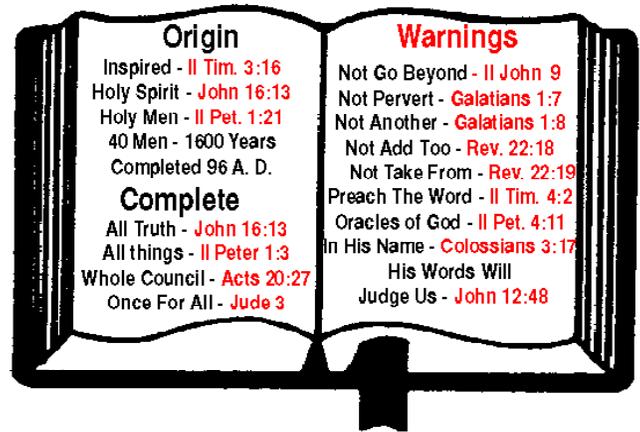


God's Pattern for Conversion Organization Worship Work

J. T. Smith

There is much confusion in the world today, as well as in the church, regarding the Bible and its usage. What is the Bible? Who wrote it? What benefit is it for us today? I hope to answer these and other questions in this tract.

The Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God. Its claims to be such are evident. It claims to originate with God, to be complete, and warns man not to go beyond what is written therein. This is either true, or the Bible is a lie from beginning to end.



II Timothy 3:16 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

John 16:13 “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”

II Peter 1:21 “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

II Peter 1:3 seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue;

Acts 20:27” For I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God.””

Jude 1:3 “Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.

II John 9 “Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son.

Galatians 1:8 ASV 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema.

Revelation 22:18 ‘I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book.”

Revelation 22:19 “and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.”

II Timothy 4:2 “preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

I Peter 4:11 “if any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God; is any man ministereth, ministering as of the strength which God supplieth: that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, whose is the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Colossians 3:17 “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

John 12:48 “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”

In view of the fact that the Bible is the complete and final revelation from God, let us observe that it involves three different periods or dispensations of time (*Patriarchal* — from Adam to the giving of the law of Moses at Mt. Sinai; *Mosaic* — from Sinai until the death of Christ on the cross; *New Testament or Christ’s Rule* — from the cross until the end of time). During the Patriarchal period, God dealt directly with the head of the family. During the Mosaic period, man was governed by the Law of Moses. Today, we are governed by the New Testament.

Hebrews 1:1-2 — “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.”

When I refer to “God’s Pattern” of things, I mean, “a model, plan, etc. used in making things” (Webster’s *New World Dictionary*, Page 314). It simply involves reading everything God has said on any subject. When we compile all the teaching from the New Testament on any subject, we have God’s pattern on that subject.

2 According to the Pattern

Hebrews 8:1-5



Doing God's Will - Matthew 7:21-23

Iniquity - "The condition of one without Law, either because ignorant of it, or because violating it." (Thayer Page 48)



Obeying Christ Hebrews 5:9



Scriptures Furnish Unto Every Good Work
I Timothy 3:16-17

Hebrews 8:1-5 "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; ²A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. ³For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. ⁴For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: ⁵Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."

Matthew 7:21-23 "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. ²²Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? ²³And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Hebrews 5:9 "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

II Timothy 3:16-17 "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Paul says the Scriptures furnish us unto *every good work*. Hence if it is a good work that God wants done, He reveals it to us through His Word. Therefore, following God's pattern means doing God's will or obeying Christ. Thus, God through His Word has revealed to mankind His plan (pattern) for us to follow.

From The Bible We Learn God's Pattern For:

3

Becoming A Christian



Organization for Congregation



Congregational Worship



Work of A Congregation

Paul affirms that all men are sinners. “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). He also affirms that Christ died for all men. “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Hebrews 2:9). That God devised a plan (pattern) whereby all mankind can be saved, few will deny. However, there is much disagreement as to what this plan is. So, in order for us to know God’s plan for salvation, we need to make a few observations.

