

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

Some Things We Do Not Need

by John Isaac Edwards

The church as planned by God and built by Christ is perfect in every way. It is all-sufficient and fully capable, without any additions, of doing all the Lord requires. Thus, we do not need:

A Missionary Society to Preach the Gospel for Us. The church is “...the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15). The church at Thessalonica is exemplary in that they “...sounded out the word of the Lord...” (1 Thessalonians 1:8). The church at Philippi did not send a contribution to a missionary society, but “...once and again unto my necessity”, said Paul (Philippians 4:16). The Lord’s church was so successful, without other agencies, in spreading

the gospel, that, in a very short period of time, Paul could say, “...the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven...” (Colossians 1:23). The church didn’t need a missionary society then, and we don’t need one today!

A Benevolent Institution to Relieve Our Needy. Some churches of Christ have turned over the work of benevolence to another institution of some kind to decide the place, provisions and personnel necessary for the relief. It’s not a matter of how the work is done, but who is charged with the responsibility of doing the work. In the New Testament, the local church took care of its

own needy. Read Acts 2, 4, & 6. When a church had a need greater than its ability to relieve, churches in other places, that had the ability to help in that need, sent to the elders of the church in need (Acts 11:27-30). The church in the first century did not need another institution to do this work; neither do we!

A College to Edify Our Members. Some churches of Christ send funds from their treasury to support colleges like Abilene Christian University in Abilene, Texas, Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tennessee, Harding University in Searcy Arkansas, Lipscomb in Nashville, Tennessee and others. Paul wrote about the church, “...maketh increase of the body unto

the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:16). That word “edifying” suggests building up. This work is done by the church through teaching the word of God (Acts 20:32). Where, in the New Testament, is authority for the church sending money from its treasury to a college? The church didn’t need such in the first century; neither do we today!

A Kitchen or “Fellowship Hall” in Which to Eat and Drink. Why? We have houses to eat and drink in. Paul asked the Corinthians, “What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God...?” (1 Corinthians 11:22). He further said, “...if any

man hunger, let him eat at home...” (1 Corinthians 11:34). It is said of first church members, “... breaking bread from house to house...” (Acts 2:46). And this we do!

Gimmicks to Attract and Draw Men. Many churches today have all kinds of schemes and tricks to get people in their doors. We don’t need such. We offer the same features as the church in the New Testament: “...Christ, and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2). Jesus said, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12:32). The gospel is God’s saving power as Paul said, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is

the power of God unto salvation...” (Romans 1:16). It is an insult to our youth to think they need some carnal approach to lure them to the Lord.

A New Hermeneutic. Hermeneutics has to do with how we interpret the Bible. Authority is established by command, example, necessary inference and silence of the Scriptures (Acts 15). This is too restrictive for some and so they cry for a new way of looking at the Bible like “purpose, principle, and precedent.” If it was good enough for brethren in the first century, it is good enough for us today!

We’re content with what the Lord says.

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