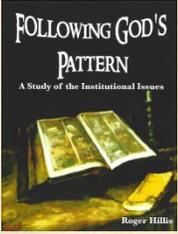


Lesson 5 - The Work of the Local church

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)



Lesson 5 - The Work of the Local church

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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.

Lesson #5 - Question #10 – Romans 14:13-17

13 Therefore let ***us not judge one another*** anymore, but rather determine this-- not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.

14 I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; ***but to him who thinks anything to be unclean,*** to him ***it is unclean.***

15 For if because of food ***your brother is hurt***, you are no longer walking according to love. ***Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died.***

16 Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil;

17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

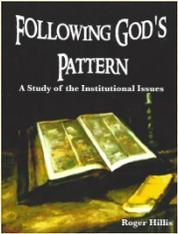
FOLLOWING GOD'S PATTERN

A Study of the Institutional Issues



Lesson 6

Scriptural
church
Cooperation



Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

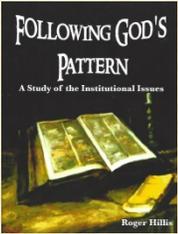
The Pattern was No Other Organization than the Local church

In the first century, Christians were organized:

- *into local churches*
- *in various localities*
- *to do the Lord's work in their area*

Each local congregation, when mature was organized with:

- *elders, deacons & saints - Philippians 1:1*
- *there were no other organizations at all*

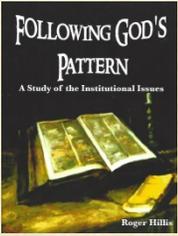


Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

The Pattern was No Other Organization than the Local church

In the first century:

- *there was **no missionary society** through which the local church could **send \$\$** to evangelize*
- *there was **no organization like a Bible college** through which a local church could **send \$\$** to train preachers and teachers*
- *there were **no group homes** through which the local church could **send \$\$** to care for the needy as part of a local church's work of benevolence*

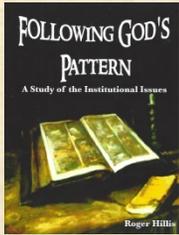


Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Independent Action of churches

In the first century:

- *churches worked together to evangelize the world – the common goal of all*
- *they did so by each local church doing its part, according to its ability & opportunities to reach the lost*
- *there was no centralized headquarters which coordinated those efforts*

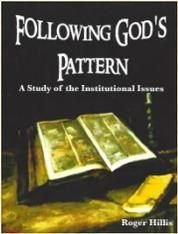


Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Independent Action of churches

Scripturally:

- *there can be cooperation among local churches, but each church should act independently of others*
- *it is possible for local churches to work together in supporting a preacher to go to a particular location to preach*
- *Note an example of such scriptural cooperation in the support of a preacher*



Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Independent Action of churches

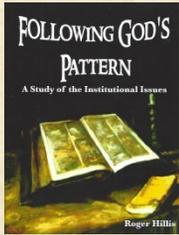
Concerning Paul's work in preaching at Corinth:

- *he stated that several churches helped to finance that effort*

2 Cor 11:8-9

8 I robbed other churches, *taking wages from them* to serve you;
9 and when I was present with you and *was in need*, I was not a burden to anyone; for when the brethren came from Macedonia, *they fully supplied my need*, and in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and will continue to do so. NAS

- *but they did not pool their \$\$ through a sponsoring church and then have it sent to Paul*
- *each supporting church sent what they could to the apostle*

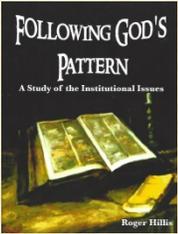


Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Independent Action of churches

Scripturally:

- *local churches, while working (**cooperating**) to achieve the same goal*
- *helped **independently** of one another*
- *no one church **told another** church to give, how much to give, that they could not give, etc.*
- *It was **concurrent cooperation** i.e., with each church working separately toward a common goal*
- *It was not **JOINT COOPERATION** in which churches were **joined together structurally or financially***

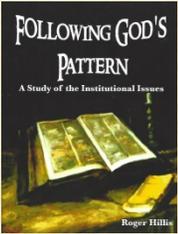


Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Independent Action of churches

It is important to realize:

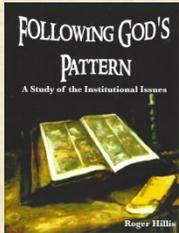
- *that in **financially supporting** gospel preachers*
- *each local church sent their support **directly to the preacher**, not to another church to then give to the preacher*
- *As noted previously, **other churches supported Paul** while he preached at Corinth*
- *The did not **send their \$\$ to the Corinthian treasurer** to compile together and then give to Paul*



Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Autonomy of Each Local Church

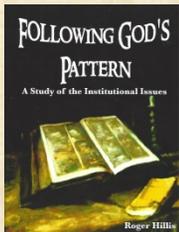
- Autonomy is defined as the quality or state of being self-governing; especially the right of self-government
- Each local church had elders – *Acts 14:23*
- Those elders made decisions for that local church and how it would spend its funds.
- They were not answerable to any other group of elders
- They cared for the flock which was “among them”
Acts 20:28 & 1 Pet 5:1-2



Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Autonomy of Each Local Church

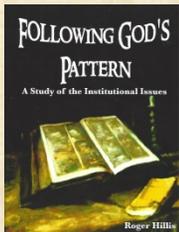
Scriptural	Unscriptural
No other organization than the local church	



Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Autonomy of Each Local Church

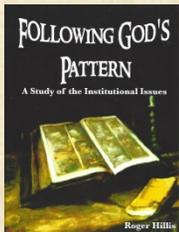
Scriptural	Unscriptural
No other organization than the local church	Human organizations which do the work of the local church



Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Autonomy of Each Local Church

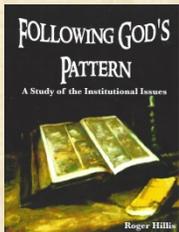
Scriptural	Unscriptural
No other organization than the local church	Human organizations which do the work of the local church
Independent action of each church	



Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Autonomy of Each Local Church

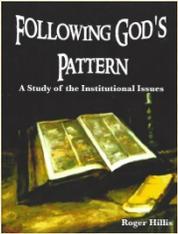
Scriptural	Unscriptural
No other organization than the local church	Human organizations which do the work of the local church
Independent action of each church	Joint action of congregations



Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Autonomy of Each Local Church

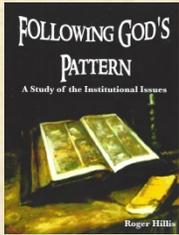
Scriptural	Unscriptural
No other organization than the local church	Human organizations which do the work of the local church
Independent action of each church	Joint action of congregations
Autonomy of each local church	



Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Autonomy of Each Local Church

Scriptural	Unscriptural
No other organization than the local church	Human organizations which do the work of the local church
Independent action of each church	Joint action of congregations
Autonomy of each local church	Sponsoring church arrangement



Lesson 6 - Scriptural Church Cooperation

Conclusion

- In New Testament times, the basis for any cooperation was need. When the need no longer existed neither did the cooperation. The sponsoring church creates a permanent need.
- The command to evangelize the world is the work of every church.
- There is NO example in the New Testament of one church contributing funds to help another church evangelize the world.
- All churches are equally obligatory to such assignment.

Dee Bowman