

# The Bulletin

## Meeks Street Church of Christ

1201 Meeks St. Corinth, Ms. 38834

Phone – (662) 808-7777

Visit Our Website at:  
MeeksstreetchurchofChrist.com

**March 19, 2023**

### ***“The Difference Between Individual & Church Action” #2***

By Brian Meade

We are looking at this important subject of church action in an effort to clarify some errors that have divided brethren who formerly were in fellowship with us concerning truth. The major battleground for innovations coming into the church work and budget was college support and orphan homes. But it expanded afterward to sports, recreation, fun, food, and games being the mission of the church.



As was stated in our last article, the church cannot look to God's word for authority to do individual action; it must go outside the realm of Scripture to do things permissible in the individual realm of responsibility. To make the argument that "Individual Christians can do it, why can't the church made up of individuals do it as well" is overlooking God given collective responsibilities.

If we are honest, we can see a clear distinction in how the church functions and individual functions in such passages as Matthew 18:15-17; Acts 5:4; Romans 14:2 and 17; 1 Corinthians 7:3-5; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Colossians 3:18-22; 1 Timothy 5:10; and 1 Timothy 5:16. These are clearly in the realm of individuals working in their sphere of action outside the collective action of church responsibilities.

A debate saying used many times in debates about church doctrines and issues has been: "What proves too much, proves nothing at all!" It is stating the obvious flaw in a line of reasoning by saying it goes too far in application or practice. This lack of regard for church action being separate from individual action goes too far as well. I want to use some practical examples to help us see this clearly the problems and pitfalls of such thinking.

- 1.** An Individual may play the piano at their home, but the church cannot play the piano in worship to God (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). The Christian Church has made the argument that an individual can play religious music, and therefore the church can too. But that argument overlooks the silence of God in using instruments like David did in the Old Testament.
- 2.** An individual may be required to pay taxes to the government, but churches are tax exempt. Going further with this, someone might argue: "Since there is no difference in church and individual actions, I can be exempt from paying taxes as well." "After all, the church is made up of individuals, who are Christians, and I should not have to pay taxes because I am a Christian." Try that one with the IRS and see how far you get! I predict it would not make any difference to the government whether we are a Christian or not, we would still pay taxes.
- 3.** An individual may vote for a candidate running for an office such as Mayor, Governor, or President— but the church does not have a collective vote in the area of politics. We often will state, and rightfully so, that voting is an individual matter and not for the church to be involved in these kinds of secular affairs. Local churches are not given a collective vote for their favorite candidate! But if there is no difference in church and individual action, what would stop churches from having a collective vote in elections? What proves too much, proves nothing!
- 4.** An individual may eat a meal at home or at a restaurant, but the church cannot use its treasury to buy meals for the church to have in a social setting. This actually is prohibited by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:20-22, "Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating, each one takes his

*own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.”*

Paul’s words, “Do you not have houses to eat and drink in?”— reminds us that we are not called together for a common meal, but to take the Lord’s Supper. The main problem of the Corinthian church here was not making a separation between the secular meal and the spiritual observance of the death of Jesus.

Paul would regulate church action and separate it from the common meals of their day by saying in 1 Corinthians 11:33, *Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.* This is to eat the Lord’s supper that we are to “wait for one another” — so they could do it together, as proper.

But notice the difference Paul makes in the next verse, *“But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.”*

These kind of things should stem from the home and individual matters. Also, for just the same reason we do not add recreation, entertainment, hobbies, cake decorating, church sponsored sports teams, and all other individual actions into the church budget— and thus having the church to pay for it all.

There was a time when our liberal brethren respected this separation of individual and collective church action. Some of their leaders would even make the same argument as us on this matter. Some preached against innovations coming into the Lord’s church on such this basis.

Notice some the early writings that prove this:

1. “Building recreation rooms and providing and supervising recreational activities at the expense of the church is a departure from the simple gospel plan as revealed in the New Testament.”  
(Gospel Advocate Annual Lesson Commentary, 1951, page 229).

2. “The mission of the church is..... not to furnish entertainment.”  
(H. Leo Boles Sermon Outlines, Outline 27.).

3. “For the church to turn aside from its divine work to furnish amusement and recreation is to pervert its mission. Amusement and recreation should stem from the home rather than the church. The church like Nehemiah, has a great work to do; and it should not come down on the plains of Ono’ to amuse and entertain.....

“As the church turns its attention to amusement and recreation IT WILL BE SHORN OF ITS POWER AS SAMSON WAS WHEN HIS HAIR WAS CUT. Only as the church becomes worldly, as it pillows its head on the lap of Delilah will it want to turn from its wonted course to relatively unimportant matters.”

(B.C. Goodpasture, May 20, 1948 Gospel Advocate Editorial p. 484).

These writings shows us a vast difference in the attitude and practices of many today who would dismiss these as being “anti” and “legalistic” words.

But the men who wrote these words were among the leaders of the institutional churches of Christ! These words reflect an understanding that many have lost sight of today— the real work and mission of the church!

### **1. Evangelism- I Thessalonians 1:8.**

The church collectively practices evangelism through its preaching to the lost through the means of gospel preaching. The support for preachers

### **2. Edification- Ephesians 4:11-12.**

The church collectively *“causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”* (Ephesians 4:16). Through Bible classes and the teaching it does to build up the body of Christ.