1. God’s plan for salvation could not be enforced on mankind until after the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. For, these are the facts of the gospel that must be believed before one can be saved. “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (I Corinthians 15:1-4).

2. One could not become a New Testament Christian before the New Testament was probated. Paul says a testament is of force after men are dead. It is of no benefit at all while the testator liveth. “For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth” (Hebrews 9:16-17).

Since Christ is the mediator of the New Covenant, neither the facts, commands, nor promises could be realized while He lived. There are instructions given by the Lord that are to be obeyed in order that we might receive the remission of sins, (be saved), “And Jesus came and spake unto them saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:18-20). “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15-16). “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47). After giving these instructions, Christ ascended to heaven to be with the Father. Christ now has all authority in heaven and on earth.

He told His apostles that the Holy Spirit would come and guide them into all truth as we have already observed on our first chart, John 16:13. This took place in Acts 2, and they went every where preaching the gospel. Every person obeyed the same instructions as those given to the apostles by Christ in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, as can be observed from the following chart. This is God’s pattern in conversion.

God's Plan of Salvation As Given In The Book of Acts						
4	Heard	Believed	Repented	Confessed	Baptized	Saved
	3,000 2:1-47		Repented 2:38		Baptized 2:38, 41	Sins Remitted
	Samaritans 8:5-12	Believed 8:12			Baptized 8:12	Saved MK 16:16
	Ethiopian 8:26:40	Believed 8:37		Confes- sed 8:37	Baptized 8:38	Rejoiced 8:39
	Saul 9:1-18;	Believed 9:5-6			Baptized 22:16	Sins Washed Away
	Cornelius 10-11:18	Believed 11:18	Repented		Baptized 10:48	Saved 11:14
	Jailor 16:31-34		Repented		Baptized	Rejoiced

THE CHURCH

Before I discuss the organization, worship, am work of the church, I believe we should try to understand just what the Lord's church is. As I pointed out in the section on conversion, all those who are obedient to the instructions of Christ will be saved from past sins.

And, the Lord adds every saved person to the number of the saved ones. "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Thus all those who are saved constitute the Lord's church. The building in which saints meet is not the church. The church is made up of those who are purchased with the blood of Christ. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). Christ did not purchase buildings with His blood. He purchased people. These people who are saved constitute the Lord's church. They are instructed to worship and work according to the Scriptures, and are commanded not to go beyond that which is written. And no one person is the church

5 **Neither Singular,**

Link



Saint



nor Plural,

Links



Saints



Chain



But Collective Church



Matthew 18:15-17
I Corinthians 12:14

Matthew 18:15-17 — "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he will neglect to hear them, tell it to the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

I Corinthians 12:14 — “For the body is not one member, but many.”

Just as one link does not constitute a chain, neither does one Christian constitute the church (cf. above passages). The word “church” is a collective noun just as “flock” and “herd” are collective nouns. individual “Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth” (Ephesians 4:28), Individuals are commanded to work that they might provide for their needs. But the church cannot go into the plumbing business, have yard sales, or engage in any kind of enterprise in order to make money. The church is instructed, “Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come” (I Corinthians 16:2). The work is to be supported only by the freewill offerings of the saints, and that upon the first day of the week.

ORGANIZATION

The Lord’s church is not an organization in the same sense that the Roman Catholic Church is an organization (with an earthly headquarters, etc). However, it has organization. God’s pattern for organization is set forth in just a very few passages of Scripture. In Philipians 1:1 we read, “Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.” Hence, the congregation at Philippi consisted of bishops (elders, pastors, presbyters, which words all refer to the same work and office) deacons, and saints.

According to Acts 14:23, they ordained a plurality of elders in every church, “And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.” In Titus 1:5-11 and I Timothy 3:1-7 God’s pattern is found for qualifications that men are to meet in order to serve as overseers of a local church. (Please read the above passages). Also, in I Timothy 3:8-13 we learn God’s pattern for qualifications of deacons, and the wives of elders and deacons. (Please read these passages also).

