

The work of the church

- We have seen 3 areas of work divinely-assigned to the church
 - Evangelizing
 - Edifying itself
 - Relieving its own needy
- Although Christians have responsibilities individually in each of these realms, we've been focusing on what the local church is authorized to do and thus should be doing according to its ability

- In the work of evangelism,
 - The local church supported preachers by providing wages (2 Corinthians 11:8)
 - This could be a preacher in that local church or a preacher elsewhere
 - The wages were sent directly to the preacher,
 - Not to human organizations
 - Not to a church

- In the work of edification,
 - The local church was devoted to being built up spiritually
 - On the first day of the week
 - At other times also (e.g. Acts 2:42, 46a)
 - The basis for edification was the word of God, spiritual truth
 - In the New Testament, a local church never sent funds to another local church for that local church's work of edification

- In the work of relieving needy saints,
 - The local church had a responsibility to relieve its own needy (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35; 6:1-3)
 - But note individual responsibility first: 1 Timothy 5
 - In some cases, a local church sent funds to the elders of other churches where there was a need that could not be relieved by their own (Acts 11)
 - In some cases, local churches sent funds by messengers of their choosing to a church where there was a need that could not be relieved by their own (1 Corinthians 16: 2 Corinthians 8, 9; Romans 15:25-31)
 - The money was sent directly to the church with needy saints,
 - Not through human organizations
 - Not to centralized or sponsoring churches

- No other work than those works found in the New Testament
 - Preaching the word
 - Edifying itself
 - Benevolence for its own
- To add any other work not found in the New Testament is to go beyond what is written
 - 2 John 9
- We saw different patterns in finances for support of preaching vs. benevolence
 - When a church sent money to a preacher, it was sent to him
 - When a church sent money to another church for relieving its needy saints, it was sent to that church
 - This is the only case in the New Testament of a church or churches sending to a church
- Without authority:
 - For a church to be an intermediary or sponsoring church for the work of the local church
 - For another organization to be created to coordinate or execute the work of the local church

The worship of the church

- See the divinely appointed worship the church offers to God and its pattern in the New Testament.

- Several words are translated “worship” in our English Bibles.
 - The most frequent word translated “worship”, “proskuneo”, is defined by Vines as “to make obeisance, do reverence to.” It is defined by Thayer to mean “to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence.”
 - Other words sometimes translated “worship” are “sebo” or “sebomai”, meaning “to revere”, and “latreuo”, meaning “to serve”, “to render religious service”.
- All men bow before some object, person or cause greater than themselves
- The object of worship is someone/something of value or worth to which honor, allegiance, and devotion is given
- Should man decide who or what and how to worship?
 - Jeremiah 10:23
 - Proverbs 14:12
 - God, who created us, has the right to direct us:
 - Acts 17:29
 - Hebrews 12:9

What constitutes acceptable worship to God?

- John 4:23-24
- Directed to God
 - Isaiah 45:5
 - Matthew 4:9-10
 - Therefore...
 - Not to men
 - Acts 10:25-26
 - Revelation 19:10; 22:9
 - Not to angels
 - Revelation 22:9-10
 - Colossians 2:18
 - Not to idols
 - Acts 17:16
 - 1 Kings 18:27
 - Isaiah 44:9-20
 - Colossians 3:5
 - Not to creatures or creation
 - Romans 1:25
 - Certainly not to Satan
 - Matthew 4:9