



Is The Church of CHRIST A Biblical Church?

**The
Principle of
Submission**

*“Serving God By Faith”
The NT Pattern
For Benevolence*

Is The Church of CHRIST A Biblical Church?

THEREFORE, JUST AS THE CHURCH IS SUBJECT TO CHRIST,... EPH 5:24

WALKING BY FAITH

- ◆ Only Two Possible Sources For All We Believe, Teach & Practice - Heaven? or Men? - Mat 21:25-26
- ◆ God's SILENCE MUST Be Respected - (Faith comes by what God says, not by what He hasn't said) - Rom 10:17
- ◆ Walking by faith means walking by what God has said - 2 Cor. 5:7; 1 Cor. 4:6; Gal. 1:6-9



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WALKING BY FAITH

ATTITUDES
REGARDING
THE NEED
FOR
SCRIPTURAL
AUTHORITY

- ◆ “We do many things for which we have no authority.” – Col 3:17; 2 John 9
- ◆ “Details do not matter.” – Heb 8:5; Lev 10:1,2; Num. 20:11;
- ◆ “We have to change with the times.” – Jude 3,4; Gal 1:6-9
- ◆ “If it is not directly forbidden then it must be o.k.” – Lev. 10:1,2; Num. 20:11; Prov 30:6; Rev 22:18,19
- ◆ We Must Have A “Thus saith the Lord?” – Jer 6:16; Col 3:17; 1 Peter 4:11; 2 Cor 5:7

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WALKING BY FAITH

THE COMPREHENSIVE NATURE OF THE NT SCRIPTURES

- ◆ Understandable – Eph 3:3-5
- ◆ Sufficiently Instructs –
2 Tim 3:16,17
- ◆ Cannot Be Transgressed –
2 Jn 9
- ◆ The totality of information revealed regarding any act of righteousness forms the pattern for that act – 2 Tim 1:13; 3:16,17; 2 Pet 1:3;



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THE N.T. PATTERN FOR THE

♦ ORGANIZATION OF A LOCAL CHURCH

- * Christ the head
- * Elders (bishops, pastors)
- * Deacons to serve
- * Evangelist, teachers & saints

♦ WORSHIP OF A LOCAL CHURCH

- * The Lord's Supper
- * Giving To The Lord's Work
- * Teaching the scriptures
- * Praying together
- * Music = Singing



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THE N.T. PATTERN FOR THE **Work of A Local Church**



- ♦ **Self-Edification**, i.e. to build up and strengthen itself (Acts 20:28, 32; Col 2:6, 7).
- ♦ **Evangelism** - Preach the gospel to the lost (Mat 28:18-20).
- ♦ **Benevolence** – Providing the needs of destitute Christians (Acts 6:1-4)

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THE N.T. PATTERN FOR THE **Work of A Local Church**



- ◆ We ARE NOT free to involve the church in whatever work we deem suitable!
- ◆ There is a distinction to be made between the church "universal" and the church "local."
- ◆ The work of the local church can be gleaned in some respects from what is revealed about its organization and worship.

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THE N.T. PATTERN FOR THE **Work of A Local Church**



- ◆ The Lord equipped local churches to do the work that He has given them - Eph 4:11-16
- ◆ If more organization is needed to carry out a work than is found in the NT – then it should be obvious that such a work is NOT a work of the church – (*whether establishing other institutions or reorganizing the local church*)

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THE N.T. PATTERN FOR THE **Work of A Local Church**

BENEVOLENCE – DEFINITIONS



- ♦ **Benevolence** – The provision of assistance, help or aide such as food, clothing, shelter & medical care for the relief of material needs for others.
- ♦ **The English term “benevolence”** –
Appears only once in the KJV - 1 Cor 7:3
- The Greek word rendered benevolence in the KJV in 1 Cor 7:3 appears only one other time in Eph. 6:7 - “good will”

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N.T. PATTERN FOR THE WORK OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Benevolence

WHAT WE FIND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

ACT OF FELLOWSHIP

2 Corinthians 8:4
(NKJV)

⁴ imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

- ◆ A local church caring for those of its own number - (Acts 2:44-46; 4:32-37).
- ◆ A local church Caring for its own widows – (Acts 6:1-8; 1 Tim 5:3-16).
- ◆ The church in Antioch sent to the brethren in Judea – (Acts 11:27-30).
- ◆ The churches in Macedonia, Achaia, and Galatia sent to the church at Jerusalem – (1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor 8:1-5; 9:1,2).

