

A Study In

DEPARTURES FROM THE FAITH

By Donald Townsley

A Study In Departures From The Faith

Lesson 1

INTRODUCTION:

1. This is a study of the attitudes and arguments brethren have had and used in the last two major departures from the faith.
2. The first major departure resulted in the Christian church.
 - (1) In the 19th century the Christian church was established by those who insisted upon churches doing their work of evangelism through missionary societies.
3. The second major departure resulted in institutional churches of Christ.
 - (1) The issues that have brought about this division among brethren are the same ones that brought about division in the 19th century.

I. THE BEGINNING OF DIGRESSION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

1. The restoration movement of the 19th century was an effort to restore -- to bring back--the true church of the first century.
 - (1) To "restore" is to "return"; "to re-establish"; "to put back into existence or use".
 - (2) Two well-known preachers in the 19th century who were trying to restore the New Testament church were **Barton W. Stone** and **Alexander Campbell**.
 - (3) Preachers and churches that were associated with these two preachers united in 1832.
 - (4) By this time these churches were growing -- new congregations were being established, and people by the thousands were obeying the gospel.
 - (5) The years between 1832 and 1849 were years of great growth.
 - (6) They were also years of a changing attitude on the part of many.
2. **Two attitudes** were developing among disciples:
 - (1) There were those who believed the church should **adapt** itself to the changing conditions of the times.
 - (2) Others continued to hold to the original attitude that the New Covenant reveals a **fixed pattern** for the church for all time, and that it is the business of Christians to hold to that pattern regardless of the consequences.
3. With these two attitudes developing -- one holding to a rigid interpretation of the scriptures, and the other to a liberal interpretation of the scriptures -- a **conflict was inevitable**.

4. The development of this attitude (a liberal interpretation of the scriptures) culminated in the establishment of the **American Christian Missionary Society** in October of 1849 in the city of Cincinnati, Ohio with Alexander Campbell as its first preacher.
 - (1) The establishment of the Missionary Society was not something that just occurred overnight; it had been worked on and advocated by certain men for a number of years before it came into existence.
 1. Alexander Campbell had shown himself to be a friend and advocate of organizations throughout his life.
 - (1) The "Brush Run church", of which Campbell was the preacher, became a member of the Redstone Association in 1813 and remained a member of that Association until the "Wellsburge church" was started.
 - (2) When Campbell and others started the "Wellsburge church" they joined the Mahoning Baptist Association.
 - (3) The Mahoning Association was dissolved in 1830. (Walter Scott led in the move to dissolve it.)
 - (4) Campbell admitted that he was displeased with the dissolving of the Mahoning Baptist Association.
 2. In 1831 Campbell began to plead with brethren to establish an organization through which all the churches might concentrate their efforts in getting evangelistic work done.
 - (1) When he presented his "missionary idea" through the Millennial Harbinger it was met with a great deal of opposition, so he was quiet on the subject for a while, thinking that later on the time would come when brethren would be more lenient and accept it.
 - (2) He waited for about ten years, then decided the time was right to go into the subject again.
 3. By 1849 Campbell finally got his way (in part).
 - (1) He had planned on an agency that would regulate and control all the various activities of the brotherhood --for example, Education, Publications, and Mission work.
 - (2) This organization would be one large agency through which **all the churches** would work.
5. In the beginning the Missionary Society did not have wide acceptance among brethren.
 - (1) Churches simply refused to support it.
 - (2) Twice in its history special efforts had to be made to save it.
 - (3) Ed Harrell said, *"When the Society was formed in 1849, it was opposed by a few Christians, but for the most part it went unchallenged. However, the Society*

remained weak in its early years and was ignored by the vast majority of churches."

(4) During the Civil War it was made up entirely of Northern sympathizers.

(5) In 1865, at the end of the Civil War, its popularity was at a low ebb.

II. HOW ALEXANDER CAMPBELL AND HIS SON-IN-LAW, W. K. PENDLETON, DEFENDED THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY:

1. Campbell reasoned that God gave to the church the responsibility of preaching the gospel to save the lost.
2. He argued that God gave this responsibility to the CHURCH UNIVERSAL , **not** the church local.
3. He also contended that God told the church universal to preach the gospel, but did not tell it HOW to do this work; therefore, he concluded that whatever method the church universal might choose to use to accomplish this work would be acceptable based on the grounds of expediency.
4. Campbell and Pendleton believed it was alright for a Society of **any nature** to do the churches work; therefore, it was not wrong for the church to support the Society.

(1) They saw no need for a "thus saith the Lord" in respect to the Society.

5. Campbell's concept of the church universal:

(1) He defined the LOCAL CHURCH as: "a single community in a single place";

(2) He defined the CHURCH UNIVERSAL as the "congregated multitude at all these communities". (Earl West, *Congregational Cooperation*).

1. He believed that the CHURCH UNIVERSAL was made up of ALL LOCAL CHURCHES the world over.

(1) This is NOT the New Testament concept.

1. The UNIT which makes up the **church universal** is the INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN, **not** local churches.

(1) We read about a brotherhood of saints (I Pet. 2;17), NOT a sisterhood of churches !

(2) The church universal is a **spiritual relationship** (I Cor. 1:9).

2. The UNIT which makes up the **church local** is the INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN (just as the unit that makes up the church universal is the individual Christian).

3. The expression "congregations of the church of Christ" is unscriptural !

6. W. K. Pendleton admitted that the scripture is silent concerning the Society, but this itself (in his estimation), was no argument against its existence !
7. Pendleton argued that when Thomas Campbell said, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent", he did **not** mean that the **unauthorized is forbidden** !
8. Pendleton laid the groundwork for a new concept among brethren:
 - (1) He said: "Let it not be said, then that the disciples of Christ are to take the silence of the scriptures on a given subject as a positive rule of prohibition against all freedom of action or obligation of duty. No rule could be more productive of evil than this." (Earl West, *Learning a Lesson From History*).

