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DOING ALL THE GOOD WE CAN AND AS LITTLE HARM AS POSSIBLE

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GOD UNDERSTANDS
It is sweet to know,
When we are tired and when the hand of pain
Lies on our hearts, and when we look in vain
For human comfort, that the Heart Divine
Still understands these cares, both yours and mine:
Not only understands, but, day by day,
Lives with us while we tread the earthly way;
Bears with us all our weariness, and feels
The shadows of the faintest cloud that steals
Across our sunshine; ever learns again
The depth of bitterness and human pain.

There is no sorrow that He will not share;
No cross, no burden, for our hearts to bear
Without His help, no care of ours too small
To cast on Jesus: let us tell Him all-
To lay at His feet the story of our woes,
And in His sympathy find sweet repose. —Sel.

CAN'T WE AGREE ON SOMETHING?

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also
which shall believe on me through their word; that
they all may be one: as Thou, Father, art in me, and I
in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the
world may believe that Thou hast sent me." (John 17:20, 21.)

To those of the Churches of Christ who desire a
Plan for Unity, we submit the following for your con-
sideration. We cry "Unity," and say that Unity can
be obtained only on a New Testament basis; and yet
the New Testament is the Book we disagree on. If we
search out the things we can agree on, and unite
on them, and work together, we'll have Unity!
So we submit the following items of the worship
which are necessary to a New Testament Church.

COMMUNION.—The Lord's Supper must be kept
each Lord's day.
PREACHING and MUTUAL EDIFICATION should
be decided by each congregation for itself. It knows
its own needs.

"PASTOR SYSTEM."—There are no New Testa-
ment pastors save Elders.
OFFICERS.—Only officers recognized for religious
work by the New Testament are Elders and Deacons.
SINGING.—No instrumental music, but honest en-
deavor to make the song-service as edifying as possi-
ble.

CONTRIBUTION.—This is for support of spreading
the Gospel and taking care of the poor.
DISCIPLINE.—The course that is fair is the Scrip-
tural plan every time. Conduct that brings reproach
on the Church, and heresies, are matters of discipline
if persisted in after due warning.

WORKERS.—Safety of the New Testament plan of
worship demands all such should be under supervi-
sion of Elders and mature members of the Church. All
Bible classes must be under supervision of the Church
—not a separate organization.

PREACHERS.—Must be men of good character. If
they favor "Bible colleges" or not, let it be an individu-
al matter. Their business is, preaching the Gospel
and building up churches, not other religious organi-
zations.

BIBLE CLASSES.—As they are not part of the wor-
ship, those not believing in them may stay away with-
out censure.

LESSON-LEAVES.—If a Bible-class uses lesson-
leaves, those not agreeing may use their Bibles without
censure on the part of those using lesson-leaves. (Most
of us use commentaries of some sort, the place where
we use them being the main point of difference. Some
use New Testaments with extensive notes at bottom of
each page, without criticism, even in worship.) Bible-
classes are not part of the worship.

"BIBLE COLLEGES" and ORPHANS' HOMES.—
Supporting them is an individual matter—the Church
Contribution is not for that purpose. We're saved as
individuals, anyhow; not as churches. If anyone
must take the risk, let that one do it as an individual.
It's a matter of believing in the efficacy of the Church.
If a preacher or a brother talks to us privately about
"Bible colleges," just inform him kindly, yet firmly,
that you do not support them, and tell him why.
We can't force them not to believe in them, but maybe
we can reason with them.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.—Individual work. There's
plenty of work at hand to satisfy those who want work-
SOCIETIES.—These are all foreign to the Scriptural
plan, and are full of possibilities for departures. The Church is the only avenue through which to do religious work.

BROTHERLY LOVE.—This is as much a command as “repent and be baptized,” and, if exercised, would be the solution of many problems. “Come, let us reason together,” means “reason,” not quarrel. Ephesians 4:16 speaks of “love” as a means of the Church edifying itself. All can take part in this, and make it really “mutual.”