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N.T. PATTERN FOR THE WORK OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Benevolence

THE LOCAL CHURCH IS TO ENGAGE IN “BENEVOLENT” WORK



**A local
church caring
for those of
its own
NUMBER:**

Acts 4:32-37

- ◆ Money was laid at the apostles feet – thus a common treasury.
- ◆ Distribution was made according to the need among the believers.
- ◆ None of them lacked so the effort was successful under the organization provided.

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Acts 6:1-8; I Tim. 5:3-16

- ◆ There was a daily ministration – but some were being neglected.
- ◆ The church was instructed to “seek out seven men to be appointed over this business;”
- ◆ Those taken into the number [to be cared for by the church] had to meet certain conditions.



A local church caring for those of its own WIDOWS:

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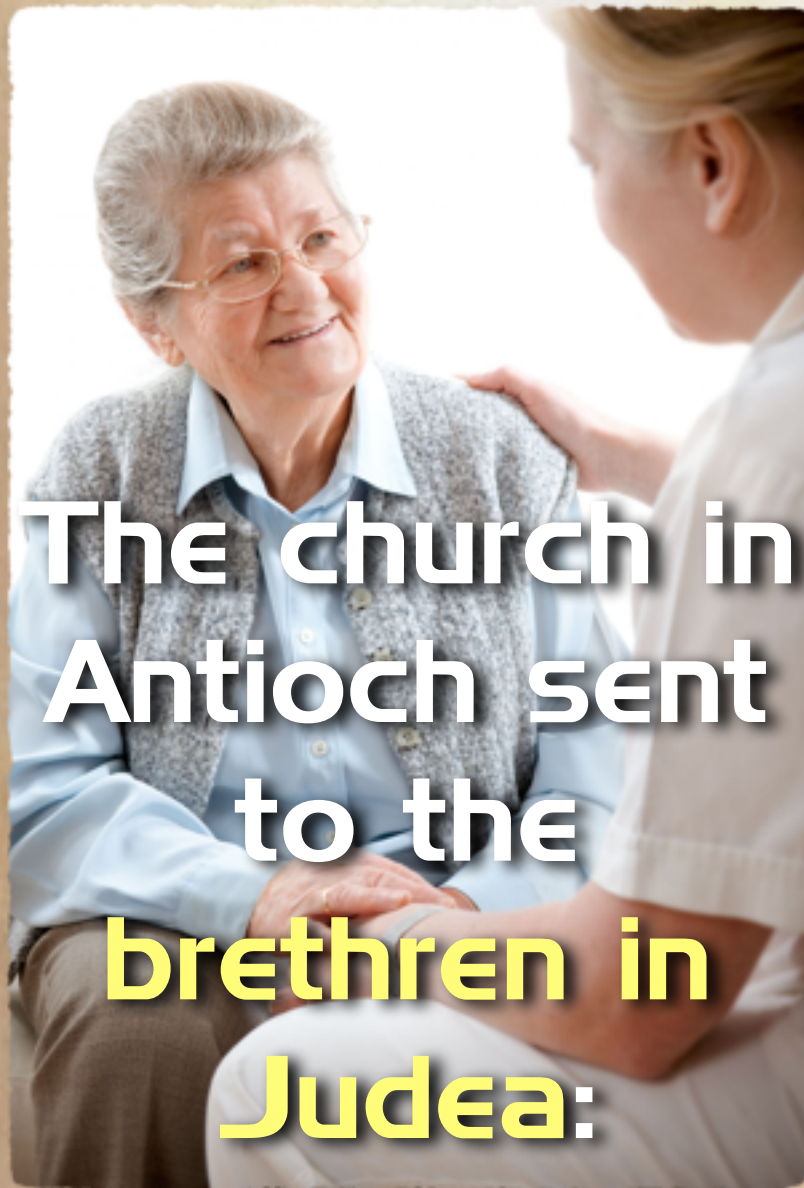
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Benevolence

