

Divine Authority

Lesson 10

The Individual Christian, The
Local Church and Benevolence

What We Have Learned In The Previous Lesson

Local churches are to be independent and autonomous, overseeing their own decisions and treasuries

Independence safeguards a local church from error

Acts 15 does not prove local churches have the right to meet and settle matters for other local churches

2

What We Have Learned In The Previous Lesson

Concurrent cooperation is when two or more work together independently to accomplish the same goal

Collective cooperation is where two or more work together under centralized oversight to accomplish the same goal

New Testament authorizes only concurrent cooperation between local churches

3

Introduction

- Benevolence not primary work of local church
- Much erroneous thinking and practice in this area
- Wrong ideas about benevolence
- Confusing roles of individual Christians and local church in benevolence
- Wrong ideas about authorized methods of local church doing benevolent work

4

Purposes of This Lesson

- Clearly define benevolence
- Examine role of individual Christians in benevolence
- Examine the role of a local church in benevolence
- Identify where churches of Christ have departed from the New Testament pattern on benevolence

5

The Individual Christian, The Local Church and Benevolence

What is benevolence?

Individual Christian and benevolence

The local church and benevolence

The New Testament says nothing about...

6

What Is Benevolence?

Word not in New Testament but idea is
Idea – aiding those who are in physical need
of food, clothing, shelter and medical care
Does not include recreational or
entertainment activities

7

The Individual Christian And Benevolence

- Individual Christians have a wider ranging responsibility in benevolence than that of a local church
- Local church responsibility involves collective action where individual Christians agree to work together in various ways
- New Testament reveals patterns for these responsibilities in benevolence

8

The Individual Christian And Benevolence

Provide for our families
Provide for needs of other Christians
Provide for needs of our neighbors, lost and saved

9

Provide For Our Families

Eph 4:28 He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.

10

Provide For Our Families

1Ti 5:3 Honor widows who are widows indeed;
1Ti 5:4 but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must 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.

11

Provide For Our Families

1Ti 5:8 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.

12

Provide For Our Families Except When...

2Th 3:6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us.

2Th 3:7 For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you,

13

Provide For Our Families Except When...

2Th 3:10 For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.

2Th 3:11 For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies.

14

Provide For Our Families Except When...

2Th 3:14 If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that person and do not associate with him, so that he will be put to shame.

2Th 3:15 Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

15

Provide For Needs of Other Christians

Gal 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

Gal 6:10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

16

Provide For Needs of Other Christians

- Local church not to assume individual Christian's benevolent responsibilities
- Local church provides benevolence if Individual Christians are unable to provide for their families or other needy Christians

17

Provide For Needs of Other Christians

1Ti 5:16 If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.

18

Provide For Needs of Our Neighbors, Lost and Saved

Mat 22:37 And He said to him, " 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'

Mat 22:38 "This is the great and foremost commandment.

19

Provide For Needs of Our Neighbors, Lost and Saved

Mat 22:39 "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

Mat 22:40 "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

20

Provide For Needs of Our Neighbors, Lost and Saved

Gal 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

Gal 6:10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

21

Provide For Needs of Our Neighbors, Lost and Saved

Jam 1:27 Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

22

Provide For Needs of Our Neighbors, Lost and Saved

- In helping people, we must be careful not to contribute to organizations that spread religious error
- This in some cases can be hard to avoid especially when purchasing essential healthcare from religiously based organizations such as hospitals

23

The Individual Christian And Benevolence

Provide for our families

Provide for needs of other Christians

Provide for needs of our neighbors, lost and saved

24

The Local Church And Benevolence

Local church benevolent work authorized
Local church cares for own members
Local church cares for saints in several local churches
Several local churches care for saints in one local church

25

Local Church Benevolent Work Authorized

- Individual Christians bear primary responsibility in benevolence
- Local church responds when individual Christians cannot fulfill their responsibilities
- Local church is limited to providing benevolence in only authorized ways

26

Local Church Benevolent Work Authorized

1Ti 5:16 If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.

27

Local Church Benevolent Work Authorized

1Co 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also.
1Co 16:2 On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

28

Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 2:44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;
Act 2:45 and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

29

Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 4:32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them.
Act 4:33 And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.

30

Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 4:34 For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales

Act 4:35 and lay them at the apostles' feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need.