I want you to observe from the Scriptures that the words Elder, Pastor, Bishop, Presbyter are all used to refer to the same person. In Acts 20:17 we read where Paul called for the elders of the church at Ephesus. When they came to him in Miletus, he referred to them as bishops or overseers in verse 28. In Ephesians 4:11 they are called pastors; and in I Timothy 4:14 they are called presbyters.

Elders are to oversee the flock of God which is among them, taking the oversight thereof. “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind” (I Peter 5:1-2). There is no authority in God’s pattern for elders overseeing any congregation or work other than the one which is among them. For, how can they oversee what they cannot see? We cannot have a binding together of congregations in any way without going beyond God’s pattern for organization. If there could be a binding together of congregations, where is the passage in God’s pattern that authorizes it?

(Acts 20:7). “Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come” (I Corinthians 16:2). No other day (other than the first day of the week) is authorized on which these items of worship were performed. Thus, we have God’s pattern on this subject.

WORK

In this particular part of our study, we want to discuss the work of the church. We will not be discussing (except perhaps by contrast) the work of the individual Christian. We are concerned with God’s pattern for collective action of the church.

6 According to the Pattern The Church Is

Authorized To:



Preach the Truth I Timothy 3:15



Edify Itself Hebrews 10:24-25



**Relieve The Needy Saints
I Corinthians 16:1-2**



**This Is All God Authorizes The
CHURCH To Do!**

I Timothy 3:15 “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

Hebrews 10:24-25 “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

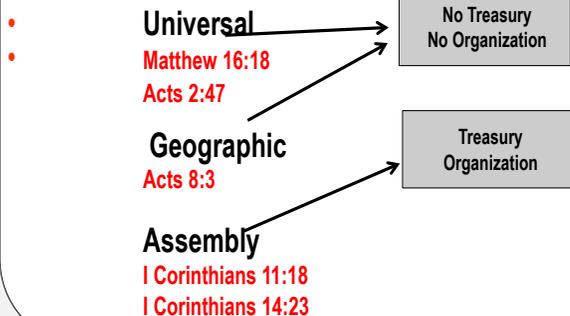
I Corinthians 16:1-2 “Now concerning the collection for the saints as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

II Timothy 2:2 — “And the thing that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

Once we determine from God’s pattern that a thing is authorized (such as traveling, teaching, and baptizing), unless God tells us how the thing is to be done, then whatever method (way) and aids are necessary in carrying out that which is authorized, may be used. A word of caution. We must be sure God authorized a work before we can use any method in carrying it out. For there is no right way to do a thing that God has not authorized. We might note just here that the word “church” is used in three different senses in the New Testament. However, God has only given one of them (the local assembly) the authority to have organization or a treasury.

7 The Word “Church”

• The Word “Church” as used in three different senses in the New Testament:



Matthew 16:18 — “And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Acts 2:47 — Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

Acts 8:3 — “As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women committing them to prison,”

I Corinthians 11:18 — “For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.”

I Corinthians 14:23 — “If therefore the whole church be come together in one place...”

8 Command	Inclusion	Perversion	Aid	Addition
Sing Ephesians 5:19 Colossians 3:16	Psalms Hymns Spiritual Songs	Rock & Roll Country	Books Leaders Etc.	Mechanical Instruments (Another Action)
Baptize Matthew 28:19	Bury Believers In Water	Bury Believers in Rose Petals	Natural or Artificial Pool	Sprinkling (Another Action)
Partake of Lord's Supper I Cor. 11:23-28	Eat The Bread and Drink the Cup	Eat a Common Meal	Plates and Containers	Cake and Coffee (Other Elements)

Even when God Authorizes a practice (by command, example or necessary Implication) even though there are inclusions and aids, we must be careful not to pervert nor add too what God has said (II John 9)

Ephesians 5:19 “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;”

Matthew 28:19 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit:”

I Corinthians 11:23-25 “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.”

As you can see from chart # 9 and the top half of chart # 10, God's pattern is plainly revealed in evangelism. There is no problem with a preacher being supported by individuals, by churches, or for churches sending a preacher. The problem arises with the lower part of the chart. Let me further illustrate it with the following chart.

