THE DIVINE PATTERN

"As Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle; for See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount." Heb. 8:5. A pattern is an exclusive way of doing a thing, as in the Bible there are commands given in a general sense (which includes) and also some things Specifically stated (which excludes). For example, God told Moses just exactly how to build the tabernacle, and that excludes all other ways of building it. For another example, notice Gen. 6:14-16; God commanded Noah to build an ark. He told him just how long to build it, (450 feet) how wide (75 feet) and how high (45 feet), a window in the top, and to pitch it with pitch inside and out.

The kind of wood God specified was gopher wood, and that excludes all other kinds of wood. God did not have to say, "don't you put Walnut, oak, hickory etc., for when he specified gopher wood, that excludes all other kinds of wood. All these things has to do with literal things in God's dealing with people of old.

Now to Spiritual patterns of work and worship of the CHURCH OF CHRIST.

THE TIME OF WORSHIP (break bread).

The disciples came together to break bread on the Ist. day of the week, Acts 20:7. Here we have a certain day specified; first day of the week, (Sunday) which excludes all other days of the week, in which to break bread.

KIND OF MUSIC SPECIFIED

We notice that "singing" Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19; I Cor. 14:15. Since singing was specified, it excludes all other kinds of music, such as instruments of music, the piano, horn, etc. Just as the wood in the ark was specified as gopher wood, excludes all other kinds of wood. So singing is specified, and excludes all other kinds of music.

EXAMPLE OF TEACHING

We have example of teaching the Scriptures "public", and "private", as Paul said, "And how I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house." Acts 20:20.

Concerning public teaching, Paul has this to say about the teachers teaching in an assembly of the church; "For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." I Cor. 14:31. This public teaching is limited to men, and that one at a time, that all may learn. This teaching was done in one assembly: they did not divide into classes to teach those that was to be taught. Sunday School was unknown to the Apostles in the early church. Sunday School had its origin in England about 1780 by a newspaper editor by the name of Robert Raikes.

Women were forbidden to teach in an assembly. "Let your women keep silence in the churches: (assemblies) for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law". I Cor. 14:34. Also Paul to Timothy; "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence". I Tim. 2:11-12. Where is woman not to teach? Ans., In the assembly. Where is woman not to usurp authority over man? Ans. Nowhere, public or private. This is the pattern for teachers teaching in public.

Pattern for the communion or Lord's Supper, consists of One Loaf (bread), and One Cup of the fruit of the vine, or the juice of the grape. This is the number and kind of literal elements to be used. Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22: 17-20; I Cor. 10:16; I Cor. 11:23-26. We notice that these elements were prepared before they were feasted on. Jesus gave us a perfect example and pattern in the institution, the night He was betrayed, as recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke. In the preparation of the elements: First, "Jesus took bread (a loaf of bread), and blessed it, (gave thanks) brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said; Take, eat; this is my body." Jesus was the one that served at the table. He prepared the loaf to be his body; then after Jesus took, gave thanks, and broke the loaf, he said it was his body. The breaking of the loaf is a qualifying act performed

only by the one that serves at the table. When Jesus broke the loaf, it was not for the purpose to get a part to eat, nor was it for the purpose for the disciples to get their part to eat. The loaf that Jesus took and gave thanks, and broke, he gave all of it to the disciples. Notice Goodspeed's Translation of Matt. 26:26; "As they were eating, Jesus took a loaf and blessed it, and he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples." So this shows that Jesus gave all the loaf to his disciples. Yes, but one will ask; "If Jesus broke the loaf into two or more pieces, how can it be said he gave IT to them, or how can pieces be referred to as IT?" Answer. If a calf gets run over by a railroad train and got cut into, it would still be IT, the calf, though in pieces. So also the loaf when broken into pieces, it is still IT the loaf. I think this takes care of that.

So then comes the question; under what command do we get our part to eat? Answer: after Jesus had broke the bread, he told the disciples to take, eat. Then the command "Take" which is generic, simply not stating just how each was to get their part; but whatever was necessary for the disciples to get a part of the broken loaf, was included in the command "Take".