31

Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 6:1 Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food.

32

Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 6:2 So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables.

Act 6:3 "Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.

33

Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 6:4 "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

Act 6:5 The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch.

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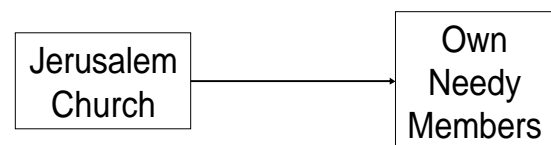
Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 6:6 And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.

Act 6:7 The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

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Local Church Cares For Own Members



Acts 6:1-7

36

Local Church Cares For Own Members

- Each member's contribution voluntary
- Once given, money under control of local church not individual
- Local church restricted to using money only as God has authorized through apostles' teaching

37

Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 5:1 But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property,
Act 5:2 and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet.

38

Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 5:3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land?

Act 5:4 "While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

39

Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 5:5 And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came over all who heard of it.

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Local Church Cares For Own Members

- Jerusalem church cared for their own needy members
- No indication they collected for the poor in general

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Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 3:1 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth hour, the hour of prayer.
Act 3:2 And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple.

42

Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 3:3 When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he began asking to receive alms.

Act 3:4 But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us!"

Act 3:5 And he began to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.

43

Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 3:6 But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene--walk!"

Act 3:7 And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened.

44

Local Church Cares For Own Members

Act 3:8 With a leap he stood upright and began to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.

45

Local Church Cares For Saints In Several Local Churches

Act 11:27 Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.

Act 11:28 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.

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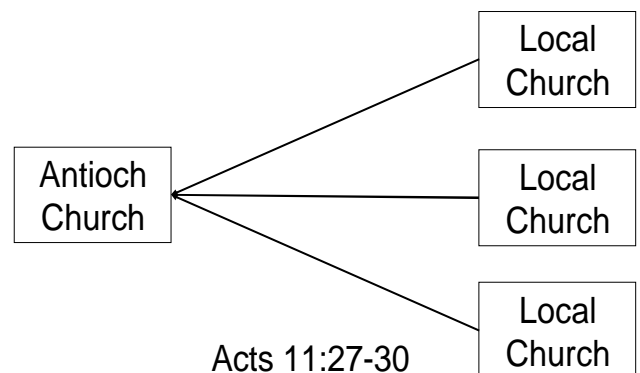
Local Church Cares For Saints In Several Local Churches

Act 11:29 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.

Act 11:30 And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders.

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Local Church Cares For Saints In Several Local Churches



48

Local Church Cares For Saints In Several Local Churches

- Some wrongly conclude Antioch church sent money to Jerusalem elders who then distributed money to other local churches in need
- If true, would violate local church autonomy where elders must oversee their own work not work of another local church

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Local Church Cares For Saints In Several Local Churches

Act 14:23 When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

1Pe 5:2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;

50

Several Local Churches Care For Saints In One Local Church

1Co 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also.

1Co 16:2 On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

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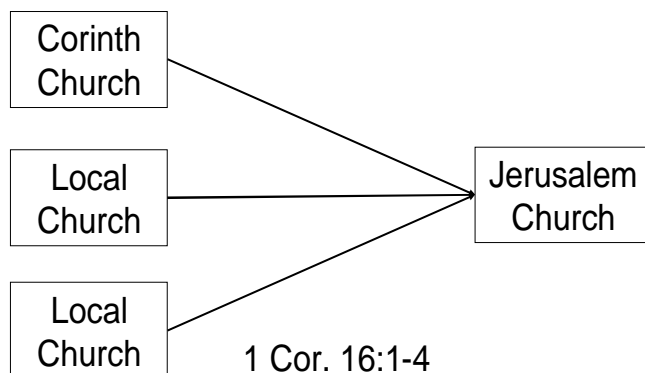
Several Local Churches Care For Saints In One Local Church

1Co 16:3 When I arrive, whomever you may approve, I will send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem;

1Co 16:4 and if it is fitting for me to go also, they will go with me.