### **3. Limited Benevolence- I Corinthians 16:1-2.**

The church collectively practices limited benevolence when such aid is needed. Why is it limited? Because God specified that the benevolence was “for the saints.”

### **4. To Worship God Together- 1 Corinthians 14:15-19; Acts 20:7.**

I believe we all understand that God calls to church to come together to worship each and every first day of the week. It is the basis of collective worship that glorifies God (Romans 15:6; Acts 4:24).

**News and Notes:** Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Sam Johnson, J F Dancer, Robbie, Sheila, and Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Brandon Briggs, Jimmy Briggs, Chad Harris, Randy Ferrell (Brandi's brother in law), Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Wayne Bivens (recovering from double by-pass) Ricky Doles, and Jamie Jones.

Danny Cottrell is doing his rehab and recovering well.  
Karen Kennemur had her procedure done last Thursday and is recovering.

**Those Who Serve:**

**Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:**

<b>Opening Prayer:</b>	Doug George
<b>Preaching:</b>	Brian Meade
<b>Sermon #1:</b>	<i>"Are You Really A Disciple Of Jesus?"</i>
<b><u>Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:</u></b>	Fred Johnson
<b>Workbook:</b>	Colossians
<b>Author:</b>	Donnie V. Rader
<b>Starting Page &amp; Question:</b>	<i>Page #13, Question #1</i>

**Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:**

<b>Announcements:</b>	Russell Briggs
<b>Opening Prayer &amp; Scripture Reading:</b>	Danny Sheffield
<b>Scripture Reading:</b>	<i>Psalm 7:9-17</i>
<b>Song Leader:</b>	Dan Cottrell
<b>Lord's Supper:</b>	Brian Meade
<b>Assisting:</b>	— —
<b>Singing Service:</b>	<i>Men of the Congregation Lead Singing</i>
<b>Invitation:</b>	Fred Johnson
<b>Closing Prayer:</b>	Blake Briggs

**Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.**

**March 22nd:**

<b>Auditorium Bible Class:</b>	Paul Busby
<b>Workbook:</b>	The Miracles Of Jesus
<b>Author:</b>	Mike Willis
<b>Starting Page &amp; Question:</b>	<i>Page #97, Question #1</i>
<b>Invitation:</b>	Paul Johnson
<b>Song Leader:</b>	Brian Meade
<b>Closing Prayer:</b>	Jerry Kennemur

**GOSPEL MEETING**

Speaker: **Billy Randolph**

Location: **Meeks Street Church of Christ**

Date: **April 16th -- 19th** (Sunday To Wednesday)

Starting Time: **7:00 PM Nightly** (Except Sunday)

# ***“Are You Really A Disciple Of Jesus?”***

Lesson Text: **John 18:15-17.**

## **I. Those Who Say “No” — And Really Mean It.**

- Some Men Are Shameless In Their Rejection Of Jesus.
  - Some Because Of The Love For Sin- **2 Timothy 3:1-4.**
  - Some Just Don't Believe In Jesus. **John 10:23-28.**
- They Are Proud Not To Be A “Jesus Follower.” **2 Peter 3:3-4.**
- They Think They Are Less Guilty If They Freely Admit It.

## **II. Those Who Say “Yes” — When They Should Say No.**

- **John 9:26-29.**
- But Were They Really Moses' Disciples? **John 5:45-47.**
  - Did They Really Follow Moses' Teachings? **Deuteronomy 18:18-19.**
  - **Mark 7:7-13.** Why Jesus said **Matthew 23:15**
- Denominations That Teach Different Doctrines Than Christ.
  - **Acts 20:28-31.** “...draw away the disciples after themselves.”
  - Can Denominations Make Up Their Own Way, And Still Be Christ's Disciples?
  - If Their Doctrines Are Not What Christ Teaches, How Can They Claim Jesus?
  - If Men Follow Luther, Calvin, Joseph Smith, The Pope, Or Alexander Campbell...
  - They Will Quote From These Men And Use Words As Their Authority.
  - If Men Teach Differently Than Jesus On Unity, Salvation, and The Church, Are They Really His Disciples? **John 17:20-23; Mark 16:15-16; Ephesians 4:4.**
- Those Only Pretending To Follow Christ.
  - Matthew 23:25-26; 2 Cor. 11:26; Gal. 2:4.**
- Those Who Rarely Attend Services To Study, Worship, & Serve Christ.
  - What If Stay Home When We Could Be With The Saints? **Hebrews 10:25.**

## **III. Those Who Say “No” — When They Should Say Yes.**

- Like Peter Said “No!” **John 18:17. Mark 14:27-31.**
- Like Some Of The Jews- **John 12:42-43.**
- Fear, Praise of Men, Peer Pressure, Conforming To The World- **Romans 12:1-2.**
- Those Turn Back On Christ- **Luke 9:62; 2 Timothy 4:10.**

## **IV. Those Who Say “Yes” — And Rightly So.**

- Those Who Imitate Jesus- **Luke 6:40; Ephesians 4:13.**
- Who Have Fervent Love For The Brethren- **John 13:34-35.**
- Those Who Continue In Jesus' Words- **John 8:31-32.**
- Those Who Make The Necessary Sacrifices- **Luke 14:27.**
- Those Who Bear Much Fruit- **John 15:8.**