

BIBLE AUTHORITY: EXPEDITIOUS MATTERS

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Can anyone find in the New Testament where it is explicitly stated (in just so many words) that the church owned or rented land and buildings such as are rented and owned today by most churches of Christ in the U.S.A? Furthermore, can anyone in the New Testament find where the church had Bible classes and Bible class literature to which we in the churches of Christ in America for the most part have become accustomed? Moreover, where is there explicit authority in the New Testament for song leaders, song books, rest rooms, public address systems, audio and video tape recorders, baptisteries, communion sets, heating and cooling systems, electric lights, running water, telephones, printing presses, copying machines, computers, or kitchens as exist in many church buildings today?

Of course, there is no explicit authorization in the New Testament for the church owning or renting lands and buildings or any of the other aforementioned matters. That being the case, where is the New Testament authority for the church to own the aforementioned buildings and all the rest of the things just noted (Col. 3:17; 1 Pet. 4:11)?

OF LANDS AND HOUSES, AND ALL THE REST

There is an “...**assembling of ourselves together**” that Christians are not to forsake (Heb. 10:25). Also, the church at Troas “...**came together to break bread...**” on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). Furthermore, the church at Corinth came “...**together into one place...**” (1 Cor. 11:20, 33; 14:23). How could these brethren assemble without a place to assemble?? Hence, when the church is authorized to assemble, a place is implied by that which is necessary to comply with the thing authorized.

In the case of the church coming together into one place, brethren must choose a place that expedites (is advantageous to) the design and purpose for such an assembly as aforementioned. The selection of a place to assemble must take into consideration the financial ability of a congregation, size, location, accessibility, environment, along with other matters of like nature.

Furthermore, anything that the New Testament authorizes the church to do, it must have a place or places to discharge its scriptural obligation to God. “Common sense” would allow for no less a conclusion. The nature of the place (places) is demanded by that which is authorized. In this area, all manner of optional avenues for discharging the will of heaven is available.

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

The work of the church is to save souls. She does this by preaching the gospel to the alien sinner, edifying the saints, and benevolence. Each one of these scriptural obligations demands a place (places) or other avenues for the church to discharge them. There are many specific things involved in saving souls through

preaching the gospel to the alien sinner, edification of the saints, and benevolence. The nature of the obligation involved, along with the ability and the options of the church to accomplish the task, will determine what is expeditious (advantageous) for a given church in choosing the place(s), building(s), and all the other aforementioned matters, to accomplish the thing(s) authorized.

OBLIGATORY AND OPTIONAL

For things to be obligatory, they must be authorized. Hence, it is only of obligatory matters that we may seek to determine what options are available for discharging them. The criterion for deciding among the options as to which one is best, is determined by which option is most expeditious for accomplishing of the task. Sometimes there may be more than one advantageous option. Options to expedite the Lord's will vary according to the ability, technology, and things of like nature that are available to the people. To expedite something is to get it done the quickest and best way possible. It is the option with the greatest advantage for doing the thing the Lord has authorized that is to be chosen. Aside from keeping the church doing only what the New Testament has authorized, deciding who, when, and how an obligation is to be carried out is the primary function of elders of each church and eldership oversees.

WHAT WILL BE THE END THEREOF?

Because brethren have spent little time on how to ascertain Bible authority, they have pierced themselves through with many divisions. Will we ever learn how the Bible authorizes? Will we ever learn the difference in obligatory matters and optional matters/ Will we ever learn how to tell the difference? If we do not find the answers to these questions, we will from generation to generation be found loosing where God has not loosed and binding where God has not bound. The result in this life will be division that God does not want Eternally, the result will be thousands of souls lost in the pits of torment forever.~