

## 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

# FOLLOWING GOD'S PATTERN

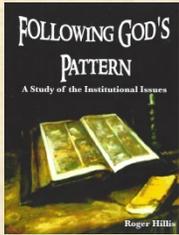
A Study of the Institutional Issues



Roger Hillis

## Lesson 7

# The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

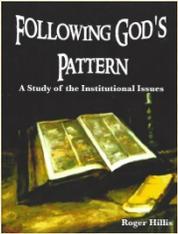


## Lesson 7 - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

### What Is a Sponsoring Church?

#### *In a Sponsoring Church arrangement*

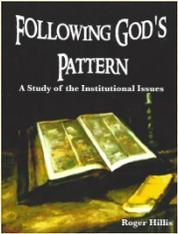
1. One church becomes the “**headquarters**” through which other churches channel and pool their funds.
2. Then the “**Sponsoring Church**”:
  - distributes the money to various needs
  - such as a preacher in a needy area
  - large scale national radio/TV programs



## Lesson 7 - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

### What Is Church Cooperation?

1. The word **“cooperate”** means working together
2. So **“church cooperation”** refers to “how” local churches may **scripturally** work together to do the Lord’ work.
3. Churches may cooperate with each other in **defeating the devil** and **saving as many souls** as possible.
4. But each **must make certain** that any cooperating together is according to **God’s pattern** for such activity.

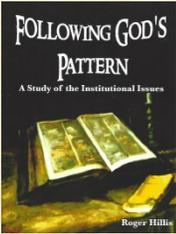


## Lesson 7 - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

### Two Kinds of Cooperation

#### Joint Cooperation

1. This type of cooperation involves a **pooling of funds** by **combining** the money contributed by **two or more local churches** and placing the **control** of these funds under a **single church's eldership**.
2. This arrangement may even involve **a separate organization** to manage and distribute such funds or the **receiving church elders** may make decisions as to how the funds are to be distributed.
3. The **contributing congregations** thus have little or no say as to how the funds are used; those funds are **no longer in their control**.

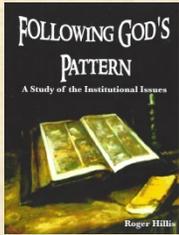


## Lesson 7 - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

### Two Kinds of Cooperation

#### Independent, but Joint Cooperation

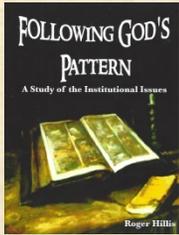
1. In this method of cooperation, each autonomous congregation does the work that **God has designed the local church** to do; **evangelizing** the lost, **edifying** the saved, **providing for needy** saints.
2. Each church works under the *authority* of its **scriptural elders**. The elders **do not oversee the work** of any other church nor do they **accept the oversight** of their work by any **other eldership**.
3. They **do not pool** their funds or **combine** their organizations **to form** something **foreign** to the New Testament **pattern**. **Together**, however, they may help to **financially support** gospel preachers.



## **Lesson 7** - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

### **The Biblical Pattern**

**The Biblical Pattern is for a church (or several churches) to send support directly to an evangelist**



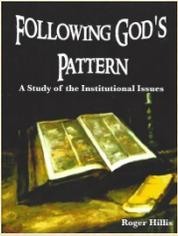
## **Lesson 7** - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

### **The Biblical Pattern**

**The Biblical Pattern is for a church (or several churches) to send support directly to an evangelist**

**This truth is illustrated using the following charts**





# Lesson 7 - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

## The Biblical Pattern

### Chart on the Biblical Pattern to Support a Preacher

Scripture	Who did the Supporting?	





## **Acts 11:19-22**

*19 So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone.*

*20 But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus.*

*21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.*

*22 And the news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch.*

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## Acts 11:23-26

23 Then when he had come and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord;

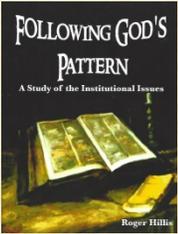
24 for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And considerable numbers were brought to the Lord.