THE LOCAL CHURCH IS TO ENGAGE IN “BENEVOLENT” WORK

Acts 11:27-30

- ◆ Each gave according to their ability
- ◆ For the purpose of relieving BRETHREN in Judea – (Jerusalem – Bethany – Joppa – Lydda – Emmaus)
- ◆ This THEY did, sending it by Paul and Barnabas,
- ◆ To the elders – (of each local church) – (Acts 14:23; 1 Peter 5:2)



The church in Antioch sent to the brethren in Judea:

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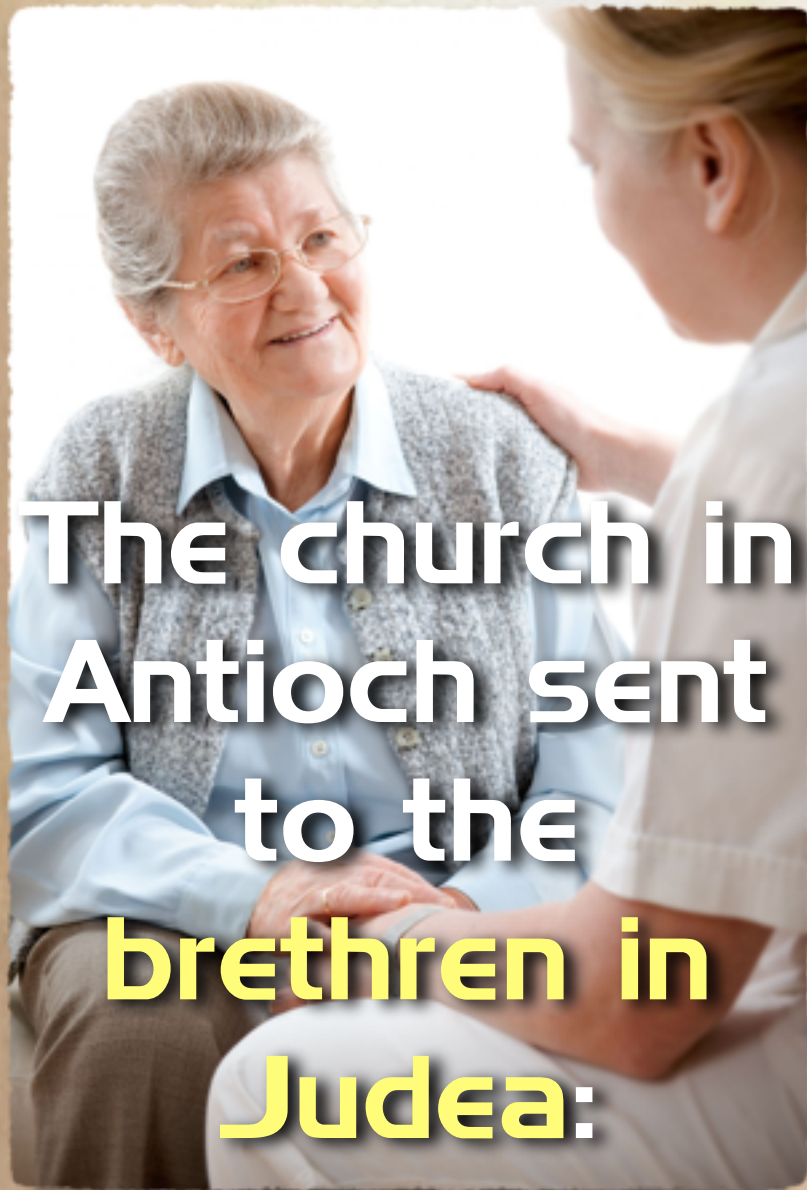
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1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8:1-5; 9:1,2

- ◆ The Jerusalem church had members in need of temporal things, which she was unable to supply.
- ◆ Paul commanded these churches to send to Jerusalem that there be equality – (i.e. they all be relieved of being without necessities).
- ◆ The sending churches sent their gifts to the needy church. [12 to 14 years after Acts 11:27-30]



**The churches
in Macedonia,
Achaia, and
Galatia sent to
the church at
JERUSALEM.**

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Ac 4:32-37; 6:1-8; 1 Tim. 5:3-16



The NT Way:

