

Kitchens, Fellowship Halls and The Work of A Local Church

Does the New Testament authorize a local church to plan and provide for social activities?

Introduction

- While in Philippines, we observed some local churches that practiced using their church buildings to host social meals
- Since the 1960's the practice of church buildings having kitchens and fellowship halls, dining area, has become common among churches of Christ
- Why would anyone oppose such practices?

2

Reasons We Should Not Oppose Kitchens and Fellowship Halls

1. All eating and drinking in church buildings prohibited
2. The church building is holy

3

Defining The Issue

- Does the New Testament authorize a local church to provide money and facilities for social meals and other social activities?
- In other words, are social activities a part of the work of a local church that we are commanded to do together as a congregation?

4

Kitchens, Fellowship Halls and The Work of A Local Church

1. Need for New Testament authority for both individual and local church actions
2. What is the authorized work of a local church?
3. What is fellowship?
4. The Lord's Supper our only authorized fellowship meal
5. Individual Christians are responsible for social activities

5

Need For New Testament Authority For Both Individual And Local Church Actions

2Ti 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;
2Ti 3:17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

6

Need For New Testament Authority For Both Individual And Local Church Actions

Col 3:17 Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

7

Need For New Testament Authority For Both Individual And Local Church Actions

2Jn 1:9 Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.

8

What Is The Authorized Work Of A Local Church?

- New Testament reveals what Christians did together as a local church
- Divine authority expressed in commands, approved examples and necessary conclusions
- Whatever is not authorized by the New Testament should be rejected as a work of the local church

9

What Is The Authorized Work Of A Local Church?

- Whatever a local church is authorized to do, it is also authorized to use collected funds to provide for those things as long as no Scripture is violated
- List authorized work of a local church

10

Regularly Assemble Together

Heb 10:24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

Heb 10:25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

11

Regularly Assemble Together

Act 20:7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul *began* talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

12

Partake Of Lord's Supper

Act 20:7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul *began* talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

1Co 11:23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread;

13

Partake Of Lord's Supper

1Co 11:24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

1Co 11:25 In the same way *He took* the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me."

14

Partake Of Lord's Supper

1Co 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

15

Preach And Teach The Word Of God

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

Act 20:7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul *began* talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

16

Preach And Teach The Word Of God

Mat 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

Mat 28:20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

17

Preach And Teach The Word Of God

1Co 14:26 What is *the outcome* then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

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

18

Sing Without Instruments

1Co 14:26 What is *the outcome* then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

19

Sing Without Instruments

Eph 5:19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;
Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

20

Pray

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

Act 12:5 So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.

21

Collect Funds To Support Needy Saints

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.

22

Collect Funds To Support Preachers And Elders

2Co 11:8 I robbed other churches by taking wages *from them* to serve you;

2Co 11:9 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.

23

Collect Funds To Support Preachers And Elders

1Ti 5:17 The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.

1Ti 5:18 For the Scripture says, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

24

Discipline Unruly Members

Act 20:20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house,

Act 20:21 solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

25

Discipline Unruly Members

Mat 18:15 "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

Mat 18:16 "But if he does not listen *to you*, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED.

26

Discipline Unruly Members

Mat 18:17 "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

27

Discipline Unruly Members

1Co 5:1 It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father's wife.

1Co 5:2 You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst.

28

Discipline Unruly Members

1Co 5:3 For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present.

1Co 5:4 In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus,

29

Discipline Unruly Members

1Co 5:5 *I have decided* to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1Co 5:6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump *of dough*?

30

What Is The Authorized Work Of A Local Church?

Regularly assemble together	Collect funds On first day of week used for
Partake of Lord's supper	Support of needy saints
Preach and teach the Word of God	Support of preacher and elders
Sing without instruments	Discipline unruly members
Pray	

31

Where Is Authority For Social Activities As A Work of A Local Church?

- No command, approved example or necessary conclusion in New Testament authorizing social activities as a work of a local church
- Therefore, they should be left to individuals to do

32

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33

What Is Fellowship?

- Local church funded social meals are often called "fellowship" meals
- Dining areas in church buildings are called "fellowship" halls
- Does the New Testament reveal that social activities are expressions of fellowship?

34

What Is Fellowship?

Greek word "koinonia" means "communion, fellowship, sharing in common.."

Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words

The word is used to show Christians sharing with God and Christians sharing with each other in spiritual activities not social activities

35

Basis of Fellowship

1Jn 1:1 What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life -

1Jn 1:2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us--

36

Basis of Fellowship

1Jn 1:3 what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

1Jn 1:4 These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

37

Basis of Fellowship

1Jn 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.

1Jn 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;

1Jn 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.

38

Called Into Fellowship

1Co 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

39

Fellowship In The Gospel

Php 1:5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.

40

Fellowship In The Sufferings of Christ

Php 3:10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

41

Fellowship In Helping Needy Saints

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,

2Co 8:5 and *this*, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.

42

Fellowship and Social Activities

- When concerning Christians, fellowship refers always to sharing in spiritual things with God and with one another
- Fellowship never refers to Christians sharing together in purely social activities such as eating meals together

43

The Lord's Supper Our Only Authorized Fellowship Meal

- When we take the Lord's Supper, we have fellowship or communion with the Lord, His body and blood
- We also have fellowship with one another as members of His one body, universal congregation throughout the world
- Social meals never authorized as a work of a local church showing spiritual fellowship

44

The Lord's Supper Our Only Authorized Fellowship Meal

1Co 10:16 Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ?

1Co 10:17 Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.

45

Individual Christians Are Responsible For Social Activities

- New Testament reveals Christians eating together in social settings
- But, no indication that local church funds or resources are used to provide for these social meals
- There is a clear distinction made between spiritual activities we are commanded to do together as a local church and social activities left to individual action

46

Individual Christians Are Responsible For Social Activities

Act 2:46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

Act 2:47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

47

Individual Christians Are Responsible For Social Activities

1Co 11:20 Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, 1Co 11:21 for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

1Co 11:22 What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you. 48

Individual Christians Are Responsible For Social Activities

1Co 11:33 So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

1Co 11:34 If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you will not come together for judgment. The remaining matters I will arrange when I come.

49

Individual Christians Are Responsible For Social Activities

- Individuals are responsible for providing social, educational and recreation activities for their families
- The local church is not to be burdened by needy Christians who can be helped by their family members
- Only when family members are unable to help, then the church is to help
- No Scriptural authority for social activities being part of local church's work

50

Do Not Burden The Local Church With Individual Responsibilities

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.

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.

51

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52