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Several Local Churches Care For Saints In One Local Church



53

Several Local Churches Care For Saints In One Local Church

- They sent funds to Jerusalem to establish equality between local churches
- Equality meant there were no needy saints in either giving or receiving churches
- They sent directly to the needy church
- The only time one local church sent money to another was for benevolence

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Several Local Churches Care For Saints In One Local Church

2Co 8:13 For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but by way of equality--

2Co 8:14 at this present time your abundance being a supply for their need, so that their abundance also may become a supply for your need, that there may be equality;

55

Several Local Churches Care For Saints In One Local Church

2Co 8:15 as it is written, "HE WHO gathered MUCH DID NOT HAVE TOO MUCH, AND HE WHO gathered LITTLE HAD NO LACK."

56

Several Local Churches Care For Saints In One Local Church

Act 24:17 "Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings;

57

The Local Church And Benevolence

Local church benevolent work authorized
Local church cares for own members
Local church cares for saints in several local churches
Several local churches care for saints in one local church

58

The Local Church And Benevolence

- If all were content with this pattern for benevolence, there would be no need for next section of lesson
- But many brethren have departed from this pattern
- We look at how they have departed and their reasons for doing so
- We will compare their practices with the New Testament pattern for benevolence

59

The New Testament Says Nothing About...

Individual and local church obligations are the same
Local church meeting needs of non-Christians
Benevolence used as tool for evangelism
Local churches supporting benevolent organizations
Local churches sending money through a sponsoring church

60

Individual And Local Church Obligations Are The Same

- Mac Deaver, institutional preacher, said "Whatever an individual can do upon the peculiar grounds that he is a Christian the church can do." Padfield-Deaver Debate 1994
- In other words, whatever good work an individual Christian can do, a local church can do
- If that were true, then how do we explain the following examples?

61

Individuals May Call Themselves Christians

Act 11:26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

62

Local Churches Called Christians Churches Forbidden

Rom 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

63

Individual Christians May Observe Special Days

Rom 14:5 One person regards one day above another, another regards every day *alike*. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind.

Rom 14:6 He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God.

64

Local Churches Forbidden Observing Special Days

Gal 4:10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.

Gal 4:11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

65

Individual Saints Have Broad Benevolent Responsibility

Gal 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

Gal 6:10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

66

Local Churches Limited In Benevolent Responsibility

1Ti 5:16 If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.

67

Local Church Meeting Needs of Non-Christians

- Many brethren use passages to show this is true
- However, when we note context, passages refer to individual action not local church action
- Passages relating to local church action always refer to the local church aiding needy saints

68

Individual Action Not Local Church Action

Gal 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

Gal 6:10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

69

Individual Action Not Local Church Action

- Some parts of Galatians apply to local church action
- Some parts of Galatians apply to individual action
- Notice context of Gal. 6:9-10
- Refers to individual action

70

Individual Action Not Local Church Action

Gal 6:1 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.

Gal 6:2 Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.

71

Individual Action Not Local Church Action

Gal 6:3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

Gal 6:4 But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have *reason for* boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.

Gal 6:5 For each one will bear his own load.

72

Individual Action Not Local Church Action

Gal 6:6 The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches *him*.

Gal 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

Gal 6:8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

73

Individual Action Not Local Church Action

Jam 1:27 Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

74

Individual Action Not Local Church Action

- No local church mentioned
- No local church collection mentioned
- No local church contributing to any needy person mentioned

75

Did Local Churches Help Non-Christians?

2Co 9:13 Because of the proof given by this ministry, they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all,

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2 Cor. 9:13

- “all” refers to all saints from context of 2 Cor. Chapters 8 and 9
- “Contribution” in verse is same word meaning fellowship, communion or partnership
- Fellowship refers always to saints sharing with saints or saints sharing with God
- Never saints sharing with non-Christians

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Fellowship In New Testament

2Co 6:14 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?

Act 2:42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

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Fellowship In New Testament

1Jo 1:5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

1Jo 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

1Jo 1:7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. 79

New Testament Pattern Local Church Aiding Saints Not World

Act 2:44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;

Act 4:32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them. 80

New Testament Pattern Local Church Aiding Saints Not World

Act 6:1 Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. 81

New Testament Pattern Local Church Aiding Saints Not World

Act 11:29 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. 82

New Testament Pattern Local Church Aiding Saints Not World

1Co 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also.