25 And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul;

26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. **And it came about that for an entire year they met with the church, and taught considerable numbers;** and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

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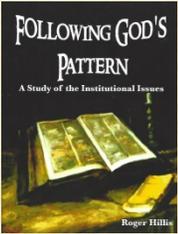


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# The Biblical Pattern

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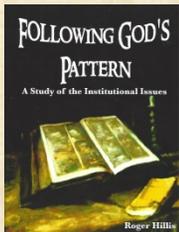


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1 Cor 9:4-14		

## **1 Cor 9:4-9**

*4 Do we not have a right to eat and drink?*

*5 Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?*

*6 Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working?*

*7 Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard, and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock?*

*8 I am not speaking these things according to human judgment, am I? Or does not the Law also say these things?*

*9 For it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing." God is not concerned about oxen, is He?*

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## **1 Cor 9:10-14**

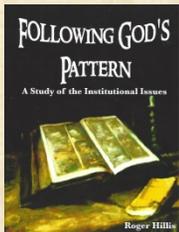
*10 Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops.*

*11 If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you?*

*12 If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ.*

*13 Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the food of the temple, and those who attend regularly to the altar have their share with the altar?*

*14 So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel. NAS*

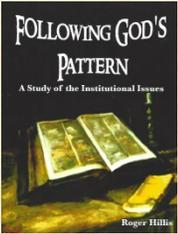


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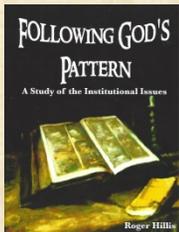


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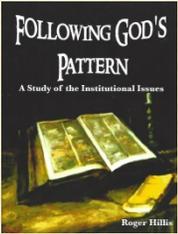


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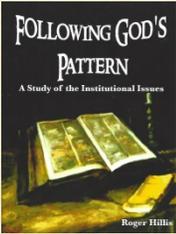
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2 Cor 11:8-9		

## **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.*

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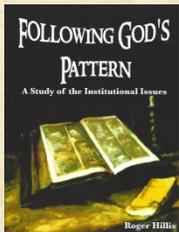


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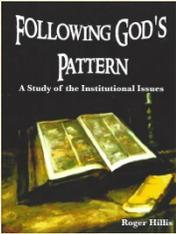


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<b>Phil 1:3-5</b>		

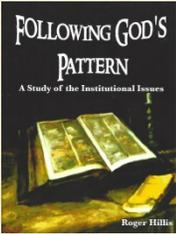
## **Phil 1:3-5**

*3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,*

*4 always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all,*

*5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until  
now.*

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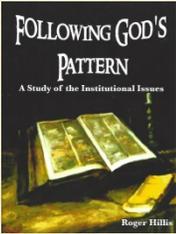


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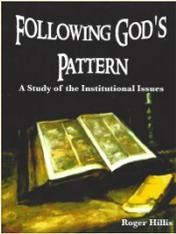


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<b><i>Phil 4-14-18</i></b>		

## Phil 4:14-18

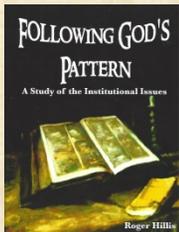
14 Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction.

15 And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;

16 for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs.

17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account.

18 But I have received everything in full, and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

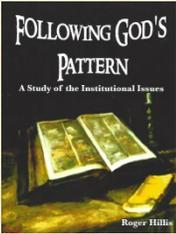


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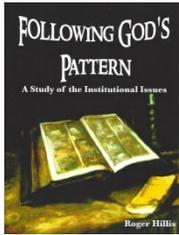


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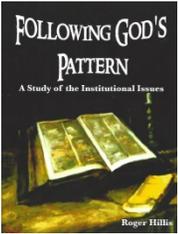
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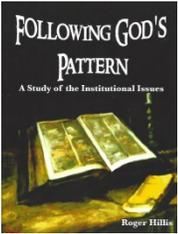
**God's Plan for a Local Church to Support a Gospel Preacher**



## **Lesson 7** - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

God's Plan for a Local Church to Support a Gospel Preacher



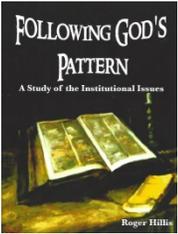


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**God's Plan for a Local Church to Support a Gospel Preacher**

