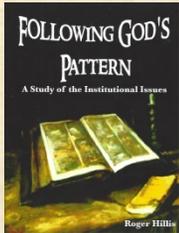
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- Do these things please God?
- Or are they simply examples of human wisdom?

[Prov 14:12](#)

*There is a way which **seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.***

There is no scripture that authorizes the Lord's church to engage in these activities



Lesson 5 - The Work of the Local church

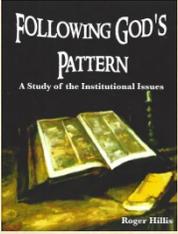
The standard of what is right and wrong is not what our society tells us.

It is not what we have become used to seeing or doing.

The standard of right and wrong is God's word.

If it is found in the New Testament, it is right.

If it is not found in the New Testament, it is wrong.

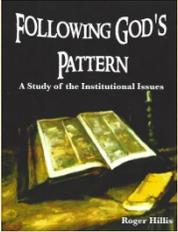


Lesson 5 - The Work of the Local church

What the Work of the church IS

The work of a local congregation of Christians may be described in ***only two*** ways:

- 1. The Worship of God***
- 2. The Saving of Souls***



Lesson 5 - The Work of the Local church

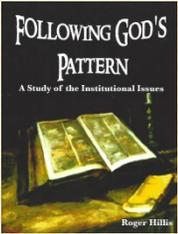
The Worship of God

- The worship of the church is clearly defined in God's word.
- To be pleasing to Him, Christians **must worship Him today** as the **first century** Christians worshiped.
- This worship consisted of 5 elements:

- 1. Singing**
- 2. Praying**
- 3. The Lord's Supper**

- 4. Contribution**
- 5. Teaching**

Any Other?



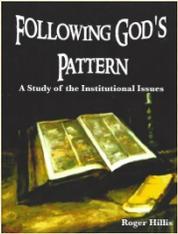
Lesson 5 - The Work of the Local church

The Saving of Souls

- The second major area of work for the local church is the *saving of souls*
- This subdivides into four important functions

- 1. Evangelism**
- 2. Edification**
- 3. Benevolence**
- 4. Church discipline**

Any Other?

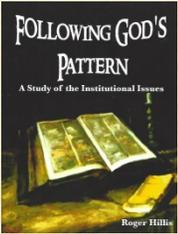


Lesson 5 - The Work of the Local church

Lesson 5 Conclusion

- “It should be remembered that as a divine institution the church has a divine mission.
- It is neither political, nor social, but altogether spiritual in its design.
- Its concern is not the entertainment of people but the saving of souls”

(Roy Cogdill, “*The New Testament Church*”, page 24)



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- The work of the local church is wholly spiritual in its nature (Romans 14:17).
- Let no one attempt to alter what God had ordained that His church perform as her divine mission.