1Co 16:2 On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come. 83

New Testament Pattern Local Church Aiding Saints Not World

2Co 8:3 For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord,

2Co 8:4 begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, 84

New Testament Pattern Local Church Aiding Saints Not World

2Co 9:1 For it is superfluous for me to write to you about this ministry to the saints;

2Co 9:2 for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the Macedonians, namely, that Achaia has been prepared since last year, and your zeal has stirred up most of them.

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New Testament Pattern: Local Church Aiding Saints Not World

Rom 15:25 but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints.

Rom 15:26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.

86

New Testament Pattern Local Church Aiding Saints Not World

1Ti 5:16 If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.

87

Accept New Testament Pattern For Benevolence

- Worship pattern accepted and instrumental music rejected
- Benevolence pattern – local church helped saints not the world
- Local church not authorized to provide benevolence to the world

88

Benevolence Used As Tool For Evangelism

- Mac Deaver, institutional preacher, said “Let me tell you something brethren, the Bible teaches that benevolence when rendered to non-saints, is an evangelistic vehicle.” Debate 1994
- Local church giving benevolence to the lost to persuade them to obey the gospel
- For example dispatching of evangelistic medical teams

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Benevolence Used As Tool For Evangelism

- Local church benevolent action limited to Christians
- Piano not aid for singing
- Benevolence not aid for evangelism

90

Benevolence Used As Tool For Evangelism

- Accepting benevolence as an aid to evangelism has led to other unauthorized aids being accepted
- Recreation such as church camps for children
- Family life centers providing athletic activities for all

91

Jesus, Food And Evangelism

- Jesus refused to use food as a tool for evangelism
- After miraculously feeding people to prove His deity, He refused to feed them the next day
- Pointed them to higher spiritual priorities
- Using earthly enticements encourages continuation of worldly attitudes that can only be changed by the gospel

92

Jesus, Food And Evangelism

Joh 6:14 Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."

Joh 6:15 So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone.

93

Jesus, Food And Evangelism

Joh 6:26 Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.

Joh 6:27 "Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal."

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Jesus, Food And Evangelism

Joh 6:28 Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?"

Joh 6:29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."

95

Our Individual Example To The Lost

- We should be good examples to the lost
- Can be done without perverting local church benevolent work

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Our Individual Example To The Lost

Mat 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.

Mat 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden;

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Our Individual Example To The Lost

Mat 5:15 nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

Mat 5:16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

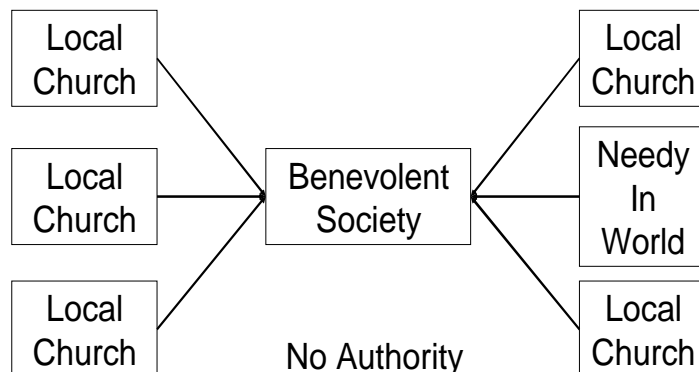
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Local Churches Supporting Benevolent Organizations

- Local churches contribute to benevolent organizations
- Benevolent organizations distribute supplies to needy local churches
- Benevolent organizations distribute supplies to needy non-Christians
- Example - Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc., Nashville, TN.

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Local Churches Supporting Benevolent Organizations



100

Why Is This Wrong?

- Local church restricted to helping needy saints
- Local churches sent funds directly to needy local churches
- Local churches have no collective work together
- Centralized oversight unauthorized
- Centralized treasury unauthorized

101

Local Church Restricted To Helping Needy Saints

1Ti 5:16 If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.