Local Church
Provided



Place
Provisions
Personnel

NOT THIS

Local Church



Benevolent
Society



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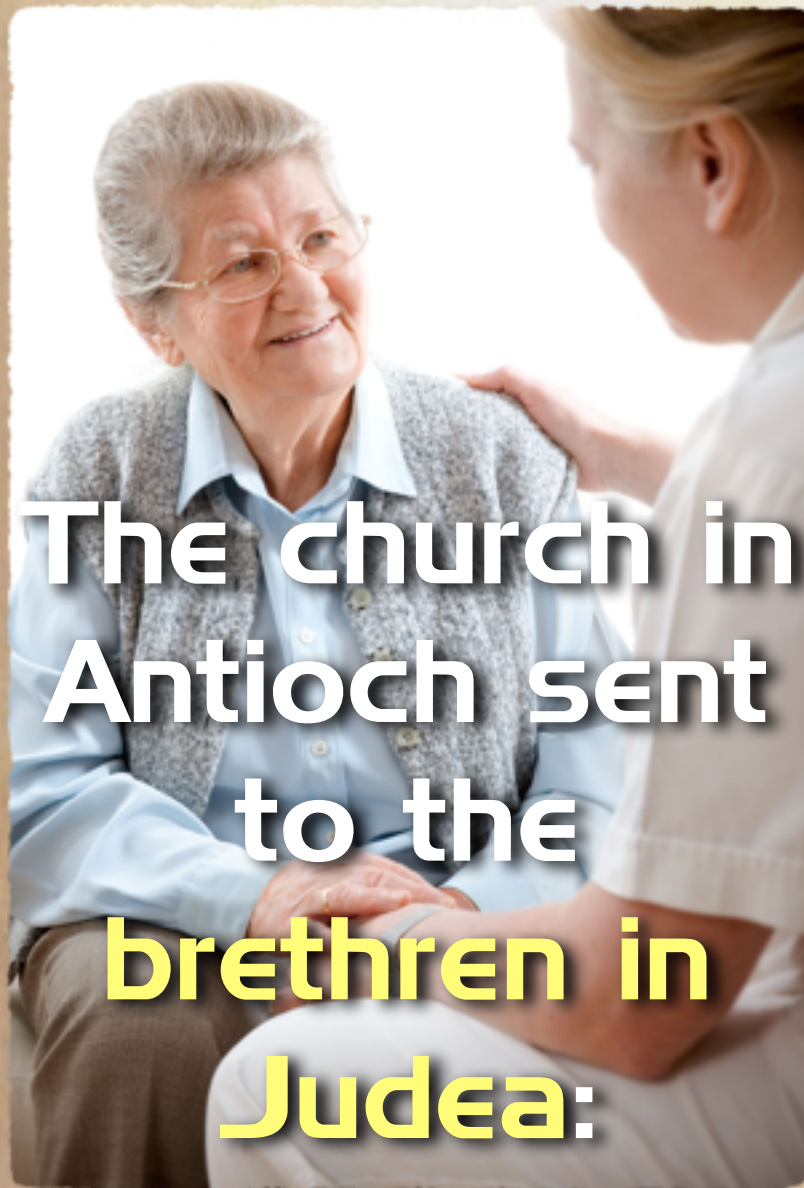
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N.T. PATTERN FOR THE WORK OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

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THE LOCAL CHURCH IS TO ENGAGE IN "BENEVOLENT" WORK

Acts 11:27-30



The NT Way:

church in Antioch

Jerusalem
Bethany
Joppa
Lydda
Emmaus

NOT THIS

church in Antioch

church in Jerusalem

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1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8:1-5; 9:1,2

The NT Way:

NOT THIS

Thessalonica
Philippi
Berea
Corinth
Athens
Lystra
Derbe
Iconium



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Thessalonica
Philippi
Berea
Athens
Lystra
Derbe
Iconium



The churches
in Macedonia,
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the church at
JERUSALEM.

