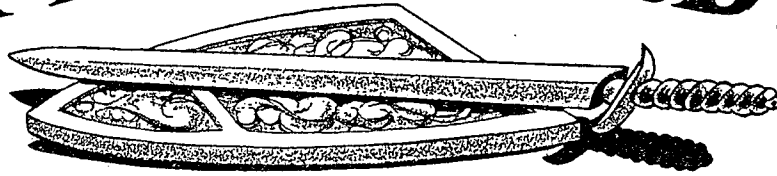


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## INSTITUTIONAL BOARDS

Earlie T. Williams, Florence, Alabama

As it is generally known that I, with many others, am opposed to orphan homes supported by the Lord's church, but separate and apart from the church, under a board of directors who are from many congregations, thus forming an organization to do the work of the church, and as I have been misrepresented or misunderstood, and as this misunderstanding could cause some to be lost, I feel that it is necessary to make the following statement that all may know that I am and have always been in favor of caring for those who are in need. I believe and have always taught that the local congregation of the Lord's people is required by the Lord to do so. It has been and is still being reported that I with others who are opposed to human organizations soliciting funds from the church, am opposed to helping those in need. As for myself, this is just not true. I write this without the knowledge of anyone, I have not asked or received help from anyone; therefore, all the responsibility rests upon me. No one will see this until it is in print, and if I have misapplied the Word of the Lord, I will have to give an account to Him.

Whatever the church, as such, is commanded to do can be done only through the church. And the only way to do anything through the church is to do it through the local church, which is the only organization known in the New Testament.

The missionary society performs the function of the church. It stands between the church and the work being done. Its organization supersedes and usurps the organization and work of the church. The missionary society, therefore, supplants or displaces the local church. If it were permissible to have institutional orphan homes in the work of benevolence, then it would be permissible to have the missionary society in the work of evangelization. But the question assumes the point to be proved. Nothing is permissible as an auxiliary of the church which is not scriptural. And no one can find the passage of scripture that delegates the work of the church, either missionary or benevolent, to boards and organizations other than the church. Therefore, the institutional orphan home performs the function of the church. It stands between the church and the work being done. It takes the work away from the local congregations over a large area and makes an

emergency in one place that did not exist before the orphans were collected in the home. If the \$150,000.00 that it will take to start one of the homes were spent in preaching the Gospel, would it not establish one hundred and fifty new congregations, and would not these one hundred and fifty congregations do more in their communities in helping the needy than one centralized home that is no part of the church?

Where is the passage of scripture that will permit a few brethren to organize an institution and then lay it at the door of the church and say, "This is your baby—care for it." The Lord has commanded the church by command and example to care for its needy; therefore, it is the responsibility of the local congregation to care for its own. (Acts 6:1-4) Institutionalism has ever been a menace to congregational independence as taught in the New Testament. It has wrought havoc in the church in the past, and is a present hazard today. The truth is this can be seen in the present condition around us today. When anyone stands against institutions taking over the work of the church, then the wrath of some who are promoting these institutions will be brought to bear upon that one.

Moses E. Lard wrote in his quarterly in 1865, Vol. 2, page 138, "Let now anyone, no matter who he may be, or from what motives he may act, rise up to oppose these institutions, and not more naturally does the wild beast defend to the death her young than do they seek to maim or crush the interfering party." As it has been previously set forth, the mission of the church is twofold—missionary and benevolent. Any organization that takes over the function and as an organization does what the church is commanded to do is in violation of a plain New Testament principle. The missionary society is an institution with its own working units and organizations. It usurps the function of the church, taking the oversight of the funds of the evangelistic work of the church out of the hands of the elders of the church and placing them in an entirely different organization. The missionary society, therefore, supplants the church in that phase of the work the church is commanded to do. But the church as such, is also commanded to do benevolent work, and for the same reason the church cannot scripturally transfer the work of benevo-

(See BOARDS, page 11)

## YOU NAME IT

J. L. Hines, Dallas, Texas

A congregation of people who have been immersed in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, for the remission of sins, and subscribes to the following:

1. Meets upon the first day of the week to break bread.
2. Contributes upon the first day of the week.
3. Sings without the accompaniment of mechanical instruments of music.
4. Has a robed choir on special occasions, singing special songs with all the trimmings.
5. Some sing while others HUM.
6. Has a Christian (?) college in the budget.
7. Has institutional orphan homes and old folks' homes, separate and apart from the church, in the budget.
8. Has a recreational program, with recreational director.
9. Has chapel in the church meeting-house, where special meetings, marriages, and funerals, may be had—with the use of musical instruments.
10. Has fellowship program, arranged by "fellowship committee."
11. Where elders and deacons are classified together as "THE BOARD."