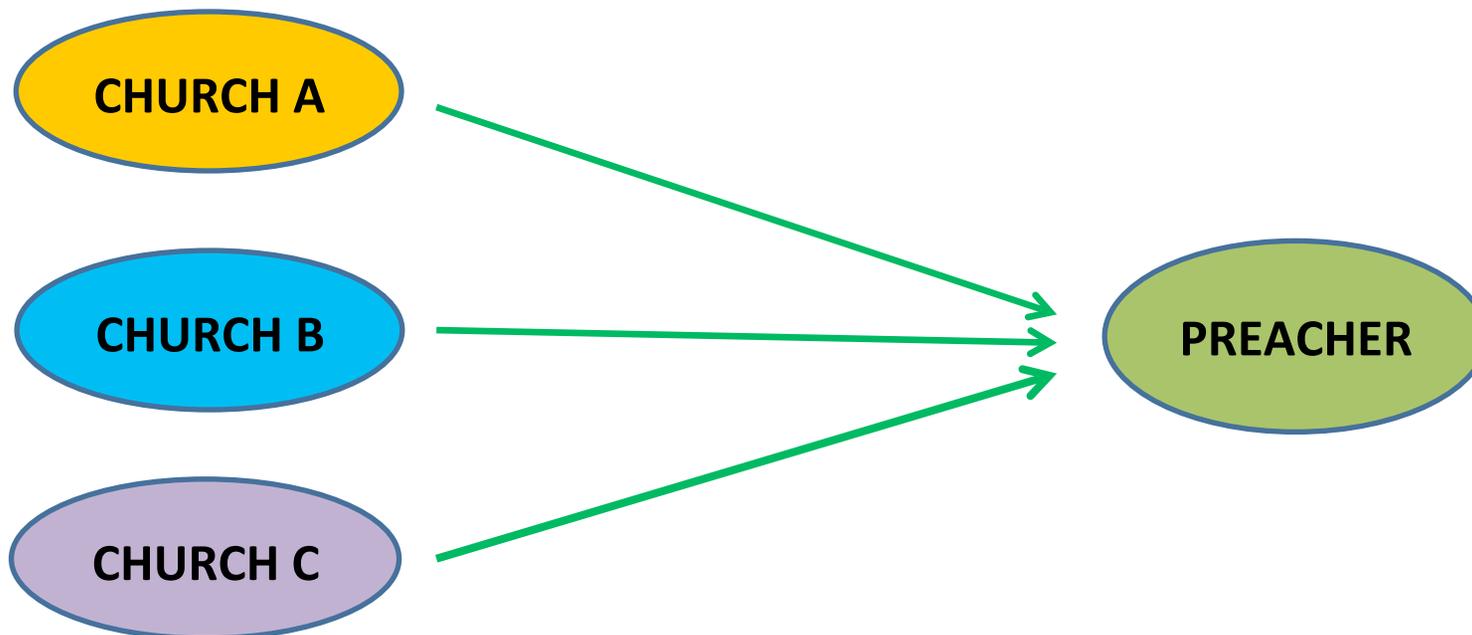


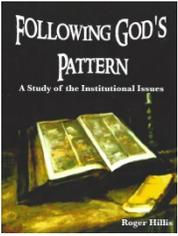
**Local church sends directly to the Preacher**