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N.T. PATTERN FOR THE WORK OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

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LIMITED TO NEEDY SAINTS

ACT OF FELLOWSHIP

2 Corinthians 8:4
(NKJV)

⁴ imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

- ◆ All that believed – Acts 2:44,45
- ◆ Them that believed – Acts 4:32-35
- ◆ The disciples – Acts 6:1
- ◆ Relief unto the brethren – Acts 11:29
- ◆ Unto the saints – Rom. 15:25
- ◆ For the poor saints – Rom. 15:26
- ◆ Accepted of the saints – Rom. 15:31
- ◆ Collection for the saints - 1 Cor. 16:1
- ◆ Ministering to the saints – 2 Cor. 8:4
- ◆ Supplied need of the saints – 2 Cor. 9:1,12
- ◆ Relieve the widows indeed – 1 Tim 5:16

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N.T. PATTERN FOR THE WORK OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Benevolence

BIBLICAL PATTERN

Arrangement



Direct

Condition



From Ability to Need

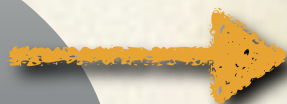
Purpose



Alleviate Need

Phili 4:15-17; 2 Cor 11:8; Acts 11:27-30

church in
Little Rock



**GOSPEL
PREACHERS**



churches
In Other
Places



Needy Saints



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N.T. PATTERN FOR THE WORK OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Benevolence

ANSWERING ARGUMENTS USED TO ADVOCATE GENERAL BENEVOLENCE

WHAT ABOUT JAMES 1:27 – (CONGREGATIONAL OR INDIVIDUAL?)

James 1:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

- ◆ [23] For if anyone is a hearer
- ◆ [24] for he observes himself,
- ◆ [25] But he who looks . . . this one will be blessed in what he does.
- ◆ [26] If anyone among you thinks he is religious, . . . deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless.
- ◆ [27] . . . to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

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WHAT ABOUT JAMES 1:27 – (CONGREGATIONAL OR INDIVIDUAL?)



(James 1:27 assigns Christians the obligation of caring for “orphans and widows in their trouble.” Brethren often want to shift their responsibilities. Some take the care of these helpless ones away from the individual and burden the church with them. And then the church sends a pittance off to a distant institution where they are shipped. Brethren congratulate themselves on their benevolence, castigate those who personally care for widows and orphans as “anti-orphan,” and the helpless widows and orphans languish in institutionalized care.) Keith Sharp

COMMAND	TEXT	DOES NOT AUTHORIZE
"Visit the fatherless"	James 1:27	Does not Authorize Church orphanages
"Visit the widows"	James 1:27	Does not Authorize Church widowages
"Feed the hungry"	Mt. 25:35,36	Does not Authorize Church restaurants
"Visit the sick"	Mt. 25:35,36	Does not Authorize Church hospitals
"Visit the prisoner"	Mt. 25:35,36	Does not Authorize Church jails
"Clothe the naked"	Mt. 25:35,36	Does not Authorize Church clothing stores
"Entertain strangers"	Heb. 13:2	Does not Authorize Church hotels

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ANSWERING ARGUMENTS USED TO ADVOCATE GENERAL BENEVOLENCE

WHAT ABOUT GALATIANS 6:10 – (CONGREGATIONAL OR INDIVIDUAL?)

Galatians 6:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

- ◆ [1] Brethren, if a man . . . you who are spiritual restore such a one . . . considering yourself
- ◆ [2] Bear one another's burdens,
- ◆ [3] For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.
- ◆ [4] But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone,