These are only some of the things practiced and condoned by this congregation. The preacher and elders cannot see that the principle of supporting colleges and homes, which are separate institutions from the church, is the same as supporting a Missionary Society. Neither can they see that humming at the time of singing is on a par with the use of the organ with the singing.

Any preacher today who has faith and courage enough to cry out against these apostacies is classified as a crank, ostracized, marked, and all but "cast out of the church,"—and this they would do, too, if possible. The time will come when this will be done; for such is the spirit and attitude of this "church."

YOU NAME IT.

## BOARDS ----- (Continued from page 1)

lence to any agency or institution that takes the work out of the hands of the elders and deacons of the church—the local church. Such organization would supplant the church in benevolent work exactly as the society does in mission work. The command to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10) makes it the duty of the church to help those in need. If a family is in need, the church may surely pay the grocery bill without going into the grocery business. If a poor man's rent is due and his family must have shelter, for the church to pay his rent would not put the church in the tenement business. Likewise, if a poor person is sick, the church may surely pay the doctor or the hospital without the church going into the hospital business. In each instance the church is in direct contact with the individual and the thing being done. It is the church helping the one in need—the very thing commanded—with nothing coming between the church and the thing done.

It is argued by some that the Lord has commanded the church to care for the one who is in need but has not

told us how to do the work. We can find how benevolent work was done in the early church and if we follow their example we can rest assured that we are doing the Lord's will. (Acts 6:1-4; Acts 11:29-30; Rom. 15:25-28; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; Eph. 3:21; Gal. 6:10; 1 Tim. 5:16) In all these passages of scripture there is not anything said about any organization except the church. Yet some will say that it does not tell us not to have an orphan home that is separate and apart from the church. Neither does the Lord tell us that we cannot have instrumental music in the church. When this instrumental music was introduced in the church with the missionary society, there were those that objected on the ground that it was unscriptural. But the one who was responsible for the thing contended that it was only an opinion and that they were going to keep it in the church and if any division came, the ones who were opposed to it would be responsible for the division. The same argument is being made today in regard to the institutional orphan home even though they say that the orphan can be cared for in different ways. But the question is always asked, "if we have some orphans and there is no one to take them in their homes, what will we do with them?" Let the local church rent or buy a small home, place the orphans in the home, hire a good Christian woman to go to that home and live with them. Let the elders and deacons see that they are provided for. Let the women of the congregation sew and make clothes for them. But let it be under the direct oversight of the church; then Christ will receive glory in the church which is the pillar and ground of the truth.

But still another argument is "that the church is not doing its duty in regard to benevolent work; therefore, there must be some plan to care for the orphans besides the church." It is to be regretted that the local congregation is not caring for those in need as it should but it is not the fault of the Lord; it is partly the fault of some of the members of the church for not giving of their means as they should and support them instead of the church. But the church is not preaching the gospel as it should. Because of this failure should we support the missionary society to preach the gospel? Who will have to answer in judgment for not caring for the orphans, the church or the orphan home? Who will have to answer for not preaching the gospel, the church or the missionary society? If division comes in the church, who will be responsible, the ones who are promoting these human institutions or the ones who are opposed to them? These are very serious questions. Will you not think on these things?

There are some brethren who would insist that these large institutions be placed under the elders of a local congregation. This is only a cover-up of the real issue. What scriptural authority can anyone find for a local congregation to operate a \$200,000 business such as farms, dairies, chicken farms, fish ponds, swimming pools, etc.? Where is the passage of scripture that will permit one set of elders creating an emergency where one does not exist and then asking other congregations to come to their support? What scriptural example can anyone find where the Lord ever expected any congregation to do more than its ability? No congregation that I know is financially able to operate one of these "huge institutions." Therefore, the elders that would take this work would take it knowing that they would have to beg help from other congregations thereby having centralized control of benevolent work, overseeing the work of several congregations.