

Denominational Churches of Christ

by Bill Crews

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other churches) method of cooperation among congregations. (3) The cry that we don't have to have Bible authority for everything we do (so now some insist we don't need Bible authority for anything we do). (4) The urging that whatever a Christian is authorized to do, a congregation is authorized do (which 1 Timothy 5:16 denies). (5) Bringing into the work of a congregation under the umbrella of "fellowship" all manner of social and recreational activities (the N. T. does not thus use the word "fellowship" anywhere). "Fellowship halls," kitchens and banquet rooms, gymnasiums, exercise rooms, swimming pools and hot tubs, craft rooms, "family life centers" have popped up everywhere. The last ones to weep should be those who opened the gates and made the fallacious arguments that led inevitably to these ultimate innovations.

We need to get back to the "old paths" (Jeremiah 6:16). We need to speak again "as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11). We need to "abide within" and "not go beyond" the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9). We need to do all that we do in word or in deed "in the name of (by the authority of) the Lord Jesus" (Colossians 3: 17). We were not wrong in pleading, "Let us speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent. Let us call Bible things by Bible names and do Bible things in Bible ways. Let us give book, chapter and verse for all that we teach and practice in religious matters."

Editor's Note: If any of the above matters are unfamiliar to you, then please read and study the Scriptures so that you are sure that you understand what is wrong with these modern innovations. Bro. Crews has stated the issues well, and they have all come to pass. Be sure you care not carried away in such apostasies, beloved brethren. **AWG**

Other Churches

by Wayne Goff

Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles" (Acts 14:27).

Each local congregation is **independent** and **autonomous** (Acts 14:23; 1 Pet. 5:2). God ordained it that way so that apostasies might be *limited* to a local congregation, as opposed to a region, state, or country. However, brethren should still be concerned for one another in any locality, and brethren should take an interest in other churches! We see in our text that Paul and Barnabas "reported" all that God had done in converting Gentiles and establishing New Testament churches in other cities. This was good news to the brethren in Antioch. It should be good news to us when other churches prosper; or bad news when they do wrong.

Churches have a tendency to *mimic* one another, and this is not always a bad thing. The apostle Paul told Corinth that he had given the same order to the churches of Galatia (1 Cor. 16:1). He mentioned that God's grace had been bestowed on the churches of Macedonia (2 Cor. 8:1) and used them as an example of abundant giving! So today, we should be **aware** of other congregations and encourage and *support* them as individuals in the work they are doing whenever we can. We can attend their meetings, and support the preaching and teaching of the truth, building up enthusiasm together. Individuals can and do go to other churches to preach for them or to teach for them when asked to do so. In Acts 11:27-30, the brethren in Antioch sent "relief" to the needy brethren in Judea when that region was drought-stricken. Today, we can send aid to needy saints in areas where natural calamities, disease, or other difficulties arise which are beyond their ability to relieve.

In short, faithful Christians should and do take interest in other churches and other brethren. They do not just selfishly "do their own thing" and ignore the rest of the world. Let us seek and save the lost, indeed! But let us not neglect to edify brethren the world over by any biblically legitimate means.

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