21 Where Is The Scriptural Authority For:

Practice	Command	Approved Example	Necessary Implication
Paying A Preacher	I Cor. 9:4,14	II Cor.11:8-9	I Tim.4:12,15
Direct Support to Preacher		Phil. 4:15 II Cor. 11:8	
Elders Over-seeing only one church	I Peter 5:1-3 Acts 20:28-29		I Timothy 3:5
Elders Planning a work beyond their financial ability	?	?	?
Several Churches Working Through One Church	?	?	?

Have We Given Up The Demand For Book, Chapter & Verse?

Thus we can clearly see that such "Sponsoring Church Plans" as The Herald of Truth, World Radio, etc. are without Scriptural authority and actually activate the brotherhood or universal church. There is nothing in God's pattern for evangelism that resembles such plans.

BENEVOLENCE

Just as God has a pattern for conversion, organization and worship, so He has a pattern for work. And, as we have already shown God's pattern in evangelism, we now want to search the Scriptures to see if God has a pattern in benevolence.

What Has God Assigned The Church In Benevolence?

12

Church of Christ



God's Treasury

Saints

Acts 2:44-45.....Needy Believers
 Acts 4:32-37..... Needy Believers
 Acts 6:1-3Needy Widows
 Acts 11:26-30 Needy Brethren
 Romans 15:25-31... .Poor Saints
 II Corinthians 8:1-4 . Poor Saints
 II Corinthians 9:1-5, 12...Poor Saints
 I Timothy 5:16..... Widow Indeed

Scripture?
 Authority for Aliens and others ? ?

Acts 2:44-45 And all that believed were together, and had all thing's common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need."

Acts 4:34-35 "Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, 35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."

Acts 6:1 "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration."

Acts 6:3 “Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.”.

Acts 11:29-30 “Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: 30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.”.

I Timothy 5:16 “If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.”

Romans 15:25-26 “But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. 26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.”

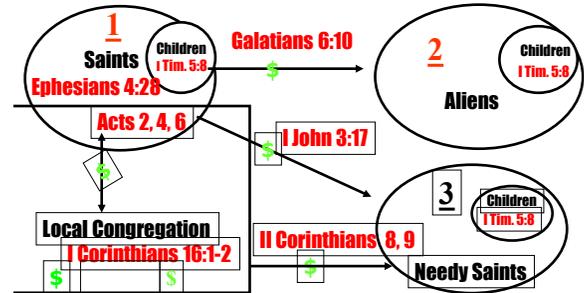
II Corinthians 8:4 “Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.”

I Corinthians 9:1, 12 “For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: 12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;”

In the above, we have all the passages that can be found on the subject of benevolence in the New Testament. None of them show the church in the church (remember we are discussing what the **church**, not the individual) from its treasury helping anyone except saints.

God does show that individuals have a responsibility in helping others. And if both the individual and the congregation do that which is required of them, there will be none that lack.

13 Who Is Responsible for Whom?



Circle # 1 we note that saints give into the treasury of the local church. They also have the responsibility of providing for their own families. Circle # 2. God also commands every Christian to provide for all men - or aliens. This too is a part of God's pattern for benevolence. Then they, in turn, must provide for their own families. And if there are those among the saints who are in need, then both the individual and the church may assist them according to their abilities as we see in Circle # 3. If everyone obeys Lord's word, then none will lack - neither aliens, saints, children.

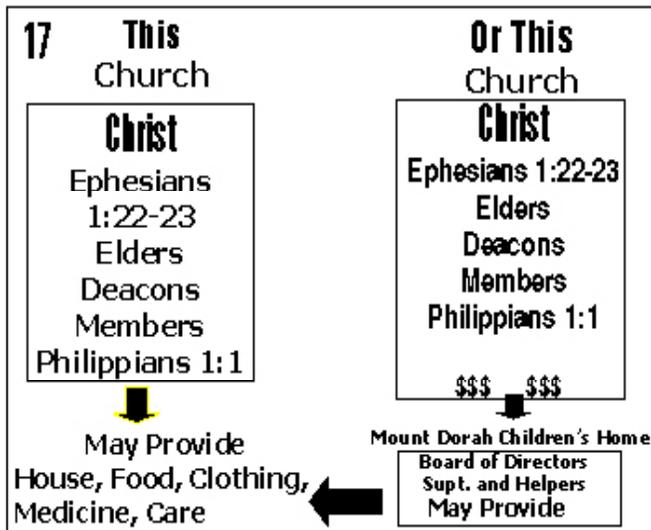
I Timothy 5:8 — “But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”

Galatians 6:10 — “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”

I John 4:17 — “But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?”

