

The Case for the New Testament Church

Throughout all time, God has hated and condemned idolatry (Ex. 20:4-6; 1 John 5:21; 1 Cor. 10:14; Gal. 5:20-21; Deut. 29:14-19). In Israel's first experiment with idolatry, we can see the appeal (Ex. 32:6). When an idol is fashioned, we can serve it and worship it however we like: Eating, drinking, playing, singing, dancing (Ex. 32:18-19). The Israelites were supposed to be God's holy people for His purposes. They were supposed to worship Him alone in the way He prescribed – because worship was for God! But they forgot God. They made God into somebody else and they made worship what they wanted it to be.

Noticing the signs and mailers of many of the religious bodies in our communities we see that some of our neighbors are busy following Israel's example and turning church into idolatry. But there is a church in the Bible! A true church. And what people may not know is that God has given a pattern for His church. And God desires people to faithfully follow His will and that the church be what God intends not what men can imagine.

I. Is God Pleased by _____ or _____?

- A. God made man and He made us to be creative. But God was never pleased with innovations in His worship or service.
- B. O.T. records major _____ efforts:
 1. Jehoiada (2 Chron. 23:18) in 878 B.C.
 2. Hezekiah (2 Chron. 31:3) in 730 B.C.
 3. Josiah (2 Chron. 35:6, 12) in 650 B.C.
 4. Jeshua (Ezra 3:2) in 450 B.C.
 5. Nehemiah (Neh. 8:14-15; 10:34; 13:1) in 430 B.C.
- C. All restoration movements worked in the same way: Go back to the _____!
 1. God's direct _____
 2. The inspired _____
- D. Christian religion falls prey to the same potential of _____ and must be restored.
 1. Beware: _____ worship (Matt. 15:8-9).
 2. Beware: Self _____ religion/ will worship (Col. 2:20-23).
 3. We must look to N.T. commands and Examples!

II. The Apostles _____ the New Testament _____

- A. The Apostles were guided in _____ by the Holy Spirit.
 1. All things and perfect remembrance (John 14:26).
 2. Guided into all truth (John 16:13).
 3. Those of Truth hear the apostles (1 John 4:6).
- B. The Apostles were commissioned to spread the truth.
 1. Preach the _____ & make disciples (Matt. 28:18-20).
 2. Their message _____ by God:
 - a. By signs, miracles (Mk. 16:20).
 - b. By signs of an apostle (2 Cor. 12:12).
 3. They were uniquely authorized to _____ doctrine.
 - a. The church continued in Apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42).
 - b. Ministry of the word of God supreme task of Apostles (Acts 6:2-4).
 - c. Their word was the word of God (1 Thess. 2:13).
 - d. Departing from Apostles' ways was departing from church fellowship (2 Thess. 3:6, 14).
 4. They were uniquely authorized to “_____” churches.

- a. Churches had consistent order, which is consistent structure, offices, work, worship practices, and doctrine. This pattern, or order, or consistency of churches is very evident in 1 Corinthians (1 Cor. 4:16-17; 7:17; 11:33-34; 16:1)!
- C. New Testament is our _____ for the Apostles' Doctrine.
 - 1. Their authority is perpetuated in the New Testament.
 - 2. The words of the apostles, whether oral or written were of equal authority (2 Thess. 2:15; 3:14).
 - 3. Peter wrote of the apostles' commands (2 Pet. 3:1-2).
 - 4. John wrote the truth and the testimony of Jesus (John 21:24; John 20:30-31).
 - 5. As epistles were penned, they were circulated (Col. 4:16).
- D. Christians are to continue in the apostles' doctrine today and so that means we follow what the New Testament expressly teaches and authorizes – that is true Christianity! And that means that we are to be restoring. Apostolic ordering of churches constitutes a pattern to follow in any culture at any time. There is a New Testament pattern for the Lord's Church (2 Tim. 1:13). So what does it look like?

III. _____ of a New Testament Church

- A. An _____ (Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; 1 Tim. 3:1-15; Titus 1:5-11).
- B. An _____ (Heb. 10:25; 1 Cor. 11:17-18).
- C. Taught (Acts 11:26; 20:7; 1 Cor. 14:19).
- D. Prayed (Acts 12:5; 1 Cor. 14:15).
- E. Sang (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
- F. Lord's Supper on 1st Day (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20).
- G. Gave on 1st Day (1 Cor. 16:1-2).
- H. Had a Common _____ (Acts 4:34-5:4; 1 Cor. 16:1-2).
- I. Relieved Needy _____ (Acts 4:34-35; 11:29-30; 1 Cor. 16:1).
- J. Supported _____ (1 Cor. 9:14; 2 Cor. 11:8; Phil. 4:15-16).
- K. _____ unruly members (1 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14).