

The Church v2

Lesson 10
The Work of A Local Church

The Church v2

1. What is the church?
2. The nature of the universal church
3. The nature of a local church
4. Unreliable sources of religious authority
5. The only source of Divine authority today
6. How to establish Divine authority
7. Things that are expedient

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The Church v2

8. Respecting the silence of the Scriptures
9. The organization of a local church
10. The work of a local church
11. Independence autonomy and cooperation of local churches
12. Institutionalism
13. The social gospel
14. The unity of the church

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The Organization of A Local Church

1. Beware of changing local church organization
2. The universal church has no earthly organization
3. Each local church must oversee and fund their own work
4. The work and qualifications of elders
5. The work and qualifications of deacons
6. Evangelists teachers and saints

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Introduction

- After focusing on how a local church is organized, we turn to the work of a local church
- This is work that is clearly revealed in the New Testament, 9 things a local church is to do in serving God
- Despite this, there is much confusion about local church work where much is done that cannot be found in the apostles' teaching

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Introduction

- We see many local churches including many churches of Christ involved in recreation, entertainment and providing benevolence to the world
- None of these activities are authorized for local churches to do
- Much of this confusion occurs when we assign work given to individuals as local church work

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Each Local Church Must Oversee And Fund Their Own Work

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;

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Each Local Church Must Oversee And Fund Their Own Work

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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The Work of Individual Christians And A Local Church Are Different

- Can a local church do any work an individual Christian is authorized to do?
- Many denominations and churches of Christ answer yes
- Therefore, local churches provide social meals, recreation and entertainment programs for their members and the world
- But, the apostles' teaching reveals a difference between the work of individuals and a local church

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The Work of Individual Christians And A Local Church Are Different

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.**

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The Work of Individual Christians And A Local Church Are Different

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.

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The Work of Individual Christians And A Local Church Are Different

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.

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The Work of Individual Christians And A Local Church Are Different

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.

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Individuals Engage In Business Not Local Churches

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.

14

Individuals Provide Secular Education Not Local Churches

Mat 28:18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

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."

15

Individuals Provide Social Meals Not Local Churches

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.

16

Individuals Provide Social Meals Not Local Churches

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.

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Individuals Must Meet Their Family Needs First

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.

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Individuals Are To Help Both The Lost and Christians Who Are In Need

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.

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Individuals Are To Help Both The Lost and Christians Who Are In Need

Jas 1:26 If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless.

Jas 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.

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What Is Not The Work of A Local Church?

1. Job training
2. Secular education
3. Social meals
4. Recreation and games
5. Entertainment
6. Politics
7. Child care
8. Benevolence to the world

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The Work of A Local Church Can Be Divided Into Three Areas

- A local church is an assembly of Christians who agree to worship and work together in a specific location
- Broadly speaking, local church work covers three areas, edification (building up saints by the Word of God including worship), evangelism (spreading the gospel to the lost), and benevolence (meeting the needs of saints whose families cannot provide for them)

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The Work of A Local Church Can Be Divided Into Three Areas

- The primary focus of this work is local first and then world obligations
- More specifically in these three areas, there are 9 things the New Testament reveals a local church must do
- Many have perverted local church work by either adding unauthorized things or doing authorized things in unauthorized ways

23

Edification – Building Up The Saints By The Word of God

Eph 4:11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,

Eph 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

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Edification – Building Up The Saints By The Word of God

Eph 4:13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

Eph 4:14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

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Edification – Building Up The Saints By The Word of God

Eph 4:15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,

Eph 4:16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

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Evangelism – Proclaiming The Gospel To The Lost

Mat 28:18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

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."

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Benevolence – Helping Needy Saints

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.

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Benevolence – Helping Needy Saints

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.

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The Work of A Local Church

1. Each local church must oversee and fund their own work
2. The work of individual Christians and a local church are different
3. The work of a local church can be divided into three areas

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Regularly Assemble To Worship God and Work Together

- Using our best judgment, we provide a place to regularly meet as a local church
- We regularly assemble on every first day of the week to worship God and work together as Christians
- The place of assembling is not special but our worship must be done in spirit and in truth with reverence toward God

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Regularly Assemble To Worship God and Work Together

- To worship in spirit means we focus on God's spiritual nature, offering spiritual sacrifices, revealed in the New Testament, To God through Christ
- To worship in truth means we offer spiritual worship given in the New Testament not physical Old Testament worship, a shadow of things to come
- We are to reverently worship God fearing Him and lovingly obeying Him in all things³²

Regularly Assemble Every Sunday

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.

33

Assemble To Worship God In Spirit and In Truth

Joh 4:23 "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

Joh 4:24 "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

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Assemble To Worship God In Spirit and In Truth

Rom 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

Rom 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

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Assemble To Worship God In Spirit and In Truth

1Pe 2:4 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God,
1Pe 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

36

Assemble To Worship God In Spirit and In Truth

Heb 13:15 Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

Heb 13:16 And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

37

Assemble To Worship God In Spirit and In Truth

Heb 9:8 The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing,

Heb 9:9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience,

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Assemble To Worship God In Spirit and In Truth

Heb 9:10 since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation.

Heb 9:11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;

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Assemble To Worship God In Spirit and In Truth

Heb 9:12 and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Heb 9:13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh,

40

Assemble To Worship God In Spirit and In Truth

Heb 9:14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

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Assemble To Worship God In Spirit and In Truth

Heb 10:1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.