Next we notice, Jesus took the cup. "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it" Matt. 26:27. Jesus simply took one cup, not two, nor a hundred. This cup contained of the fruit of the vine, or the juice of the grape. The disciples were commanded to all drink of it, or out of it. Emphatic Diaglott Greek-English New Testament renders Matt. 26:27 as follows: "Then taking a cup, and giving thanks, he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink all of you out of it". Can language be plainer than this? Yes, says one; Luke says to divide it among yourselves, and didn't say how to divide it. Answer: In Matthew it says, "Drink all of you out of it"; and Mark gives it in the past tense saying; "And they all drank out of it". Then we can clearly see that the cup was divided by each disciple drinking of, or from IT. To divide the cup, is to divide what the cup contains, or its contents. For an assembly to use more than one cup to contain the drink element, is a departure from the

example and pattern that Jesus left for us to follow

DRINK ELEMENT

Some contend that the drink element must be strong grape wine. But let us notice Isa. 65:8: "Thus saith the Lord, as the new wine is found in the cluster, and saith, "Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it". Notice Paul to the Corinthians ians; "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" I Cor. 10:16. Also Matthew 26:29; "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine....." Then what do we have for the drink element? I. Isaiah says, blessing in the cluster of grapes. 2. Paul says "cup of blessing". 3. Matthew says, "Of the fruit of the vine"; simply the juice of the grape. Did you ever see any kind of vine that produced an alcoholic drink?

CHURCH FINANCES

As each congregation must have its own treasury to finance itself and other needs; the question is, how are funds to be raised? Notice I Cor. 16:2; "Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him...." This is the only place mentioned in the New Testament, when, (First day of the week), and how, (By each giving as prospered). Therefore this is the Pattern for raising finances for the work of the church, therefore excludes all other ways, such as pie suppers, ice cream suppers, etc.

THE AUTONOMY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

"Autonomy" means self-government. God gave to the congregation the right of self-government. Each local church government depends in its actual application upon two other scriptural principles characteristic of each church of Christ. The principle of the independence of each church and the equality of all the churches of Christ.

CHRIST GAVE HIS CHURCH A CONGREGATIONAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT

I. "Elders in every church", Acts 14:23. These elders were within the local church and ruled over its affairs in harmony with the will of Christ, Phil. 1:1; Acts 20:28;

I Pet. 5:1-4. 2. These elders, bishops or pastors over each local church had jurisdiction only over the flock "among them" or over which they had been made "bishops". They could extend it no further by divine authority. Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:2. 3. This divine arrangement specified by the authority of Christ through his apostles, excluded all other organizations of forms of government for directing or overseeing the affairs of the churches of Christ. They had nothing larger than the local church and nothing smaller than the local church. Some may argue that we cannot have elders today, saying that was done away when Spiritual gifts ceased. But will you notice that all the congregations have some that are leaders or overseers, and still each church is still independent, equal, and autonomous. When any church or group of men exercises more authority, or power than the local church possesses, is certainly wrong.

CHURCH COOPERATION

There seems to be much confusion and division about church cooperation, as well as many other subjects, which only a careful study of the Scriptures we can be sure what the truth is. First of all, the question may arise, is there such a thing as church cooperation taught in the New Testament? My answer to this is, Yes, certainly so. The early churches cooperated in supporting the preaching of the gospel. Churches cooperated in helping the needy saints. But did the churches pool their funds together in a brotherhood pool or treasury, to be kept there till the need arose to send to a preacher or help some needy church? Absolutely not. But there is a pattern for New Testament church cooperation. The New Testament picture of church cooperation is plain and simple. "Each church, under its own elders or leaders, by the activity and sacrifice of its own resources, extends itself to its full limit in preaching the gospel and caring for the needy. If one congregation is in distress or need, all other congregations knowing of the need, and having ability to help, sends relief to the needy church." When the needs of that church is supplied, contributions from other churches cease or is stopped!

And for benevolent work, may I cite you to Acts 11:29-30. During a famine . in Judea, the disciples at Antioch

sent relief to the brethren which dwelt there. I want you to notice; They sent it directly to the elders of the churches, by the hands of their messengers, Barnabas and Saul. Notice 2 Cor. 8:19-23; I Cor. 16:3. These churches chose and approved their messengers. The messengers are comparable with our modern mail service today; letters were sent then by messengers. See also 2 Cor. 8:13-14; 2 Cor. 9:5; a promised bounty. Weymouth Translation renders 2 Cor. 9:5, "I have thought it necessary therefore to request these to brethren to visit you first, and to make sure beforehand that your promised benefaction may be ready as a benefaction, and not as something extorted from you.". Paul says, "But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints". Rom. 15:25. Yes, but says one, "It didn't say how he did the ministering". No, it did not say in Romans 15:25 how he did it, but it does say how it was done in Acts 11:29-30. With this kind of reasoning and logic, I could prove that we could have the Lord's supper any day in the week. How? I Cor. 11:26 Paul says, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come".

