

PRINCIPLES FOR IDENTIFYING WORKS OF THE CHURCH

INTRO: As we continue to understand the works the Lord desires each congregation to be involved in, it's important to also understand some foundational principles related to the characteristics of those work (**Ephesians 4:11-12**).

I. They Must be Authorized by Scripture

- a) **Col 3:17** Everything we do must be in accordance with Christ's authority
- b) **Rom 10:2-3** Simply being excited and doing something for God isn't profitable if it's outside of his authority.
- c) **Mtt 7:22-23** Doing mighty or wonderful works outside of God's authority will not save us.

II. Judgment can be Used to Identify Authorized Works of the Church

- a) **Jn 4:24, Mk 7:7-9, Lev 10:1-3** Our form of worship is not subject to judgment but direct command and/or example.
- b) God uses principles that require judgment to establish some commands and does not always give an exhaustive or specific list of things that would violate or be in keeping with the command or principle. A few examples:
 - a. **Gal 5:19-21** there are some things considered works of the flesh not specifically mentioned in this passage
 - b. **Eph 4:29** no specific example of what constitutes "corrupt communication" but a command about the standard of our speech
 - c. **Mk 7:10-13** The command was to honor father and mother but by their tradition they were breaking the command in various different ways
 - d. **1Tim 5:8** There are many acceptable vocations that can be used to make a living as long as they aren't illicit in violation of other commands or principles
- c) **Eph 4:12** There are many ways to accomplish these objectives and we have to use judgment and other established principles in order to do so.

III. They Must be Done by the Church

- a) **Neh 2:17-20** There was a precedent set by God's people when it comes to doing His work
- b) **Mtt 12:30** Those who are not in Christ and for Christ cannot be used to accomplish His works
- c) **Acts 8:18-21, 2Cor 6:17** If there are works that are sponsored or joined with those whose hearts are not right, it cannot be a work of the church
- d) **Mtt 23:1-4** The church must accomplish the works that it teaches and not simply be satisfied with having some vague goals ahead of it with no action behind it.

IV. They Must be Funded by the Church

- a) **3 Jn 5-8** The gospel was spread without receiving money from the unbelievers

- b) **Acts 16:14-15** Lydia understood that Paul and the brethren would only accept help from the faithful.
- c) **Mtt 10:7-14, 21:12-13** The works of the church should not be funded by commercial enterprise
- d) **1Cor 9:13-14** The spreading of the gospel and the works of the church should not be for profit but supported by those who are faithful.

CONC: These foundational principles will help us better understand the works we can undertake as we seek to fulfill God's desire for the church.