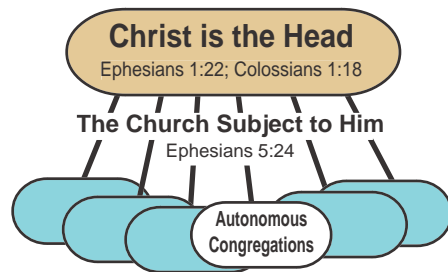


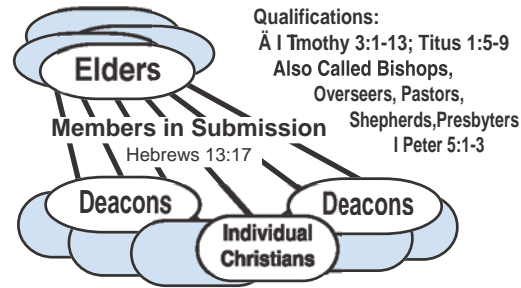
The Organization of the New Testament Church

In Heaven & On Earth



No headquarters, No convention, No Pope, No Synod

In Each Congregation



Leading A Congregation By The Word of God - Titus 1:9

Does The Congregation Where You Worship Follow This Pattern?

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Faithful Sayings

Olsen Park Church of Christ

4700 Andrews Avenue Amarillo, Texas 79106
(806) 352-2809

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Services

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.
10:20 a.m.
6:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Ken Ford
Charles Kelley
Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Pat Goguen
Neil Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Fred Perez
Rusty Scott

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

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Church Contribution: The Biblical Pattern

In many churches any time that the church comes together a collection is taken from the members (and even visitors). Sometimes great effort and motivation is used to persuade those present to give. While the Bible clearly teaches that the New Testament church did take up a collection of money to address the needs of a congregation, does the Bible teach taking up such collections at any (and every) time of assembly?



I. The New Testament Church Gave on Sunday.

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the church in ancient Corinth he gave

them instruction regarding how and when to take up a collection for a need that the church should address. He wrote – “**On the first [day] of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.**” (1 Cor 16:2). Although the occasion for this instruction concerned a gift that would be sent to Jerusalem, his instruction was not isolated to (Cont. on pg. 2)

(Cont. from pg. 1) Corinth alone. In the previous verse he wrote – **“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also”** (1 Corinthians 16:1). While individual charity is to occur as the opportunity arises (see Galatians 6:10) this is the only example we have of when the church collection was made.

II. Giving is to Be A Personal Matter, As Each Person Decides Within Their Heart. In Paul’s second letter to Corinth he returns again to this subject. While Paul clearly seeks to encourage generosity, he tempers this with a powerful qualifier. Notice what he says – **“[So let] each one [give] as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver”** (2 Cor 9:7). We notice three points here: giving is to occur...

1. “As he purposes in his heart.” Just as the words of Jesus declared – **“But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing”** (Matthew 6:3). The public spectacle of a preacher manipulating an audience, and then focusing attention upon a large contribution is the exact opposite of what the Lord is teaching in Matthew 6:3 and through the Apostle Paul.

2. “Not grudgingly or of necessity.” While a preacher or the elders are doing just what Paul did if they teach the princi-

ples of giving, any pressure or compulsion should only come from a person’s reflection upon their worship of God. A Christian’s giving must not come from “guilt-trips” and “mind-games.” Instead...

3. “God loves a cheerful giver.” When a worshipper leaves an assembly feeling as if they have been pressured and manipulated into giving, God is not pleased with the gift. In such an instance not only has the one who resents being pressured failed to worship in truth but the preacher or church leader responsible for that atmosphere stands accountable before God for violating the clear teaching of Scripture. Instead, we should search our hearts, make deliberate plans about what we would like to give, and do it with joy. Of this attitude the Hebrew writer tells us – **“...with such sacrifices God is well pleased”** (Hebrews 13:16). This is the Biblical pattern, and the one which Christians today must follow as well.

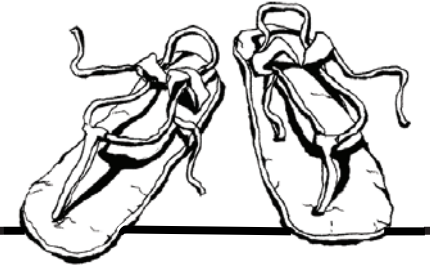
By Kyle Pope



“As He Walked” – I John 2:6

Studies in the Character of Christ

By Kyle Pope



A Quiet Disposition

As we look back through the ages to consider the character of Jesus, one of the most striking aspects of His behavior is the quiet disposition which He maintained. Even though the gospels record for us His words and teachings, it is amazing how much is said about His silence.

The prophecy of Isaiah which foretold Jesus’ death, said of Him - **“He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth”** (Isaiah 53:7, NKJV). While the gospels record for us the few words Jesus did offer in His own defense Mark tells us - **“...the chief priests accused Him of many things, but He answered nothing”** (Mark 15:3). How tempting it must have been in the face of these rebellious and blasphemous souls to declare to the whole universe the grandeur of His nature and the scope of His incomprehensible power! Yet, it was not yet the time for such a declaration. The Apostle Peter years later would speak of Christ’s character in proclaiming that Jesus - **“...when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but**

committed Himself to Him who judges righteously” (1 Peter 2:23). With the Master having such a disposition it is little wonder that we who would serve Him are to do the same. James tells us through the Holy Spirit - **“...let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath”** (James 1:19).

On three occasions in Paul’s epistles he refers to the Christian disposition as one that is “quiet.” To the church in Thessalonica he urges them to - **“...aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business...”** - (1 Thess 4:11) and to **“work in quietness”** (II Thess 3:12). He told the young evangelist Timothy that we should pray - **“for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence”** (1 Tim 2:2).

Certainly there are times when we must speak. As Christians, we (like Jesus) must teach the truth, we must rebuke sin and encourage faithfulness. Even so, when it is not necessary for us to speak, let us strive to imitate the character of our Master in putting on a disposition of quiet submission to Him in our daily life.



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