III. OPPOSITION TO THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY

1. David Lipscomb opposed the Missionary Society.
 - (1) He said: "We sincerely and earnestly believe all organized bodies for religious purposes outside of, within, above or below the congregation of the Lord are sinful and treasonable." (Earl West, *Congregational Cooperation*).
 1. Lipscomb magnified the local church as God's only agency to convert the world.
 - (2) Lipscomb on how New Testament churches "cooperated":
 1. "Cooperate" means act of cooperating; joint operation; concurrent effort or labor.
 - (1) Two types of cooperation:
 1. Joint operation
 2. Concurrent effort or labor
 2. Lipscomb believed the New Testament taught **concurrent effort or labor** in cooperation between churches.
 3. He maintained that when local churches all followed the same divine laws; all working earnestly to save souls, they were cooperating -- for all were **doing the work** God intended, and in the way God intended.
2. Men who **opposed** the Missionary Society contended that there is a **fixed pattern** revealed in the New Testament for us to follow in doing the Lord's work.
 - (1) Men who **promoted** the Missionary Society **denied** that there is a fixed pattern revealed in the New Testament.
 1. One of the arguments that was made in favor of the Society was: "While it made it a solemn duty to "GO", it did not say "HOW" to go."
 - (2) The "taproot" of digression is "no-pattern-ism".

IV. A STUDY IN WHAT IS WRONG WITH A MISSIONARY SOCIETY:

1. The Missionary Society is wrong because:
 - (1) It is an organization unauthorized by the word of God. There is no command, no example, no necessary inference of such an agency.
 - (2) It usurps the function of God's organization, the local church under elders (Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23; I Tim. 3:15).
 - (3) It is based upon an unscriptural concept -- the activation and function of the church universal.
 1. The Missionary Society is an effort on man's part to give organic entity to and to activate the church universal.
 - (1) The church universal is **not** an organic body.
 1. It has no mission, no earthly organization, and no function.
 2. The church universal is a **spiritual relationship** that each Christian has with God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. (I Cor. 1:9; John 15: 4 - 6).
 - (2) The New Testament makes no provision for centralizing the resources and coordinating the efforts of local churches under the oversight and direction of a single organic agency.
 1. The New Testament teaches that local churches are **INDEPENDENT, AUTONOMOUS, and EQUAL** (I Pet. 5: 1 - 4; Acts 20: 28; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5; II Cor. 8:14).
 - (4) The Missionary Society is wrong because it reflects upon the wisdom of God by substituting human wisdom for divine.
 1. God purposed the church from eternity (Eph. 3: 9 - 11).
 2. The missionary society ignores God's knowledge of what is best for the accomplishment of His purpose.
 3. The missionary society defeats the divine objectives of the Lord.
 2. We have specific examples in the New Testament of how churches are to cooperate:
 - (1) The **church at Antioch** made up her own contribution and sent it directly to the elders of the churches which were in **need** in Judea (Acts 11: 27 - 30).
 1. Here we have a church with an abundance sending to churches in need that they might do their own assigned work, not a "brotherhood work".
 - (2) **Congregations of Galatia, Macedonia and Achaia** cooperated (acted concurrently) in meeting the needs of the Jerusalem church (I Cor. 16: 1 - 2; Rom. 15: 25 - 27; II Cor. 8 and 9).
 1. Each congregation raised its own funds by each member giving on the first day of the week (I Cor. 16: 1 - 2).

2. Each church, acting independently, chose its own messenger to carry its contribution to Jerusalem (I Cor. 16:3).

3. No church sent its money **through** another church.

(1) There was no "sponsoring church" to receive and forward the funds.

(3) No church in New Testament times ever sent money to another church to preach the gospel.

1. In preaching the gospel each church sent **directly to the preacher**.

(1) The churches of Macedonia in supporting Paul (II Cor. 11: 7- 9).

(2) The church at Philippi in supporting Paul (Phil. 4: 14 - 18).

(4) One church only helped another church in the work of taking care of its poor members (benevolence) when the receiving church was unable financially to perform its own work.

1. The receiving church was **always** in need (Acts 11: 27 - 30).

IN SUMMARY:

1. We have endeavored to show the attitudes that brought about the Missionary Society.

2. We have shown that the Missionary Society is **without Divine authority**.

3. We have shown **how** congregations are to cooperate scripturally.

(1) We have shown that scriptural cooperation is **concurrent labor**, not joint operation through a central agency (whether it be a missionary society or a sponsoring church).

A Study In Departures From The Faith

Lesson 2

THE INTRODUCTION OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC INTO THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION:

1. About ten years after the formation of the Missionary Society, instrumental music was introduced into the worship of the church at Midway, Kentucky.

(1) The preacher who did this was L. L. Pinkerton and the year was 1859.

2. In 1869 the Olive Street church in St. Louis, Missouri bought a building from the Episcopalians which had a pipe organ in it, and they began to use it in their worship.

(1) When this happened several members left and started meeting elsewhere.

(2) The Olive Street church then decided not to use the organ, and these members returned.

(3) After a few months those members who favored the organ left, started another congregation and resumed the use of the instrument.

3. After this happened in St. Louis the instrument was rapidly introduced into churches in other states.

4. With few exceptions, until 1869 churches had not used instrumental music in their public worship.

5. Instrumental music had been opposed by preachers, up till this time, upon two grounds:

(1) Some opposed it as being INEXPEDIENT;

(2) Others opposed it as being UNSCRIPURAL.