Yes, but he did not say how often, so any day will do. Is this true? Certainly not. Lets go to Acts 20:7 for the pattern, which named the first day of the week, and that excludes all other days.

Now how did Paul minister to the saints? Lets go to the pattern, Acts 11:29-30, a messenger giving it to the elders. This excludes all other ways. Some brethren say that Luke says to divide the cup, but didn't say how. No, but Mark did, by each drinking out of it, or from it.

CHURCH COOPERATION IN EVANGELISM

Can churches cooperate in supporting preachers preaching the gospel? Yes, the Bible teaches they did. Example: "I have robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service". 2 Cor. 11:8-9. Here we have more than one church supporting Paul in his preaching to the Corinthians, which certainly shows church cooperation. Another example: Paul to the Philippians, "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity". Phil. 4:15-16. Their messenger was Epaphroditus. Notice Phil. 2:25; "Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labor, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants". So here is the divine pattern for churches supporting preachers in preaching the gospel. The funds were always sent directly from the giver to

the receivef, or the preacher. And to those who believe that the funds may be placed in a brotherhood pool to be kept there till a need to spend it. These brethren will all tell you that to send direct, is Scriptural, but they say their way is also right. Now since all agree that to send direct, that is, each congregation collect its own funds and dispurse to the preacher, is scriptural; now brethren isn't this the way upon which we can be united?; something safe?; and beyond question as Scriptural, and is the only Divine Pattern, which excludes all other ways? This way is specified. Remember Gopher wood in the Ark?

But for churches to pool their resources to support preachers is not found in the New Testament. Scripture, please! As the "Gospel Meetings Plan" set forth in the COURIER by Bro. Roy Snoderly, and other brethren, and said to be by leaders in four different states, is said to have been dropped because some objected to it. Some say it has not been dropped, and some are still advocating it.

None of these brethren have told me that they have dropped it, neither has it been stated in the COURIER that it has been dropped. If the brethren have dropped it; would not they want us that oppose it, to know about it? And may I state again, 2 Cor. II:8-9; Phil. 4:I5-I6? Here we have congregations acting independent, equal, and autonomous, (self governing) making up their own collection and sending it directly to Paul by messengers of their own choice, or who they approved. I Cor. I6:3; Phil. 2:25. There is Scripture for sending by others to others; but there is no Scripture for sending to others, to send to others.

Do we need brethren in the field preaching? Yes. There is a grave need for willing and capable preachers out in the field, those who are not afraid to preach the whole truth. Is lack of money the reason why preachers are not sent? I am persuaded that the trouble is the lack of cooperation, and also divisions; many churches not getting behind many of the preachers, because they can't go along with everything they teach and practice. Brethren, is not this the truth?

I am persuaded the trouble on church cooperation, as brethren "pooling resources" etc., is one of the mistakes of the Roman Catholic Church, and other religious bodies. They are trying to function in a universal sense. I believe the word "church", is used in at least four different senses, Universal, Local, Geographically, and the most restricted sense, Assembly. We would like to notice the universal sense. It is a relationship in Christ, Matt. I6:I8; Eph. 5:22-33. It has no organization, no geographical boundries. It has no meeting place on earth. It has no mission, no function; it is not a functional body. The church universal is a kingdom of citizens, Eph. 2:I9; a family of

children, Rom. 8:14-17; A building of stones, I Pet. 2:5; A body of members, I Cor. 12:12; A vine with branches, John 15:1-6. This church is made up of individuals who are in Christ. It has no universal overseers; It has no universal treasury; It has no collective action.

The church universal exists in heaven and on earth, Eph. 3:15; The church local is limited to the earth, Phil. 1:1. The Lord adds to the universal church, Acts 2:47. But faithful Christians may join the local church, Acts 9:26. We enter the universal church by baptism, I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27. But we are accepted into the local church by consent and agreement, 2 John 10. The universal church has but one Shepherd, Matt. 23:8; but the local church has lesser Shepherds, I Pet. 5:1-2. Against the universal church Satan cannot prevail, Matt. 16:18, either against its building or its eternal existence; but against the local congregation he may prevail, Rev. 2:5.

The Universal church has to do with the relationship of saints with God; the local church has to do with the relationship of saints with saints.

I hope each one will give these things some study; and may we all come to a better understanding of what the Lord would have us do; as we all must give an account of how we treat his word, for we will all be judged by it.

May the Lord bless us all, is my prayers.

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A Divine Example of Evangelism.
"Other Churches".....2 Cor. 11:8.