Brethren, if the Church is as supreme with us as we would have people think, WHY NOT DO ALL OUR RELIGIOUS WORK THROUGH THE CHURCH, so the glory for such work will go where the Book commands? IF YOU wish to support a Missionary or Education society to do Church work, go ahead— that’s between you and the Head of the Church. But, keep your hands off the Church treasury! Don’t touch a penny of that and send it to another organization to do Church work! Maintain purity of the worship! Couldn’t we worship with the Christian church if they’d cut out the mechanical music and not touch the Church funds in the interest of human societies to do Church work? And raise money for this work by giving as the Lord has prospered? We can worship together with our College brethren if they’ll keep their hands off the Church funds and don’t try to divert them for the aid of a College to teach the Scriptures. For, THAT’S THE CHURCH’S WORK! Bro. Strygley, of the “Gospel Advocate,” says no organization other than the Church’s Elders and Deacons is scriptural for religious work. Bro. H. L. Boles, late President of David Lipscomb College, says this President, Secretary and Treasurer stuff in Church work is wrong! So this brings us right back to the One Institution through which the manifold wisdom of God is to be made known: THE CHURCH OF CHRIST. We must jealously guard Her worship. Brethren, let’s be just as jealous of HER WORK! IF YOU wish to support the Y. M. C. A., or a Missionary or an Education society for preaching or teaching the Scripture, go ahead; that’s between you and the Founder of the one organization with Heaven’s approval for making known the Gospel. YOU must settle with HIM! BUT DON’T TOUCH THE CHURCH FUNDS IN THE INTEREST OF ANY HUMAN RELIGIOUS SOCIETY!

If the preacher we employ wants to give part of what we give him to aid a human religious society, that’s HIS PERSONAL AFFAIR, and—RISK! The Head of the Church will settle with him in the Last Day, for helping A RIVAL INSTITUTION. But, retain the Church funds strictly for Church work, and we’ll have A GLORIOUS RE-UNION! And our Preachers, Editors, and the whole Rank and File can show the world what can be done by a people who put first things first—THE CHURCH BEFORE ANY OTHER SOCIETY FOR MAKING KNOWN “THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD.” Then we ALL can joyfully and truthfully sing:

“For Her my tears shall fall,
And for Her my prayers ascend;
To Her my cares and toils be given
Till toils and cares shall end.”

Brethren, are you with us FOR THE CHURCH SUPREME? Let’s hear from Editors, Preachers, Elders and Rank and File. This is a rough draft, but is written in behalf of the thousands who desire to reach that Better Land, and who never will know, and never can understand, “the fine points” in our arguments for and against some things that have disrupted us. We desire very much to afford a place for such to worship AFTER THE NEW TESTAMENT PLAN. We solicit suggestions and close analysis of these items—Review Publishers.

NOT UNDERSTOOD

Not understood, we move along saunter,
Our paths grow wider as the seasons creep,
Along the years we marvel and we wonder
Why life is life? And then we fall asleep—
Not understood.

Not understood, we gather false impressions
And hug them closer as the years go by,
Till virtues often seem to us transgressions,
And then men rise and fall and live and die—
Not understood.

Not understood—how trifles often change us,
The thoughtless sentence or the fancied slight
Destroy long years of friendship and estrange us,
And on our souls there falls a freezing blight—
Not understood.

How many cheerless, lonely hearts are aching
For lack of sympathy—ah, day by day
How many cheerless, lonely hearts are breaking,
How many noble spirits pass away—
Not understood.

Oh, God! That men could see a little clearer,
Or judge less harshly where they cannot see—
Oh, God! That men would draw a little nearer,
To one another, they’d be nearer Thee—
And understand.

OF THE PRIMITIVE ORDER

A series of articles on this subject would not be complete without discussion of the worship and work of the primitive Church, as revealed in the New Testament.

In the seventeenth chapter of John’s record of the Gospel we find the Savior’s prayer for himself and his disciples recorded. In praying for His disciples, in that instance, He sought the Father that they might all be one even as He and the Father were one. And this prayer He offered in order that the world might believe in Him, and that His disciples might be made perfect in the likeness of Christ. The Savior thereby indicated that the conversion of the world and the perfection that the world might believe in Him, and that His disciples and these are the two all-important ends for which the Church of the New Testament was afterward established. The Divine purpose was to convert sinners and perfect believers, and this was to be accomplished by preaching the Gospel as the chief work of the Church, and the divinely ordained worship to help in perfecting the Church.

Whoever will read the second chapter of the book of Acts will find both these Divine purposes, in ordaining that the Church should be established, clearly indicated. The apostle Peter summed up His discourse on that memorable occasion by these declarations: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ... Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Here is indicated the chief work of the Church in preaching the Gospel. And the remainder of the book of Acts indicates how this was done to Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles. In that book the reader will find a wholehearted faith, repentance, confession and baptism were all required of all who wished to become Christians, and that “churches of