

FOLLOWING GOD'S PATTERN

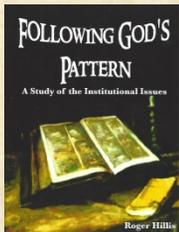
A Study of the Institutional Issues



Roger Hillis

Lesson 8

Institutionalism

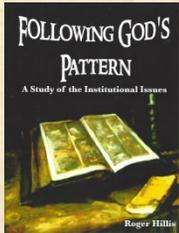


Lesson 8 - Intitutionalism

Introduction

1. “If the church of the Lord is **sufficient** to accomplish what the Lord intended for it to do,
2. [then] it is **competent** & **adequate** and [then] no other organization or arrangement is **permitted**, much less **needed**.
3. Any effort **made by man** to **add to or improve upon** the **Lord's arrangement** for the accomplishment of **His purpose** through **His church**
4. indicates **dis-satisfaction** with **God's ways**”.

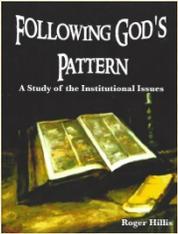
Roy E. Cogdill, “Walking By Faith”, Page 10



Lesson 8 - Intitutionalism

What is the Church?

1. The **church** is the **body** of Jesus Christ **purchased** with His shed blood. (Acts 20:28)
2. In its **universal sense**, it is the collective number of **all saved people**.
3. **The church**:
 - is **undenominational** in its nature
 - is **singular** in its design
 - has **only one head**, **Jesus Christ** Himself.

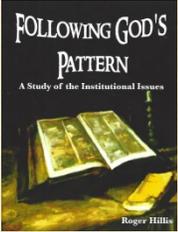


Lesson 8 - Institutionalism

What is an Institution?

1. To “institute” is to set up or establish.
2. The word “institution” as used in this study means:
 - an organization or establishment instituted for some **public, educational** or **charitable** purpose
 - whether an institution is **divine** or **human** depends upon whether it was established by **God or man**
3. The church is **one** of **only three** divinely ordained institutions in the world. These are:
 - the **home**
 - civil **government**
 - the **church**

ALL OTHERS ARE HUMAN INSTITUTIONS



Lesson 8 - Institutionalism

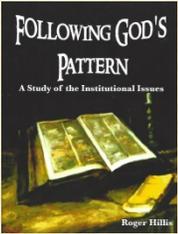
What is an Institution?

1. The church is a **divine** institution
2. It was designed in the **mind of God**, as part of His plan for **human redemption**, before the world even began

3. [Note Eph 3:10-11](#) [NLT]

“God’s purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord.”

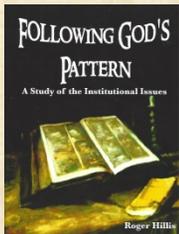
4. Notice here that the church was in God’s **eternal purpose**



Lesson 8 - Institutionalism

The Local Church

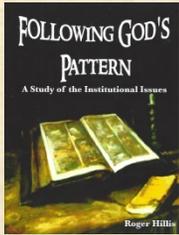
1. Each congregation is to be organized according to the ***New Testament pattern*** with **elders, deacons** and **saints**. [Phil 1:1]
2. The elders are the ***spiritual leaders or rulers*** of a local church. They are called:
bishops ***shepherds***
presbyters ***pastors***
overseers ***elders***
3. They are in charge of the ***spiritual oversight*** of the members
4. They are to ***watch out for the souls*** of those members



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The Local Church

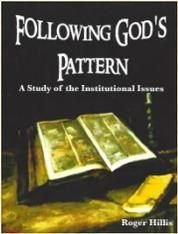
1. The ***deacons are servants*** – specially qualified servants (1 Tim 3:8-13)
2. Deacons ***serve the congregation*** under the oversight of, and as directed by, the elders.
3. They may be put ***in charge*** of whatever the elders determine ***needs to be done***, according to their individual abilities.
4. Then, ***saints are simply Christians***, often referred to as members of the church.
5. The word “saint” means ***sanctified or holy one***. Those who lead a godly, holy life according to the NT pattern.