6. In time the majority of preachers and congregations accepted the use of instrumental music.

7. The following quotation from Moses E. Lard tells how the instrument was introduced into many churches:

"Our brethren are freely introducing melodeons into their Sunday Schools. This is but the first step to the act, I fear. As soon as the children of these schools go into the church, in goes the instrument with them." (Lard's Quarterly, 1867, page 368)

8. Isaac Errett, editor of the *Christian Standard*, entered the controversy on instrumental music in 1870, and was a leader in helping introduce it into churches.

(1) He put up a vigorous defense of the use of instrumental music.

1. He claimed that those who opposed the instrument were making laws were God made none, and cited the current growing use of the instrument as being an indication of its acceptance.

2. He believed that the use of the instrument was a matter of **expediency** and opinion wherein liberty was allowed either way.

9. David Lipscomb was editor of the GOSPEL ADVOCATE during this time, and he argued that the use of instrumental music was a violation of the plea, "*Where the Bible speaks we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent.*"

- (1) To use the instrument in the singing part of the worship is no more allowable than to use some other item with the Lord's Supper.

I. WHY THE USE OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP IS WRONG:

1. Instrumental music is NOT authorized by the Word of God.

(1) Isaac Errett argued that the use of instrumental music is a matter of EXPEDIENCY.

(2) Let us now show that instrumental music is NOT AN EXPEDIENCY:

1. What is the meaning of the word "expedient"?

(1) *W. L. Vine*: "advantage, profitable".

(2) *Thayer* uses the word "help".

(3) *Webster*: "suitable means for achieving or attaining a purpose or end".

2. So, an EXPEDIENCY is a good means or method of doing what God has told us to do, but has not told us HOW to do it.

(3) For a thing to be expedient it must first be AUTHORIZED.

(4) There are two (2) kinds of Divine authority -- GENERAL and SPECIFIC.

1. GENERAL AUTHORITY

(1) The word "general" is defined by Webster, "pertaining to, affecting, or applicable to each and all of a class, kind or order; as a general law".

(2) The "general" then, **includes** each and all of the class, kind, or order under consideration, though not precisely stated nor revealed.

(3) When **choice** is Divinely authorized, we have GENERAL law.

1. So, when we have a GENERAL command we have choice, and **where there is choice**, there are EXPEDIENCIES.

(1) Expediencies must first be lawful (I Cor. 6:12).

(2) If there is NO GENERAL LAW, there can be no expediencies.

(4) Unless **choice** is AUTHORIZED, we dare not go beyond that which is revealed (II John 9).

(5) In the great commission the command to GO (Matt. 28:19) is general.

1. Whether we walk, fly on a plane, ride in a car, etc. we are still GOING.

2. SPECIFIC AUTHORITY:

(1) The word "specific" as defined by *Webster*, "precisely formulated or restricted; specifying; explicit; as a specific statement".

(2) The "specific" then **excludes** everything save that which is specified.

1. There is NO CHOICE in the realm of the specific -- if no choice is authorized, then it is specific.

(3) The command to SING is specific (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

1. This command to SING **excludes** the use of instrumental music.

(5) What the New Testament teaches about the matter of what is expedient:

1. In order for a thing to be expedient it must first be **lawful** (I Cor. 6:12; 10:23).

(1) If a thing does not come within the scope of that which is **authorized**, it cannot be an expedient.

1. The **unauthorized** is **unlawful** -- prohibited, and is sinful.

2. Such involves going beyond the word of God (II John 9 - 11).

3. The silence of God must be respected (I Cor. 4:6).

(2) Instrumental music in worship is NOT an expedient, as many claim, because the New Testament furnishes NO AUTHORITY for it.

2. In order for a thing to be expedient it **cannot be specified**.

(1) When God specifies, there is NO CHOICE but to **obey** or **disobey** !

(2) EXAMPLES:

1. We have **no choice** as to the KIND of music we will use in worship to God -- God has specified the kind -- SINGING. (Col. 3:16)

(1) Whether we sing bass, alto, soprano or tenor is a matter of choice.

1. Either one we choose to sing is **LAWFUL** because no one of these has been specified -- all come within the scope of that which is authorized -- SINGING.

(2) A **hymnbook** is an **expedient** . It could not be an expedient if there were no instructions for singing.

1. Whatever is essential to obeying the command is involved in the command.

3. In order for a thing to be expedient it **must not be an addition** to that which God has specified.

(1) Christ commanded, "*Drink this cup*" (I Cor. 11: 23 - 28).

1. This "*cup*" is the fruit of the vine (Matt. 26: 27 - 29).

(1) We have no choice as to the element, for it is specified -- the fruit of the vine.

1. If we elect to put orange juice with the fruit of the vine we have **added** to the word of God and have sinned (II John 9 - 11).

(2) But the **kind** of container, or the **number** of containers for this "fruit of the vine" has not been specified -- it is therefore left to the choice of man.

(2) We are commanded to SING in worship to God (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19).

1. When we use **seats** to sit in, **songbooks** and **lights** to help us see the words to these songs as a matter of EXPEDIENCY, we are still just SINGING.

2. But, if we employ the use of mechanical instruments of music we have NOT JUST BEEN SINGING -- we have ADDED another KIND of music and have transgressed the commandment of God.

3. Instrumental music is NOT AN EXPEDIENT, it is an ADDITION (II John 9 - 11).

(3) NOTE:

1. A Missionary Society, or any other organization, that men build and maintain to do the work of Christ's church is NOT AN AID in carrying out God's commands -- it is an ADDITION, or a substitution, for the Lord's way for it does NOT COME WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE ORGANIZATION SPECIFIED in the word of God, THE LOCAL CONGREGATION under its own elders (Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1).

4. In order for a thing to be expedient it **must edify** (I Cor. 10:23; I Cor. 14:26).

2. Instrumental music in worship is CONDEMNED by its silence and omission from the New Testament.

(1) Nowhere in the New Testament do we find a COMMAND to use it.