102

Local Churches Have No Collective Work Together

1Co 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

103

Centralized Oversight Unauthorized

1Pe 5:2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;

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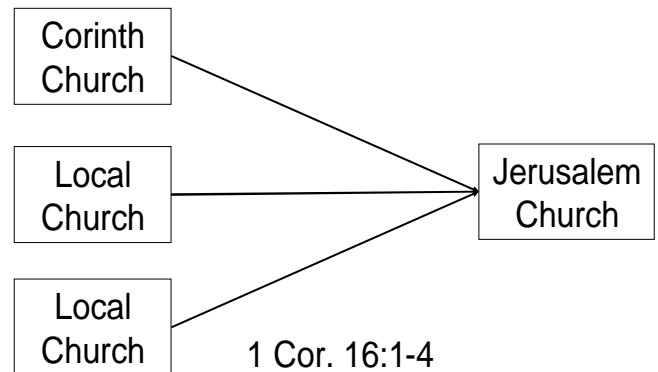
Centralized Treasury Unauthorized

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1Co 16:2 On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

105

Local Churches Sent Funds Directly To Needy Local Church



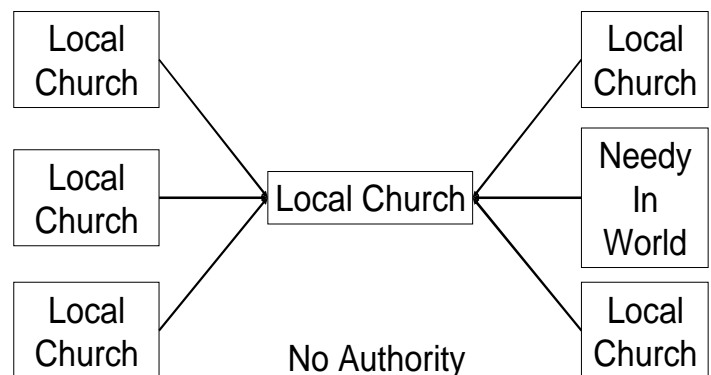
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Local Churches Sending Money Through A Sponsoring Church

- Local churches send money to sponsoring church
- Sponsoring church distributes money to needy local churches and the world
- Example - Tsunami Relief benevolent effort overseen by the elders of the Central church of Christ, Cleburne, TX

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Local Churches Sending Money Through A Sponsoring Church



108

Why Is This Wrong?

- Local churches sent funds directly to needy local church
- Local churches can receive money only for benevolence
- Local churches have no collective work together
- Centralized oversight unauthorized
- Destroys local church autonomy
- Centralized treasury unauthorized

109

Local Churches Sent Funds Directly To Needy Local Church

Rom 15:25 but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints.

Rom 15:26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.

110

Local Churches Can Receive Money Only For Benevolence

Act 24:17 "Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings;

111

Local Churches Have No Collective Work Together

1Co 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

112

Centralized Oversight Unauthorized

Act 14:23 When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Act 20:28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

113

Destroys Local Church Autonomy

- Brethren argue autonomy not destroyed because participation of churches voluntary
- Voluntarily giving up autonomy does not justify it
- Would be similar to men voluntarily giving up authority to women
- If several churches can work through one local church, then why not all churches working through one church?

114

Destroys Local Church Autonomy

1Ti 2:11 A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness.

1Ti 2:12 But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.

115

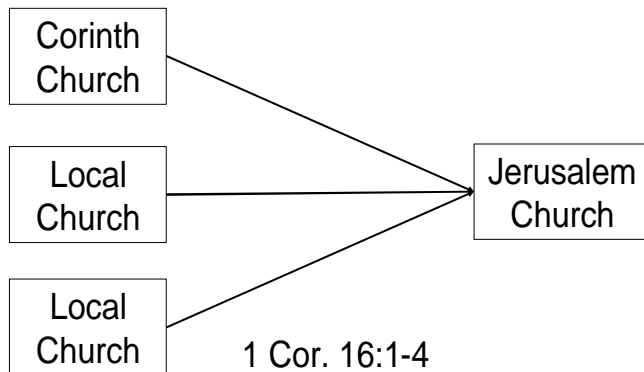
Centralized Treasury Unauthorized

1Co 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also.

1Co 16:2 On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

116

Local Churches Sent Funds Directly To Needy Local Church



117

The New Testament Says Nothing About...

Individual and local church obligations are the same

Local church meeting needs of non-Christians

Benevolence used as tool for evangelism

Local churches supporting benevolent organizations

Local churches sending money through a sponsoring church

118

What We Have Learned In This Lesson

What is benevolence?

Individual Christian and benevolence

The local church and benevolence

The New Testament says nothing about...