(All other passages on the above chart have already been quoted)

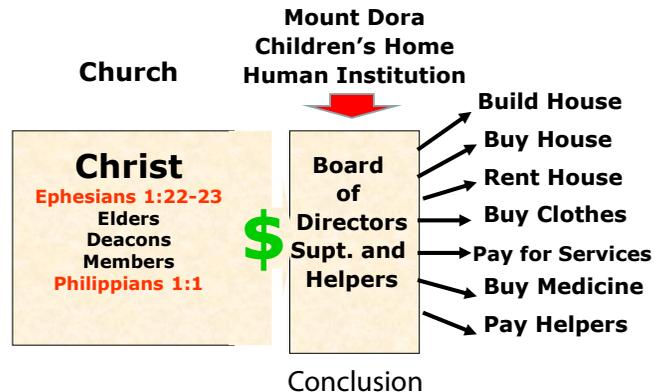
In circle # 1 of the above chart we note that saints give into the treasury of the local church. They also have the responsibility of providing for their own. But, according to circle # 2, God also commands that every Christian provide for “all men” or aliens. This too is a part of God's pattern for benevolence. Then they, in turn, must provide for their own families. And if there are those among the saints who are in need, both the church and the individual may assist them as we see in circle # 3.



As we observe from chart # 17, God's people, under Christ as head, may use the organization He has prescribed, elders to oversee and deacons to serve; a they may purchase any service (method) or use any id necessary in carrying out God's instructions.

"But," someone may say, "what about orphan's homes and senior citizens' homes? "Aren't they just methods:?" The answer is NO! As you can see from the following charts, they, with their board of directors as head, superintendent and helpers, actually stand between the church and its work. They constitute another organization, not authorized in God's pattern, and are doing the work God has instructed the church to do. And, actually, they use the same methods and aids that the church may use as you can see from chart # 19. However , brethren say the church can't provide the things necessary to care for those for whom the Lord has put in their care. Instead, the church can only send money to provide the same services and care that the church could have provided.

18 No Scriptural Authority



If space permitted, a great many other things could be pointed out that brethren are doing for which there is no authority according to God's pattern. Brethren are set on involving the Lord's church in recreational schemes, fun and frolic, etc. However, you can see from the following chart that according to God's pattern the church never came together for that purpose.

19 Reasons Why The Church Came Together

19

1. For Edification – **Hebrews 10:24-25**
2. For Worship – **Acts 20:7**
3. Teaching – **Acts 11:26**
4. To Discuss Church Problems – **Acts 15**
5. To Discuss Foreign Efforts In Evangelism
Acts 14:26-27
6. Determine How to Best Do Benevolent Work
Acts 6:1-6
7. For a Prayer Service – **Acts 4:31**
8. For Discipline – **I Corinthians 5**

Does Anyone Know Of Any Other Reason?
(Scripture Please)

What God Authorizes ➡ We May Provide For

20 <u>Action</u>	<u>Options - Choices</u>
<u>Assembling</u> Hebrews 10:25	Building, Seats Lights, Carpet, Air Cond.
<u>Singing</u> Ephesians 5:19	Song Books, Song Leader, Pitch Pipe
<u>Recreation</u> (<u>Scripture</u> - ?)	Building, Equip., etc.
<u>Social Meals</u> (<u>Scripture</u> - ?)	Kitchen, Dishes, Fellowship Halls, etc.

God Must Authorize the Action Before Any Options or Choices Can Be Made