(2) Nowhere do we find an EXAMPLE of it being used.

(3) Nowhere do we find a NECESSARY INFERENCE of it being used.

(4) Christ never authorized the use of it (Matt. 28: 18 - 20).

(5) The apostles never sanctioned the use of it (Matt. 18:18).

(6) The New Testament churches never used it.

(7) To use instrumental music is to go beyond the doctrine of Christ.

1. To go beyond the law of Christ is transgression of the law -- sin. (II John 9; I Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22: 18; I John 3:4; Gal. 1: 6 - 9; Deut. 4:2; Deut. 12:32; Deut. 29:29).

3. Instrumental music is FORBIDDEN by God's law of EXCLUSION.

(1) When God names a specific thing to be used in His service He EXCLUDES other things.

(2) A look at the law of exclusion:

1. Noah was told to make an ark of gopher wood (Gen. 6:14).

(1) This **excluded** oak, pine, cedar and any other kind of wood.

2. Naaman was told to dip seven times in the Jordan River (II Kings 5:10).

(1) This **excluded** all other rivers (II Kings 5:12).

3. God told Moses to bring water from the rock by speaking to it (Num. 20: 7 - 13).

(1) Moses did not abide by God's law of exclusion.

1. He took his rod and smote the rock twice (Num. 20:11).

2. God was displeased with him for not abiding in His law of exclusion (Num. 20:12).

4. The Lord named "bread" and "fruit of the vine" as elements of the Lord's supper (Luke 22: 19 - 20).

(1) He **excluded** ham, cheese and milk, or any other thing we might want to use.

5. We are commanded to SING (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

(1) Christ **excluded** instrumental music.

4. The use of instrumental music in worship VIOLATES THE LAW OF FAITH.

(1) The religion of Christ is a religion of faith (II Cor. 5:7).

1. Without faith we cannot please God (Heb. 11:6).

2. This faith comes from hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17).

3. What has not been authorized by the Word of God is NOT of faith, therefore it is NOT pleasing to God (Heb. 11:6).

- (1) Instrumental music is not found in the New Testament, therefore is not of faith.
- (2) An application of the law of faith: I Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; James 5:13; Acts 16:25; Matt. 26:30; Rom. 15:9; Heb. 2:12.

II. OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED:

1. It is often claimed that the Greek word "*psallo*" implies a man-made instrument of music.
 - (1) *THAYER*: "In the New Testament to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song."
 1. The word "*psallo*" is used FIVE TIMES in the New Testament; FOUR times it is translated SING.
 - (1) It is used two times in I Cor. 14:15, and is translated SING.
 - (2) It is used in Rom. 15:9, and is translated SING.
 - (3) It is used in James 5:13, and is translated "sing psalms or praises".
 - (4) It is used in Eph. 5:19, and is translated "making melody".
 - (2) Lexicons define "*psallo*": "to pluck, to twang, to pull, to cause to vibrate".
 1. Paul tells us WHAT we are to "*psallo*" in Eph. 5:19 -- it is the HEART.
 - (1) When we sing, the instrument to be "plucked" or "caused to vibrate" is the HUMAN HEART.
 - (2) The Christian's HEART is the INSTRUMENT that ACCOMPANIES his singing in worship.
2. "Instrumental music is found in the Psalms, and Psalms are not part of the Law."
 - (1) John said that Psalms are part of the Law.
 1. John 10:34 -- Psalms 82:6
 2. John 15:25 -- Psalms 35:19
3. "Instrumental music is only an AID in worship".
 - (1) It is NOT and AID -- it is an ADDITION of **another kind of music**.
 1. Riding is NOT AN AID to walking; it is another way of traveling -- **two** ways of going.
 2. A **walking cane** is an aid to walking; when one uses a cane he is still walking.
 3. A **song book** is and AID to singing; when one uses a song book he is still SINGING.
 - (2) Difference between aids and additions:
 1. Specific and generic commands

(1) Specific -- SING (Eph. 5:19).

(2) Generic -- GO (Matt. 28: 19).

4. "It was practiced under the Law of Moses in the Old Testament."

(1) This same argument would introduced incense, infant church membership, animal sacrifices, polygamy, and everything else in the Old Testament.

(2) We are not under the Law today (Col. 2:14).

5. "Instrumental music is not expressly forbidden in the New Testament."

(1) This puts a premium on the silence of the scriptures.

(2) It creates a respect for what the Bible **does not say**, rather than what it **does say**.

(3) We are not to go beyond what is written (I Cor. 4:6; II John 9; Rev. 22: 18).

A Study In Departures From The Faith

Lesson 3

THE DEPARTURE FROM THE FAITH IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

CHURCH SUPPORT OF HUMAN INSTITUTIONS

INTRODUCTION:

1. After the division over the Missionary Society, the first human institution to be built for churches of Christ to support and work through was **Tennessee Orphan Home** in Springhill, Tennessee in 1909.

(1) In the thirty (30) years to follow five (5) other orphanages were built:

1. Potter Orphan Home in Bowling Green, Kentucky in 1915
2. Tipton Home in Tipton, Oklahoma in 1922
3. Boles Home in Quinlan, Texas in 1926
4. Southern Christian Home in Morrilton, Arkansas in 1926; and
5. Sunny Glenn Home in San Benito, Texas in 1936

(2) In 1940 there were seven (7) "Homes"; by 1950 there were ten (10); but by 1960 there were twenty-seven (27). Between 1950 and 1960 seventeen (17) institutions were set up.

2. Through the years some brethren had opposed these "Homes", but **they were no great issue** among churches.

(1) They had become an issue in the late forties (1940's) when brother **N. B. Hardeman**, president of Freed-Hardeman College, introduced the Orphan Home Issue into the discussion over the colleges being supported by the church. (see number 7 and 8)

3. The digression over church support of human institutions (such as Colleges, Orphan Homes and the Sponsoring Church arrangement) had its beginning back in the 1930's.