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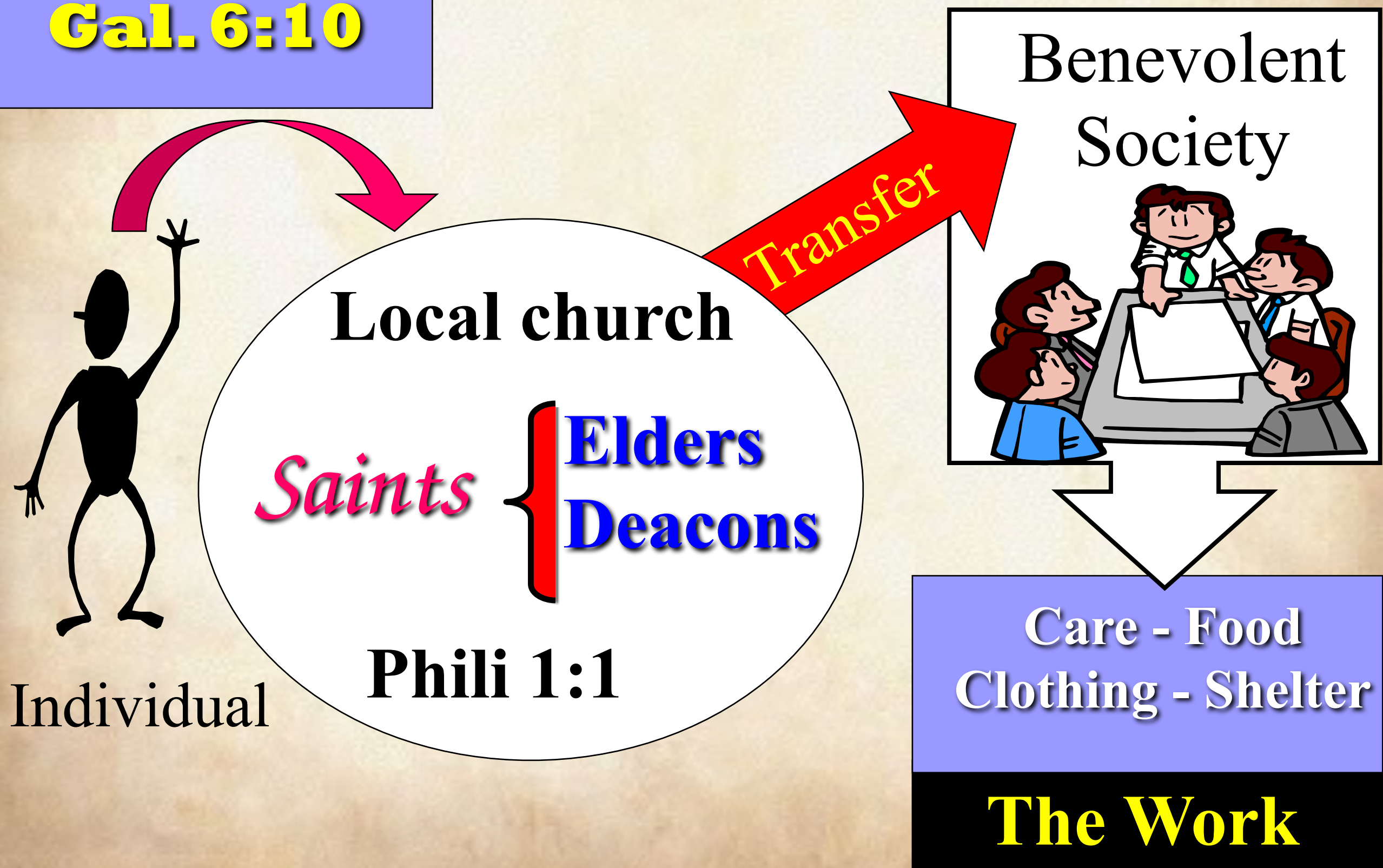
Galatians 6:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

- ◆ [5] For each one shall bear his own load.
- ◆ [6] Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.
- ◆ [7] . . . whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.
- ◆ [9] And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

James 1:27
Gal. 6:10

Shifting Responsibility



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ANSWERING ARGUMENTS USED TO ADVOCATE GENERAL BENEVOLENCE

WHAT ABOUT 2 COR. 9:13 – (ALL CHRISTIANS OR ALL PEOPLE?)

2 Corinthians 9:13 (NKJV)

¹³ while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men,

- ◆ [8:4] . . . the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.
- ◆ [8:14] . . . Supply for their lack – may be equality
- ◆ [9:1] Now concerning the ministering to the saints,
- ◆ [9:12] For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God,

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**Lenski, The Interpretation of I & II
Corinthians 9:13, pp. 1185-1186**

“The saints are seen glorifying God ‘also for the single-mindedness of (your) fellowship with them and with all,’ i.e., for your spiritual fellowship of the Corinthians which extends not only to these saints, who are being helped at present, but to all God’s saints, whether they are helped or not.”

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**Meyer, Commentary on II Corinthians,
pp. 610-11**

“The second reason refers to the persons, namely, to them, the receivers themselves, and all Christians in general.”

Lard’s Quarterly, Oct. 1864, p. 66

“...speaking of the same thing in the thirteenth verse, as above, he styles it ‘their contribution for them’ (the poor saints in Jerusalem,) ‘and for all other poor saints.’”