119

What Is Benevolence?

Word not in New Testament but idea is

Idea – aiding those who are in physical need of food, clothing, shelter and medical care

Does not include recreational or entertainment activities

120

The Individual Christian And Benevolence

Provide for our families
Provide for needs of other Christians
Provide for needs of our neighbors, lost and saved

121

The Local Church And Benevolence

Local church benevolent work authorized
Local church cares for own members
Local church cares for saints in several local churches
Several local churches care for saints in one local church

122

The New Testament Says Nothing About...

Individual and local church obligations are the same
Local church meeting needs of non-Christians
Benevolence used as tool for evangelism
Local churches supporting benevolent organizations
Local churches sending money through a sponsoring church

123

Divine Authority

Lesson 10 - The Individual Christian, The Local Church and Benevolence

Various passages and material from Lesson 10 outline

For each of the following questions, please circle the letter by the correct answer.

1. Benevolence focuses on
 - A. Meeting the desires of others.
 - B. Meeting the physical needs of others.
 - C. Providing recreational activities for others.
 - D. Providing entertainment for others.

2. The first priority of every individual Christian is to provide for the needs of
 - A. All people in the world.
 - B. Their immediate family.
 - C. Other Christians whether they are family or not.
 - D. Those people who we like.

3. The local church is to provide benevolence to its members when
 - A. Members submit a request for benevolence.
 - B. The local church decides to spend the money whether members actually need it or not.
 - C. Members become unfaithful.
 - D. Members and their families are not able to provide for their own needs.

4. From James 1:27 and Gal. 6:9-10, we learn that
 - A. Individual Christians, not local churches, have a responsibility to meet the needs of people in the world.
 - B. Local churches, not individual Christians, have a responsibility to meet the needs of people in the world.
 - C. Both individual Christians and local churches have the same responsibility in meeting the needs of people in the world.
 - D. Individual Christians have no responsibility of meeting the needs of people in the world.

5. As first priority, the local church is to provide benevolent help to
 - A. All people in the world.
 - B. Members of other local churches.
 - C. Their own members.
 - D. The local church has no benevolent responsibility.

6. Which of the following would be unauthorized for a local church to do regarding benevolence?
 - A. Send funds to a local church that oversees distributing benevolence to other local churches.
 - B. Send funds to a local church in need.
 - C. Send funds to several local churches in need.
 - D. Provide for the needs of their own members.

7. What is the only reason given in the New Testament for one local church sending funds to any other local church?
- A. Edification.
 - B. Evangelism.
 - C. Benevolence.
 - D. Build a church building.
8. Which of the following is authorized for a local church to do?
- A. Use benevolence as a tool for evangelism.
 - B. Send funds to a benevolent organization that oversees the work that is to be done.
 - C. Send funds to a sponsoring church that oversees the work to be done.
 - D. Send funds directly to a local church in need.

For each statement, circle True or False.

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|------|-------|----|--|
| True | False | 1. | Benevolence includes meeting the physical needs and social desires of Christians. |
| True | False | 2. | Of first importance, the individual Christian must provide for himself and his family. |
| True | False | 3. | A Christian is obligated to provide for the needs of all family members whether they are willing to work or not. |
| True | False | 4. | Concerning benevolence, the responsibilities of individual Christians and local churches are the same. |
| True | False | 5. | A local church should provide for the needs of its own member when they and their families cannot do so. |

- | | | | |
|------|-------|-----|---|
| True | False | 6. | The only time one local church is authorized to send funds to another local church is to provide for the needs of the saints. |
| True | False | 7. | The local church is obligated to provide benevolence from its treasury to those of the world. |
| True | False | 8. | The New Testament says nothing about the local church using benevolence as a tool for evangelism. |
| True | False | 9. | A local church is authorized to send funds to a benevolent organization that oversees and distributes them as it see fit. |
| True | False | 10. | A local church is authorized to receive funds and oversee the benevolent work of many local churches. |

For each question, please provide statements that clearly answer each question.

1. Please compare and contrast the responsibilities of individual Christians and local churches in the area of benevolence.
2. Please compare and contrast authorized and unauthorized ways of how local churches are to practice benevolence.
3. Why is it wrong for local churches to use benevolence as a tool for evangelism?