(1) There were efforts made from 1935 to 1938 to get the colleges in the budget of churches.

(2) In 1938, at the Abilene Christian College Lectures, **G. C. Brewer** was asked to make a speech to try to raise money for ACC. He spoke without preparation, and said, "*The church that does not have Abilene Christian college in its budget just has the wrong preacher.*"

(3) This speech was the beginning of the **war** over Institutionalism.

(4) After **Brewer's** speech at Abilene in 1938, brother **W. W. Otey** had this to say about Brewer: "*In my judgment G. C. Brewer is the Isaac Errett of this generation. Errett headed every 'trend' away from the gospel, and Brewer is doing the same.*"

4. A real battle raged over the question of putting the college in the budget of the church from 1945 to 1948 (soon after World War II) when **N. B. Hardeman**, president of Freed-Hardeman College, came out strongly for church support of the schools in an article in the **Gospel Advocate**.

5. The battle to get the colleges in the budget was led by **N. B. Hareman** and **G. C. Brewer**.

(1) **G. C. Brewer** was one of the early leaders of the institutional movement in churches of Christ.

6. The **Bible Banner**, with **Foy E. Wallace** as editor, led the fight **against** putting the colleges in the budget of churches.

(1) Some of those who stood with Wallace were **Cled Wallace, Roy Cogdill** and **James Adams**.

7. In 1947 the institutional fight began to turn from the **College-in-the-Budget** to the **Orphan's Home**.

(1) In 1947 **N. B. Hardeman** pointed out that the college and orphan's home stood on the **same ground** when he said:

"If it is a serious issue to donate to a school -- a human institution--why is it not a serious issue to donate to an orphan's home -- a human institution?" (**Gospel Advocate**, July 31, 1947)

8. Thus, brother **N. B. Hardeman** very cleverly **changed** the battle from the College-in-the-Budget, which had **very little emotional appeal**, to the Orphan's Home, which was **LOADED with emotionalism!**

9. The Orphan Home Issue was **used** as an **emotional tool** to break down the brethren's opposition to separate organizations to do the work of the church.

(1) After the battle was fought on an emotional issue, they would have no trouble getting the college in the budget!

10. **Honest brethren** could **see** that these organizations (orphanages), like the college, were **private enterprises** and had **no more right** for church support than the colleges had.

11. So, the war over human institutions being supported from the treasuries of churches turned from the College to the "Orphan Home".

12. Let us now look at the arguments that brethren have used to defend church support of schools and orphanages, and examine them in light of the Word of God.

I. ARGUMENTS USED TO DEFEND SCHOOLS AND ORPHANAGES BEING SUPPORTED OUT OF CHURCH TREASURIES EXAMINED IN LIGHT OF THE WORD OF GOD.

1. Arguments made for church support of SCHOOLS:

(1) "The school is doing a **good work**, and the church can support a good work."

1. The **local church** is to do the work God has assigned and not turn it over to some human institution.

2. The **good work** the **church** is to do has been **spelled out** in the **New Testament**.

3. The local church is to:

(1) Preach the gospel to the lost (I Thess. 1:8; Phil. 1: 5; I Tim. 3:15; Mark 16: 15,16).

(2) Edify the saved (Eph. 4:11 - 12, 16; Matt. 28:20).

(3) Help needy saints (I Cor. 16: 1, 2).

4. The local church **cannot** do its **preaching** through a **missionary society**; its work of **edifying** through a **college**; nor its **benevolence** through an **orphan's home** !

(2) Argument: "What the **individual** can do the **church** can do, and if the **individual** can support the school, the **church** can."

1. The New Testament teaches that the **individual** can do **many things** that the **church cannot do** (I Tim. 5: 16).

(1) The individual has many duties that the church cannot perform:

1. Family Relationship
2. Economic Relationship
3. Social Relationship
4. Civil Relationship

(2) The individual can help many organizations that the church cannot.

2. Arguments made for church support of ORPHAN'S HOMES:

NOTE: The only passage in the New Testament that discusses the care of orphans is James 1: 27. The following arguments all begin with the assumption that James 1:27 obligates the church to provide the services which these institutions provide. Before we look at the arguments they make, let us look at a few things:

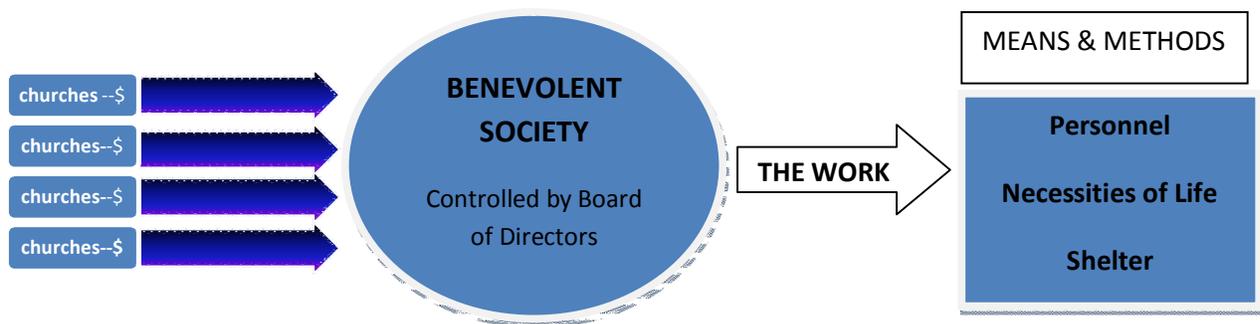
1. This passage is discussing **individual responsibility** , not church responsibility.
2. If brethren are to charge the church with the obligation of these "homes", they need a passage of scripture, and they have settled on James 1:27.
3. They start with a passage that assigns INDIVIDUAL responsibility, then **shift** that responsibility to the church.
4. They then tell us that the **church cannot do it**; then they **shift** it to a Benevolent Institution.
5. God has **not** assigned to the church a work that it cannot perform !
6. Any work that the **church cannot perform** is **not an obligation** of the church !