Lesson 8 - Institutionalism

The Local Church

1. Then, there are **evangelists**; they **are not** “church officers”
2. They are simply **Christians**, or **saints**.
3. They work under the oversight of the elders
4. They spend their time preaching and teaching the word of God.

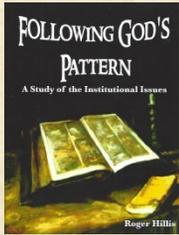


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The Local Church

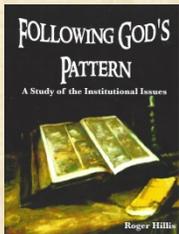
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There is no other **functioning** unit in the **Lord's plan** than the local church.



Lesson 8 - Institutionalism

The All-Sufficiency of the Church

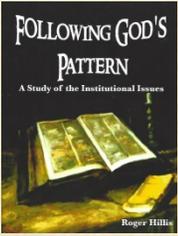


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The All-Sufficiency of the Church

Four Questions

1. Is the church, as ***designed*** by God, and ***described*** in the NT, ***sufficient to do the work*** that God intended for it to do?
2. Or does the church ***need the help*** of ***human institutions?***
3. Did God ***plan and organize*** the church so it can ***accomplish*** God's will?
4. Or does God's plan ***fall short?***

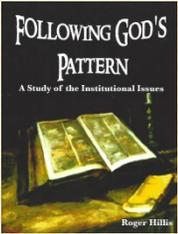


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The All-Sufficiency of the Church

Consider

1. When a *local church*, sends money from it's *treasury* to any **human institution**, to carry out its *God assigned work*

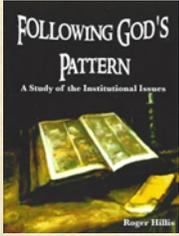


Lesson 8 - Intitutionalism

The All-Sufficiency of the Church

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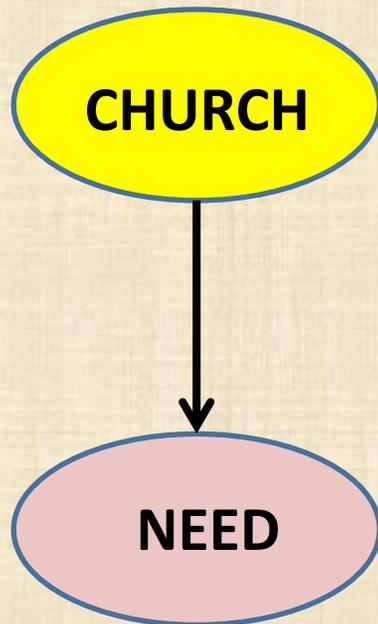
1. When a **local church**, sends money from it's **treasury** to any **human institution**, to carry out its **God assigned work**, it shows that **that local church believes it is not sufficient** to carry out the mission that **God designed** it to accomplish.
2. Was it ever **God's** purpose for **His church** to carry out **part or all** of its work through human institutions?
3. The answer is **NO!**