42

Assemble To Worship God In Spirit and In Truth

Heb 10:2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins?

Heb 10:3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year.

Heb 10:4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

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Assemble To Reverently Worship God

Heb 12:28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

Heb 12:29 for our God is a consuming fire.

1Co 14:40 But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner.

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Assemble To Lovingly Obey God

1Jn 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

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Assemble To Work Together

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."

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Assemble To Work 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.

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Partake of The Lord's Supper Every Sunday

- Done every Sunday when saints assemble together
- Purposes – remember the Lord Jesus' death, look forward to His coming again and examine ourselves whether we are living according to the New Covenant

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Partake of The Lord's Supper Every Sunday

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.

49

Partake of The Lord's Supper Every Sunday

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;

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."

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Partake of The Lord's Supper Every Sunday

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."

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

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Partake of The Lord's Supper Every Sunday

1Co 11:27 Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

1Co 11:28 But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

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Partake of The Lord's Supper Every Sunday

1Co 11:29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly.

1Co 11:30 For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.

1Co 11:31 But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged.

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Partake of The Lord's Supper Every Sunday

1Co 11:32 But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.

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.

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Partake of The Lord's Supper Every Sunday

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.

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Sing Without Mechanical Instruments

- We are to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs
- Purposes – praise God and teach one another
- The New Testament does not authorize mechanical instruments in worship

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Sing Without Mechanical 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.

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The Work of A Local Church

1. Each local church must oversee and fund their own work
2. The work of individual Christians and a local church are different
3. The work of a local church can be divided into three areas
4. What is the work of a local church?

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What Is The Work of A Local Church?

1. Regularly assemble to worship God and work together
2. Partake of the Lord's supper every Sunday
3. Sing without mechanical instruments

59

Pray

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

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.

1Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

60

Pray

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

Act 12:7 And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and woke him up, saying, "Get up quickly." And his chains fell off his hands.

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Pray

1Ti 2:1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men,

1Ti 2:2 for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

1Ti 2:3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

1Ti 2:4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

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Preach And Teach The Word of God

- Preach the Word of God to edify the saints and evangelize the lost every Sunday
- Teach the Word of God to build up the saints in classes where group is divided by either age, sex or maturity level
- Women not allowed to teach over men but may teach women and children
- Left to our judgment to teach the Word of God on other days besides Sunday

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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.

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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.

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Preach And Teach The Word of God

Mar 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.

Mar 16:16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

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Preach And Teach The Word of God

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.

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Preach And Teach The Word of God

Act 19:9 But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the people, he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

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Collect Money Every Sunday

- Funds were to be collected every Sunday when each local church assembled
- No exact percentage stated to give but it is to be a willing sacrifice
- The money is for supporting preachers, elders and helping needy saints
- Also, money can be spent for expediencies such as a meeting place, songbooks, communion trays and so on

69

Collect Money Every Sunday

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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Our Giving Must Be A Willing Sacrifice

2Co 9:6 Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

2Co 9:7 Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

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Our Giving Must Be A Willing Sacrifice

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.

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Support Preachers And Elders

- A local church is authorized to support preachers working with them or in other places
- Support for preachers was always sent directly to the preachers and not through an organization or another local church
- A local church can also support elders among them who work hard in teaching the Word of God

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Support Preachers And Elders

1Co 9:13 Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the *food* of the temple, *and* those who attend regularly to the altar have their share from the altar?

1Co 9:14 So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.

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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.

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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."

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Help Needy Saints

- Individuals are responsible for helping their own families first
- When families cannot fully meet needs, the local church must help needy saints among them and when able, needy saints in other local churches
- The only time one local church sent money to another local church was to help needy saints in the receiving church
- No money was ever sent to local churches not in need or to benevolent institutions

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Individuals Were To Help Their Own Families First

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.

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They Helped Needy Saints In The Local Church First

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.

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When Able They Helped Needy Saints In Other Local Churches

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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The Only Time Local Churches Sent Money To Each Other Was For Needy Saints

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.

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Discipline Erring Members

- After patient public and private teaching, Christians who do not repent of public sins are to be lovingly disciplined
- Discipline involves socially withdrawing from rebellious brethren
- The goals of discipline are to keep sin from spreading in the local church and bringing erring saints to repentance

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Discipline Erring 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.

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Discipline Erring 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.

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Discipline Erring 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,

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Discipline Erring 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?

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Discipline Erring Members

1Co 5:11 But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler--not even to eat with such a one.

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Discipline Erring Members

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.

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Discipline Erring Members

2Co 2:6 Sufficient for such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the majority,

2Co 2:7 so that on the contrary you should rather forgive and comfort him, otherwise such a one might be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.

2Co 2:8 Wherefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him.

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The Work of A Local Church

1. Each local church must oversee and fund their own work
2. The work of individual Christians and a local church are different
3. The work of a local church can be divided into three areas
4. What is the work of a local church?

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What Is The Work of A Local Church?

1. Regularly assemble to worship God and work together
2. Partake of the Lord's supper every Sunday
3. Sing without mechanical instruments
4. Pray
5. Preach and teach the Word of God
6. Collect money every Sunday
7. Support preachers and elders
8. Help needy saints
9. Discipline erring members