(1) ARGUMENT: "Where does the Bible **forbid** churches to support these institutions?"

1. The conclusion that the church **can** support these institutions because the Bible does not forbid it is derived from a **false understanding** that the **silence** of the Word is as much a guide for men as what the Word **specifies**.
2. Those who make this argument **fail** to understand the **prohibitive** nature of the **silence** of the Word of God.
 - (1) I Cor. 4: 6
 - (2) II John 9
 - (3) Rev. 22: 18 - 19
 - (4) I Pet. 4:11
3. When God authorizes something that EXCLUDES everything else (He specified "singing" -- Eph. 5:19, and that excludes "playing").
4. God authorized the **local church** to do His work (Acts 14:23; 11: 27 - 30), and that EXCLUDES **benevolent institutions**.
5. The SILENCE of the Word is as binding as what it DOES say !

(2) ARGUMENT: "The Homes are simply an **expedient** that churches use in doing their work."

1. The "Homes" (benevolent organizations) are NOT **means** or **methods**.
 - (1) These societies themselves use means and methods.
 - (2) Churches send money to the benevolent society (a corporate body); this Benevolent Society in turn uses means and methods in doing the work.
 - (3) The churches are not using the means or methods, the Benevolent Society is.



- (4) The Benevolent Society is performing the work, NOT the churches; the Society is using the means and methods; therefore, the Society is not a "means" or "method", it is an organization.

(3) ARGUMENT: The "Restored Home" argument -- that the Benevolent Institutions are simply a restoration of the divine home.

1. They argued that the local churches could scripturally donate to the children's **original home** before it was lost, and it can scripturally donate to the "restored home".
2. First, let us see that it is **impossible** to restore the home of fatherless children because to restore means: "to bring back to a former state or condition; to re-establish; to put back into existence or use".
3. All these institutions can do is provide a poor substitute for the home these children have lost !
4. A Benevolent Institution is NOT a "home", it is an organization that provides a "substitute home" (shelter, food and supervision).

(1) Ben Taylor says in "Potter Orphan Home, What Is It?, page 7:

"The Potter Orphan Home and School is an institution, but not within the confines of the church or any combination of local churches." "It is an institution having for its only purpose to furnish a home and the care of destitute orphans in the replacement of the private homes which have become broken or destroyed and therefore rendered unserviceable." (emphasis mine, dt)

1. From this statement you can see that the institution is NOT a "home"; it **furnishes** a substitute "home" (shelter, food, medical care, discipline, supervision and education).
 2. The Benevolent Societies are NOT "restored homes", they only provide a poor substitute home.
5. The Benevolent Societies are HUMAN ORGANIZATIONS set up to activate the church universal.

(1) They are for centralizing the resources and coordinating the efforts of local churches under the oversight and direction of a single organic agency in the work of Benevolence.

1. There is no Divine authority for such an organization.
2. Nothing is said in the New Testament about a local church **donating** to a "needy home" -- the local church helped needy saints (individuals).

(1) Acts 2:45

(2) Acts 11:29

(3) Rom. 15: 26

(4) Acts 4:35

(5) Acts 6:1

(6) I Tim. 5:16

SUMMARY:

1. In this lesson we have endeavored to show that there is NO Divine authority for churches doing their work through human institutions.

A Study In Departures From The Faith

Lesson 4

THE SPONSORING CHURCH ARRANGEMENT

INTRODUCTION:

1. In the late 1940's brethren were not only discussing the college and orphan home issues, they were also facing the issue of "sponsoring church" arrangements.

2. The "sponsoring church" arrangement is where one local church **sponsors** a work that **all churches are equally related to**, and then **calls upon other churches to send funds** to enable the sponsoring church to do the work.

(1) This arrangement is a cooperative effort on the part of churches of Christ to enable them to **jointly act** in doing some work.

3. This concept is one which tries to activate the **church universal** in a central organization by having many churches **pool their funds** under one eldership.

4. The work done through this arrangement is NOT being done by a **local church**, because the "sponsoring church" is **larger** than a local church.

5. The elders of a "sponsoring church" have ASSUMED a work **larger** than a local congregation -- a work of **brotherhood** proportions !

6. It is a work which places the funds of a number of congregations under the direction of one eldership -- the "sponsoring church" eldership.

7. The elders are no longer elders of a local church, but have become "brotherhood elders", functioning in an office which the New Testament knows nothing about!

(1) In the New Testament elders were **local** (I Pet. 5:2; Acts 20:28).

(2) The work of elders in the New Testament is ASSIGNED, not ASSUMED (I Pet. 5: 1 - 3).

1. The work of "sponsoring church elders" is ASSUMED.

2. There is no New Testament authority for an ASSUMED work.

3. Therefore, in the creation of the sponsoring church you have a functioning unit UNKNOWN to the New Testament !

I. MAJOR SPONSORING CHURCHES

1. The three major "sponsoring churches" that came into existence after World War II:

(1) The Broadway church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas became a "sponsoring church" to evangelize Germany.

(2) The Union Avenue church of Christ in Memphis, Tennessee became a "sponsoring church" to evangelize Japan.

(3) The Highland Avenue church of Christ in Abilene, Texas became a "sponsoring church" for the "Herald of Truth", a national radio broadcast.

