

Churches Or Individuals?

Through the years, brethren caught up in institutional liberalism have claimed that church support of orphan homes is authorized by Galatians 6:10 and James 1:27. However, when these texts are examined, it is apparent both apply to individuals, not churches.

Read Galatians 6:1-10. In verse six he is addressing the duty of individuals to teachers of the word. He is not discussing church support of teachers. Too, the context shows individuals are on Paul's mind: "man" (1), "himself" & "he" (3), "one," "his," "he" & "himself" (4), "each one" & "his" (5), "man" & "he" (7), "he" & "his" (8). When Paul says, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith," he is speaking of all of us individually doing good. The scriptures must be twisted to get the church in Galatians 6:10.

Read James 1:23-27. Again, notice the context: "anyone," "he" & "his" (23), "he" (24), "he" & "one" (25), "he," "his," "his own heart" & "one's" (26), "oneself" (27). Individuals, not congregations, are the focus of Paul's admonition. Besides, we wonder how many churches have a "tongue" (26)? For the church to be in James 1:27, it must be forced in.

Are we against the poor, widows or orphans? No! The Bible clearly teaches the duty of Christians in helping those less fortunate (cf. Matthew 25:31-46). We are against the church getting involved in building, maintaining or supporting orphan homes, because the Bible does not authorize it.

The church is not a "Salvation Army" organization. It is the "pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). It is a spiritual organization with the primary duty is to teach the gospel to saint and sinner (John 18:36; 1 Thessalonians 1:7-9). Benevolence is only authorized for saints in a time of need (2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 9:1-2). Let us respect God's will in these matters.

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