

The Difference Ephesians 4:11-13

Basically four things separate us from "liberal" congregations

Unlimited Benevolence - Church Cooperation

Fellowship Halls - Entertainment

Of these, two have been a dividing factor for more than half a century

Unlimited Benevolence-Church Cooperation

They have a common element - External Institutions

In most congregations today these two are so intertwined as to make them fall or stand together.

Unlimited Benevolence

Arises from perverting passages that give instruction to individual Christians to include church responsibility

James 1:27; Galatians 6:10

As context has shown, both passages deal with individual action

Paul's instruction to Timothy helps us see this distinction

1Timothy 5:3-16

Church Cooperation

In most modern congregations benevolence is also perverted by church cooperation and external institutions

Place burden of helping all upon church, problem overwhelming for any individual group, no matter the size.

Besides, caring for children takes a great deal of time and effort.

Thus Orphan's Home

Poor little children are a very emotional draw

Once external organization formed needed multiple congregations to support

A few short years later, "christian" colleges came calling

Orphan Home provides care - we provide instruction

If can support one, can support the other

Alongside of these the need to reach the "entire" world suggested sponsoring church arrangement

Congregations turning over "nonexistent" orphan responsibility to separate organization, "nonexistent" teaching responsibility to separate organization, and "nonexistent" mission responsibility to another congregation.

Who is in control of this small, or large, group's responsibilities?

There is no passage that says the church is responsible for education

Ephesians 6:4; 2Timothy 1:5; 3:10-17

There is no passage which demonstrates that we should cooperate with any organization outside this local assembly of Christians.

Each group did its own work. Each group was focused on teaching the Gospel. Any example of benevolence by the local church was decided by and acted upon directly by that local church.

1Corinthians 8:1-15

Such digressions pervert the purpose and organization of the local church

Ephesians 4:11-13; 1Timothy 3:14-15

Elders-Deacons-Saints-Preachers-Teachers -- All with purpose of equipping saints to spread the Gospel

Fellowship and Entertainment

The last two of our differences are simply an expansion of the errors already accepted.

Once local group has taken on the work of dealing with the social ills of all mankind and aligned itself with outside organization for benevolence and teaching, they are just a step away from including any others who are focused on the same goals.

If filling bellies can be justified because it might give an opportunity to teach the word, then certainly one can be persuaded that swapping pulpits with a denominational group would offer opportunity to spread the word.

Once one's concern has been focused on helping with physical needs rather than spiritual, kitchens, gymnasiums and entertainment cannot be far behind.

Preach The Word

The Church of Our Lord has been given one responsibility - help individual Christians proclaim the Gospel!

Some individuals might need physical assistance from time to time. Some groups might be overwhelmed by need due to disaster or persecution.

God has given examples for filling such needs using His Plan and Organization!

We must remember that the Church is to help each of us in our duty to spread the Gospel!

Where is our authority for anything more????