1. The first "Herald of Truth" radio program was aired by affiliates of the American Broadcasting Company on February 10, 1952. James W. Nichols preached the first sermon.
2. The "Herald of Truth" program began on television in 1954.
3. In 1963, 317 radio stations and 65 Television stations were carrying the program.
4. In May of 1960 they claimed that almost one in ten congregations were helping to support the program.

2. OUR MAJOR POINT OF EMPHASIS -- THE "HERALD OF TRUTH"

(1) Our major point of emphasis in this lesson will be the "HERALD OF TRUTH", sponsored by the Highland Avenue church of Christ in Abilene, Texas.

1. From the beginning the "Herald of Truth" set-up was opposed by many good brethren.
 - (1) Their number increased with each succeeding year.
 - (2) Many articles were written and sermons preached to show that the arrangement of churches involved in this set-up was unscriptural.
 - (3) Many debates were conducted on this subject.

II. ARGUMENTS MADE SHOWING WHAT WAS WRONG WITH HERALD OF TRUTH:

1. It was pointed out that Herald of Truth was a **brotherhood** project under the oversight of the **Highland elders**.

(1) HERALD OF TRUTH was too big for one church to support.

1. It had a full-time, paid coordinator who spent much of his time out promoting and soliciting funds from churches for the program.
2. It had a separate treasury from that of the Highland church.
3. It maintained an office separate and apart from the regular offices in the Highland building -- and had a different telephone number from that of the Highland building.
4. The Highland church **contributed** to Herald of Truth.
5. It was shown by all this that the Herald of Truth was a **brotherhood project**, not just a work of one local church.

2. It was pointed out that HERALD OF TRUTH entailed a form of congregational cooperation for which there is no Bible authority.

(1) The Bible nowhere authorizes many churches sending funds to one congregation to enable it to carry on a work of evangelism.

1. There is neither precept, inference, or example for this type of "cooperation".
- (2) The examples we have of churches in the New Testament sending to another church was for the relief of their own "poor saints" (Acts 11: 27 - 30; Rom. 15:26; I Cor. 16: 1 - 3; II Cor. 8 and 9).
 1. The Highland church of Abilene, Texas was NOT a **needy** church !
 - (1) Had around 1,000 members.
 - (2) Had a yearly budget of around \$250,000.
 - (3) Had a spacious building seating around 1,500 with 32 classrooms.
 - (4) They donated to 18 "Homes" for orphans and aged persons.
 2. It was shown by all this that contributions were NOT being sent to Highland because it was **unable** to care for her own needy, but that it might be able to sponsor a large-scale work of radio and television preaching.
 3. It was shown that this type of congregational cooperation found in the HERALD OF TRUTH set-up violated the autonomy of the churches involved, and is wholly without scriptural authority.
3. It was shown that the HERALD OF TRUTH set-up **provides a medium** for **universal church action** -- action the New Testament does not authorize.
 - (1) **Guy N. Woods** argued FOR universal church action and tried to prove it with the **Great Commission**. He said:

"There never was a church on earth that could carry out this commission unaided. There is in the commission absolute authority for church cooperation. By cooperation, I mean the pooling of resources. It would take the resources of the Federal Government to carry out this commission with any degree of success whatever. There never was a New Testament church on earth that had sufficient means by which to carry out this commission unaided."..."I would believe in the Herald of Truth if there were nothing in the Bible about church cooperation save the great commission." (From a tract entitled, "Cooperation In The Field of Benevolence and Evangelism", by Guy N. Woods)

"If there were nothing else in the Bible on this subject save the Great Commission, I would insist that it alone justifies that program and similar cooperative efforts." (From COGDILL - WOODS DEBATE, page 195)
 - (2) These are the same kind of arguments that were made by those who supported the Missionary Society.
 - (3) What Guy N. Wood, Campbell and Pendleton (and all others who have sought to activate the church universal) have failed to see is that the Lord never authorized the church universal **to act**, and therefore gave it no earthly structure (organization) whereby it could act.

1. The word "church", as used to **speak of all saved people everywhere** (church universal), does not refer to a functional body but rather to a **spiritual relationship** (I Cor. 1:9; I John 1:7; John 15: 3 - 8).
- (4) The **only functional unit** established by the authority of Christ is the **local congregation** (Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1).
 1. There is nothing **larger**, nothing **smaller**, nothing **other than** the local church -- no other organization, either within or without.
 2. There is no **combining** of local churches in the New Testament for any purpose.
 3. The elders of every local church were ASSIGNED the oversight of the work and resources of the church of which they were **members**, and **nothing else**. These elders "assumed" nothing, but carried out their ASSIGNED work (I Pet. 5: 1 - 3; Acts 20:28).
4. Some things local churches in the New Testament **did not do**:
 - (1) No church contributed to another church unless it was in NEED (Acts 11: 27 - 30; Rom. 15:26; I Cor. 16: 1 - 3; II Cor. 8 and 9).
 - (2) No church made another church its agent in forwarding, delivering, handling, or distributing its contribution to anything.
 - (3) No church delegated its responsibility to another church either in caring for the needy or preaching the gospel.
 - (4) No congregation became a centralized agency through which other churches cooperated in doing any work.
 - (5) There was no pooling of funds by the churches of the New Testament.
 - (6) No eldership of any congregation exercised any control over the members, the discipline, the fellowship, the resources, or the activity of another congregation.
5. The HERALD OF TRUTH and the sponsoring church type of evangelism practices these things we have just studied.
 - (1) These practices are sinful and presumptive because they are without scriptural authority.

III. ARGUMENTS THAT WERE MADE IN DEFENSE OF HERALD OF TRUTH AND THE SPONSORING CHURCH ARRANGEMENT.

1. It was argued that there is no bound pattern for congregational cooperation in the New Testament, and any method of cooperation was scriptural -- that HERALD OF TRUTH was just an expedient.
 - (1) There IS a specific pattern for congregational cooperation in the New Testament.
 1. Churches helped each other **in time of emergency** by contributing directly to the church or churches which needed relief. (Rom. 15:26; I Cor. 16: 1 - 4)

(2) Antioch sent relief to the Judean churches (Acts 11: 27 - 30).