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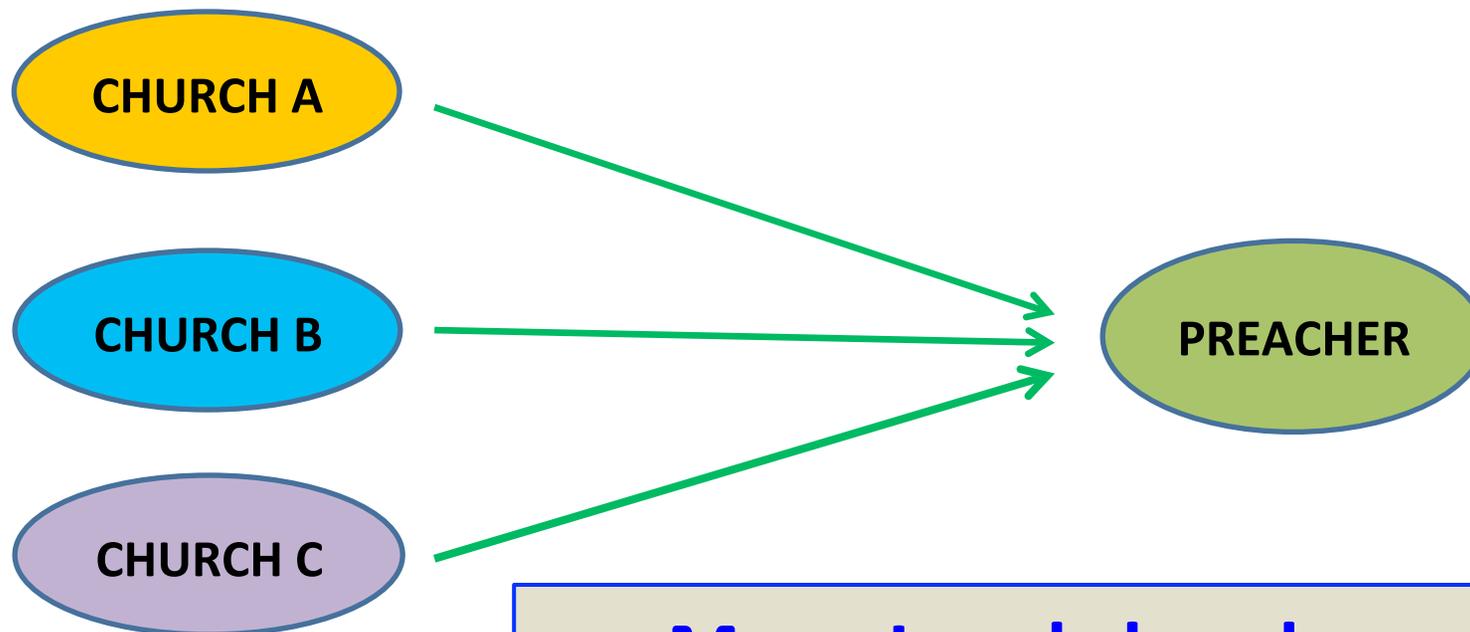
**God's Plan for Multiple Local Churches to Support a Gospel Preacher**



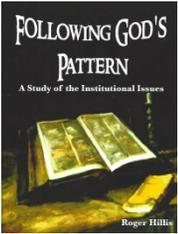


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**God's Plan for Multiple Local Churches to Support a Gospel**