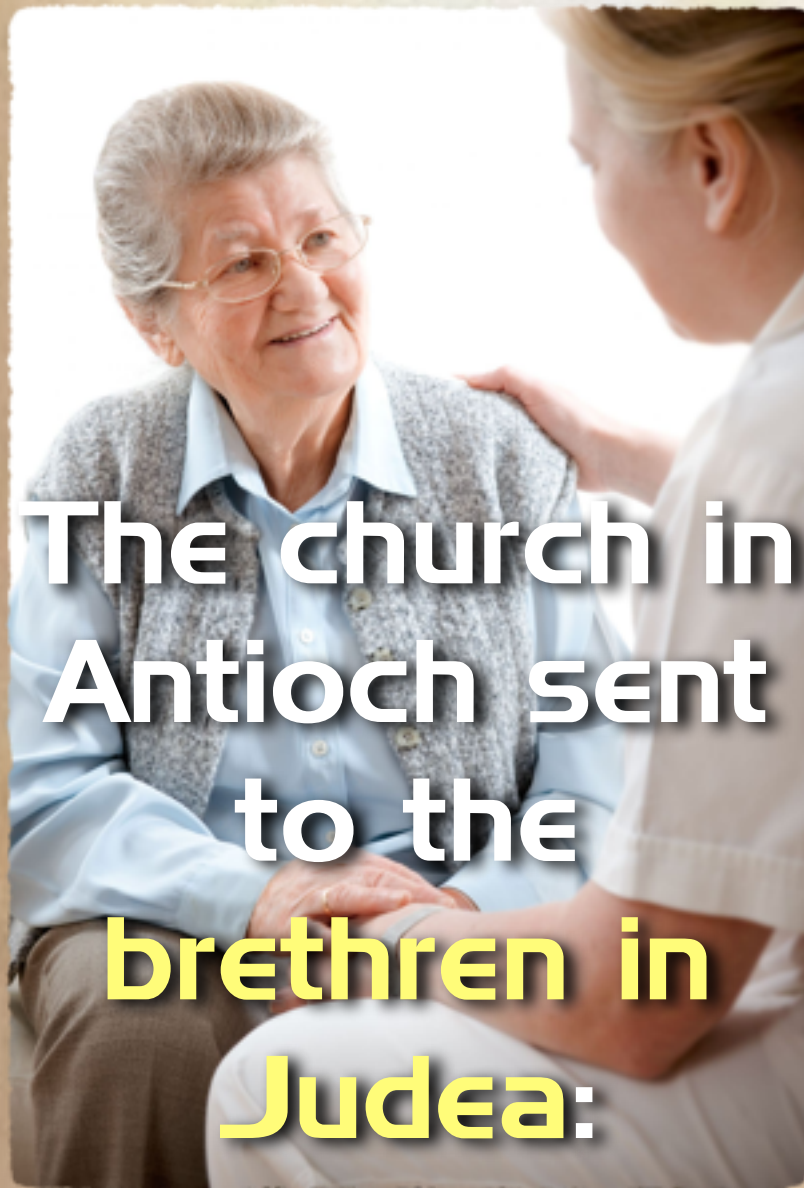
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Benevolence

THE LOCAL CHURCH IS TO ENGAGE IN “BENEVOLENT” WORK



**The church in
Antioch sent
to the
brethren in
Judea:**

- ◆ The church should do its own work within the organizational structure found in the NT.
- ◆ The distinction between the church & individual
- ◆ The need for authority – Establishing the pattern –
- ◆ The NT church engaged in helping to relieve needy saints in their time of need –
- ◆ The work of the church in benevolence is limited -

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THE N.T. PATTERN FOR THE **Work of A Local Church**



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- ♦ **Evangelism** - Preach the gospel to the lost (Mat 28:18-20).
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THE N.T. PATTERN FOR THE
Work of A Local Church

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ACTS 4:32-37 (NKJV)

³² Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. ³³ And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.



ACTS 4:32-37 (NKJV)

³⁴ Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, ³⁵ and laid *them* at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.



ACTS 4:32-37 (NKJV)

³⁶ And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, ³⁷ having land, sold *it*, and brought the money and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.