1. Each church made up its own "money", selected its own "messenger", and sent its "money" by its own "messenger" directly to the church in need (I Cor. 16: 1 - 3; Rom. 15: 26; Acts 11: 27 - 30).

(3) A church with "power" (ability) gave to a church in "want" in order to produce mutual freedom from want, or as Paul put it, "equality" (II Cor. 8: 13- 15).

1. The only time one can read about one church sending funds to another church for any purpose at all was to relieve the physical "want" of members of the church to which the funds were sent.

(4) INDIVIDUALS, not churches, served as messengers (I Cor. 16: 1 - 4).

(5) Messengers served only in the capacity of delivering the contribution from the contributing church to the intended recipient (Acts 11: 27 - 30; I Cor. 16: 1 - 4; Phil. 2:25; 4: 10 - 18).

2. Churches of Macedonia sent wages directly to Paul as he preached in Corinth (II Cor. 11: 7 - 9).

3. The church at Philippi sent more than once to Paul in Thessalonica (Phil. 4: 15 - 16); and also sent directly to him in Rome (Phil. 4: 10, 18).

(1) These examples show that churches supported preachers DIRECTLY.

(2) You can see from these examples that there IS a specific pattern for congregational cooperation.

1. There is no **scriptural** authority for one church sending money to another church unless the receiving church is in NEED.
2. When churches contributed to the support of a preacher, they sent directly to the preacher.

2. The HERALD OF TRUTH is **not** an **expedient because it is not lawful** (I Cor. 6:12; I Cor. 10:23).

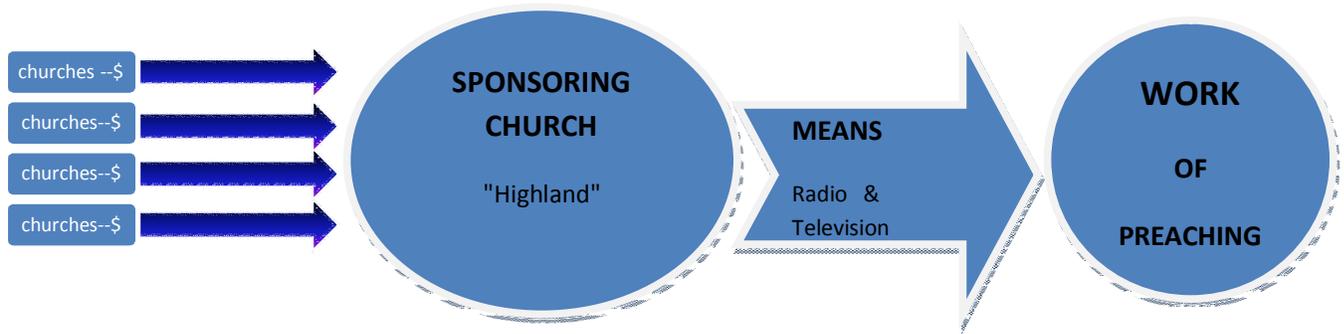
(1) The New Testament reveals a specific example of congregational cooperation, and that EXCLUDES every other kind of congregational cooperation.

1. The "sponsoring church" arrangement in HERALD OF TRUTH is an unscriptural arrangement of churches.

(1) In the "sponsoring church" arrangement you have five (5) things:

1. Contributing churches
2. Monies they contribute
3. The sponsoring church
4. The means used to do the work
5. The work

(2) Remove any one of these five things and you destroy the sponsoring church arrangement.



1. To show that the sponsoring church type cooperation is unscriptural, let us illustrate it with baptism:

(1) For baptism to be scriptural it must be:

1. The proper action (immersion - Rom. 6: 3,4).
2. The proper subject (a believer who has repented and confessed Christ - Acts 2:38; 8:37).
3. The right design (for the remission of sins - Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16).

(2) Let us look at what constitutes **unscriptural** baptism:

1. Action (sprinkling or pouring)
2. Subjects (infants or unbelievers)
3. Design (because of remission of sins)

2. Now let us look at **scriptural** congregational cooperation:

- (1) The proper action (church with abundance giving to a church in want - unable to relieve needs of its own members).
- (2) The proper subject (church in want {or need} receiving from a church with abundance).
- (3) The right design (that there "may be equality" - II Cor. 8: 14 - to bring the church in want to the place that it can do its own work).

3. **Unscriptural** congregational cooperation:

- (1) Action (gift from one church to another)
- (2) Subject (church having equality, not in want)
- (3) Design (to do a good work)
 1. Unscriptural congregational cooperation is no more pleasing in the sight of God than is unscriptural baptism.

IV. BASIC FACTS WE MUST REMEMBER:

1. In the New Testament NO church of Christ had pre-eminence over another.
2. In the New Testament there was no coordination of local churches to **function through** one eldership.
3. In the New Testament there is NO PRESSURE of one church on another, or others.
4. The only force in the religion of Christ is the force of being right.
5. In the New Testament there is no function of elders outside the church of which they are elders.
6. In the New Testament no action of one church was binding on another church (even in discipline); otherwise there would be an authority other than the scriptures infallible.
7. No elders of one church can be the **voice** of the churches of Christ -- elders of one church can only speak for themselves.
8. No eldership has authority to operate a human institution (the church is without authority to do so).
9. No eldership can function for the elders of another church.
10. No eldership of a sponsoring church is mentioned in the New Testament.
11. There is no organization of any kind or character in the New Testament for inter-church general work.
12. There is simply no authority for the church "universal" to operate through the church local.

(These "BASIC FACTS" were taken from Foy E. Wallace's new book.)