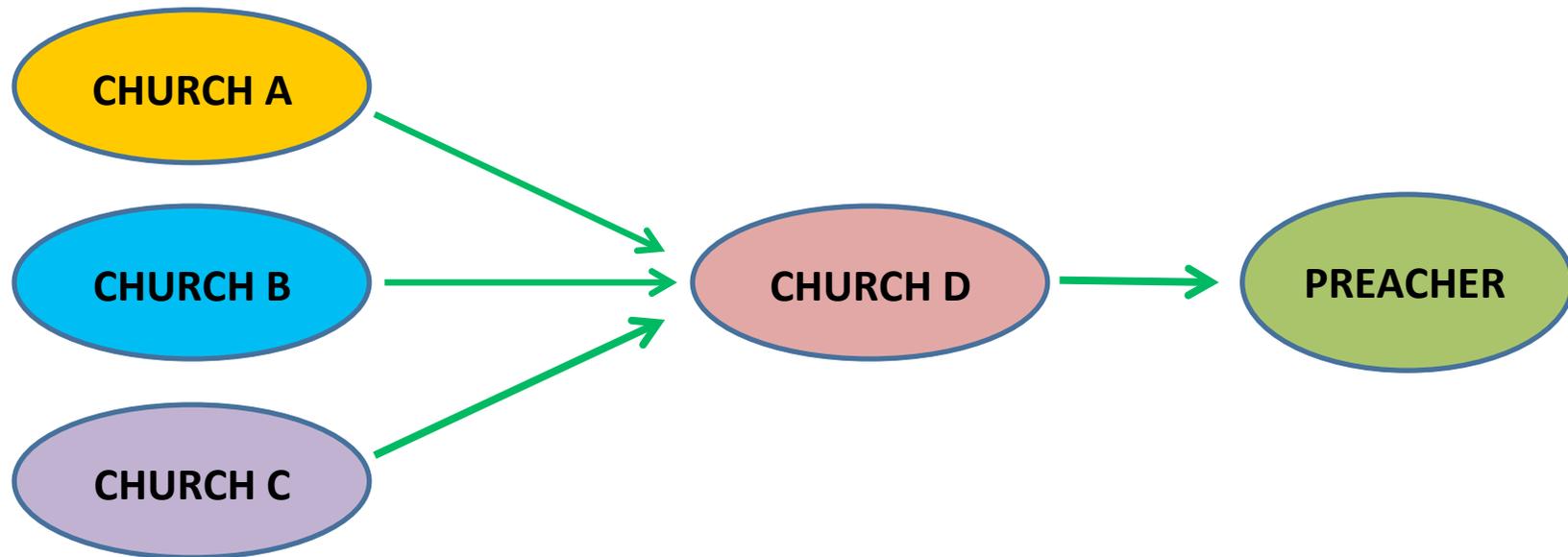


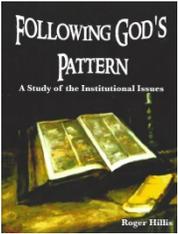
**Many Local churches send support directly to the Preacher**



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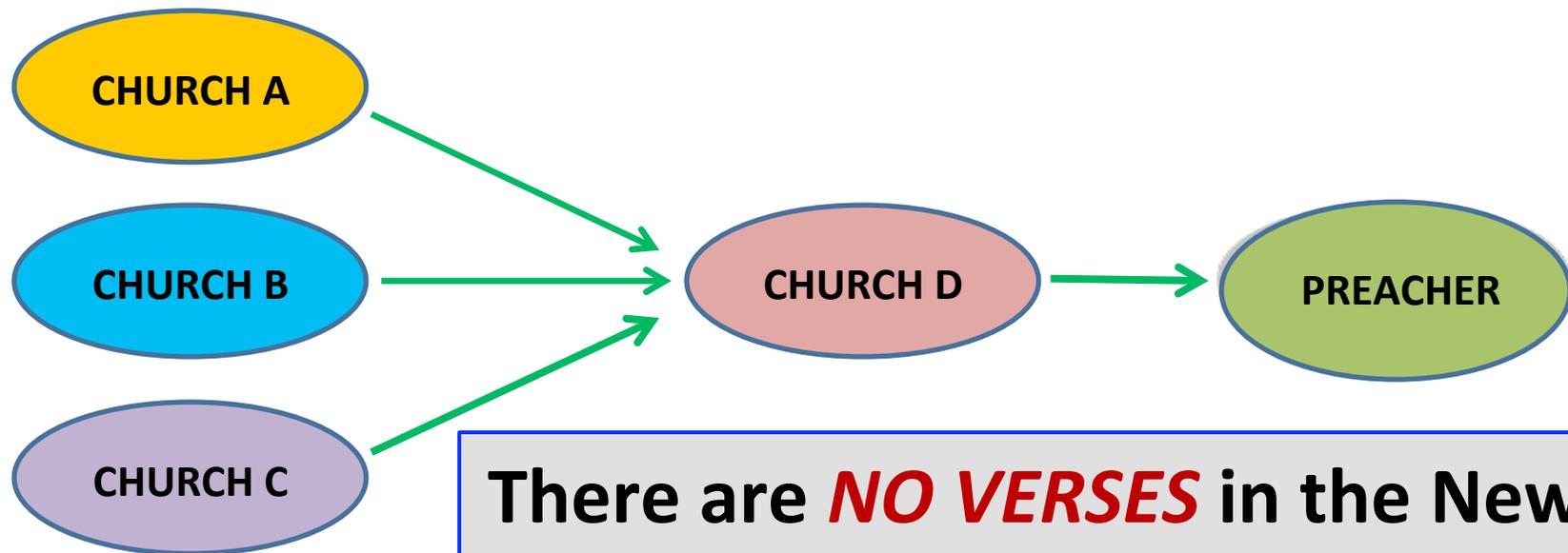
**Man's Plan Under a Sponsoring Church Arrangement Looks Like This**