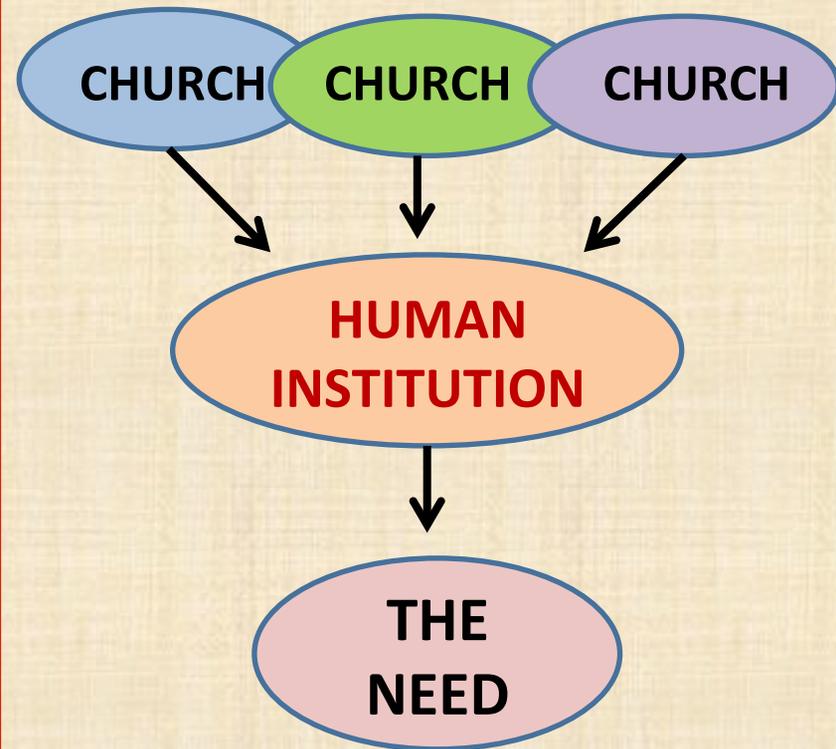
Lesson 8 - Intitutionalism

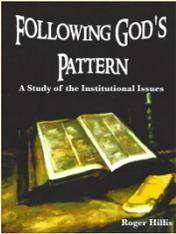
The All-Sufficiency of the Church

God's plan is simple -
it looks like this:



Man's plan looks like this:



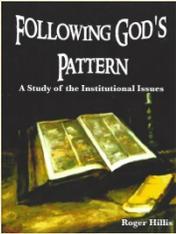


Lesson 8 - Institutionalism

EXAMPLES OF HUMAN INSTITUTIONS

1. There are several examples of human institutions **that brethren have created** over the years that, every single time, have brought **division and heartache** to the body of Christ.
2. In the field of **evangelism**, it was the church supported **missionary society**.
3. In the area of **edification**, it was the church supported **Bible college**.
4. In the realm of **benevolence**, it was church supported **orphan's homes, nursing homes and hospitals**.

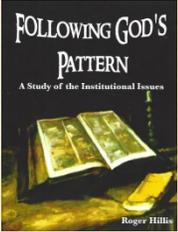
The church is **all-sufficient** to do the work God has assigned it to do in the areas of **evangelism, edification & benevolence** without the help of human institutions!



Lesson 8 - Intitutionalism

PURCHASING a SERVICE or MAKING a DONATION

1. The local church has an **obligation** to *care for its needy* as in the case of a “**widow indeed**” who meets the *scriptural qualifications* as found in 1 Tim 5:9-11.
2. This could be done by *paying her expenses* at a Baptist, Methodist or Lutheran nursing facility.
3. In this example, the church is merely *purchasing a service* as it would by *buying class material* from a bookstore or *grape juice* from a grocery store.
4. But a local church, from its treasury, cannot make regular *contributions* or *donations* to any of these facilities.
5. Purchasing a *service* is **scriptural**; making a *donation* is not.



Lesson 8 - Intitutionalism

CONCLUSION

1. Let the **church** be the **church**.
2. Let it **do the work** God has assigned it to do.
3. Let the **church** do its work by the **simple and sufficient arrangement** God has designed – the **local congregation**
4. There is **no authority** in the scriptures for the church **contributing** to or **working through** human institutions.

Lesson 8 - Question 1

Matt 16:16-20

16 *And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

17 *And Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."*

18 ***"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it."***

19 *"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."*

NAS

Lesson 8 - Question 4

Eph 3:8-12

8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,

9 and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things;

10 in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.

11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,

12 in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. NAS

Lesson 8 - Question 9

1 Tim 5:1-5

1 Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers,

2 the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity.

3 Honor widows who are widows indeed;

4 but if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family, and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God.

5 Now she who is a widow indeed, and who has been left alone has fixed her hope on God, and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day.

Lesson 8 - Question 4

1 Tim 5:6-10

6 But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives.

7 Prescribe these things as well, so that they may be above reproach.

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.

9 Let a widow be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man,

10 having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work.

Lesson 8 - Question 4

1 Tim 5: 11-15:

11 But refuse to put younger widows on the list, for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married,

12 thus incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their previous pledge.

13 And at the same time they also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention.

14 Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach;

15 for some have already turned aside to follow Satan. NAS