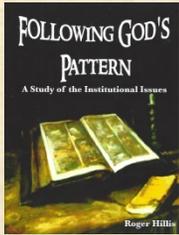


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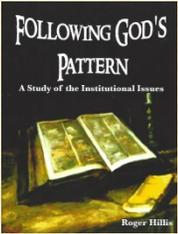
There are ***NO VERSES*** in the New Testament that can be found to ***justify*** this plan.



## Lesson 7 - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

# Limits To the Work of the Local Church

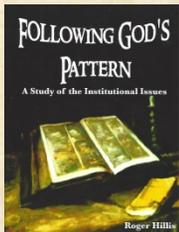
1. The **work** of the local church **is limited** to its **ability** and **opportunity**.
2. A local church is **not responsible** to do something **beyond its ability** to do. God never expects any local church to do more than it can.
3. Men often come up with a plan that **changes God's pattern** given in the New Testament.
4. We can never **improve** on God's plan nor should we try. **That is SINFUL.**



## Lesson 7 - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

# Sponsoring Church Problems

1. It places an ***eldership over the work*** of more than one local church. This includes ***overseeing*** and ***controlling*** the money contributed by other congregations.
2. If a ***single eldership*** can oversee the work of more than one congregation, what would be wrong with that ***eldership overseeing the work*** of all congregations?
3. There is ***no scripture*** which teaches it; thus it is ***sinful***.
4. There is ***no scripture*** for a single eldership to oversee even two congregations; ***only one!***



## **Lesson 7** - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

### **What About Acts 11:27-30?**

This passage has often been cited  
as *scriptural proof* of a  
Sponsoring Church arrangement

## **Acts 11:27-30**

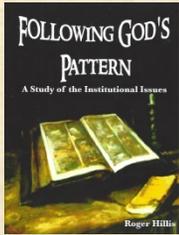
27 Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.

28 And one of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius.

29 And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea.

30 And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders

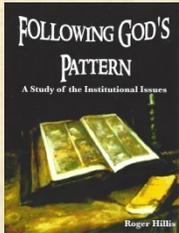




## Lesson 7 - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

# What About Acts 11:27-30?

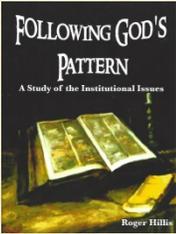
1. This is not an *example* of a sponsoring church.
2. It is an *example* of some *needy churches* in Judea that:
  - *Could not care* for their own members
  - Were *being helped* by Christians from other areas
3. Evangelism and benevolence are *not the same thing*.
4. There is one **pattern** for *evangelism* and another **pattern** for *benevolence*.



## Lesson 7 - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

# What About Acts 11:27-30?

1. The ***difference*** between Acts 11:27-30 and the sponsoring church arrangement is **substantial**.
2. The churches in Acts 11 ***did not decide to be poor***. It just happened – events **beyond their control** unfolded.
3. The sponsoring church ***takes it upon themselves*** to do some great work for the brotherhood:
  - then finds itself ***unable*** to financially support it
  - then expects ***other churches*** to bail them out financially.
3. Sponsoring churches ***are not needy churches***; they have ***overstretched their ability*** to fund what they want to do.



## Lesson 7 - The Sponsoring Church Arrangement

### Conclusion

1. This Lesson is a matter of:
2. *Either following God's arrangement* for local churches to *act autonomously & independently, yet concurrently*, to do the Lord's work
3. *Or adopting man's plan* of pooling funds & forming a new structure; i.e. the *sponsoring church arrangement eldership*
4. That in turn *oversees, distributes funds* and *controls* at least part of the work of the contributing churches.

**Sponsoring Church Arrangement – Totally Unscriptural**