

“I KNOW YOUR WORKS” UNAUTHORIZED ACTIONS

INTRODUCTION

A. Revelation 3:1

To each of the seven churches of Asia, Jesus said, *“I know your works.”* Accordingly, each church must make certain its works are pleasing to Him.

B. 1st Corinthians 4:6

Christians should *“learn not to think beyond what is written.”*

I. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A. 1st Corinthians 12:14

Some will say, “What the Christian can do, the church can do,” but the Lord tells us that *“the body is not one member, but many.”*

B. Matthew 18:15-17; Acts 5:4; 1st Timothy 5:16

Several examples in scripture demonstrate the distinction between the church and the Christian.

1. Christians are responsible in discipline before the church is.
2. Christians own private property that is not the church's.
3. Christians owe their parents care before the church does.

II. DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

A. Matthew 19:3-6

God joins a man and a woman in marriage, yet some seem to think He joins them in weddings and that such fall under the authority of the church. If weddings were a work of the church, then it would be wrong for them to be performed apart from the church (eloping, Justice of the Peace, etc.). Just because the scriptures might be opened and taught from on such occasions does not make weddings a work of the church.

B. Ephesians 6:4; Titus 2:4

Childcare is the duty of mothers and fathers, not the church. Churches have no business operating daycare centers, preschools, or the like. Neither do they have any business conducting a “Children’s Church.” And most of what is done under the banner of a “youth group” is equally unauthorized.

III. POLITICS

A. Romans 13:1

There is no question that governing authorities are established by God.

B. Matthew 22:21

However, Caesar’s and God’s realms are distinct from one another.

C. John 18:36

The kingdom in which we are a part is not earthly in nature, so the church must refrain from:

1. Endorsing political candidates or ballot initiatives,
2. Inviting civic leaders to address the church,
3. Utilizing the facilities of the church for polling places.

IV. COMMERCE

A. John 2:14-17

1. Fashioning a whip of cords (15) could take some time, at least a couple hours. What Jesus did here was not rash, but premeditated. He was intent.
2. He chased people out with that whip! And then he flipped their tables over (15). The Lord used physical force to expel those engaged in “merchandise” (16).

3. He was offended by how they were degrading God's "house" (16). Presently, God's house is the church (1st Timothy 3:15). The church cannot justify conducting bake sales, rummage sales, or the like.
4. Notice that the merchandise in this case consisted of animals that would be used in the sacrifices offered in the temple. If anything at all could be legitimately sold there, sacrificial animals would be it.

B. Mark 11:15-17

"And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple" (Mark 11:16), which means we shouldn't even bring that outside stuff in

V. ENTERTAINMENT

A. Romans 14:17

Eating and drinking is not the work of the spiritual kingdom. This eliminates potlucks, ice cream socials, fellowship banquets, and the like from the legitimate work of the church.

B. 1st Corinthians 11:20-22, 34

Common meals have no place in the function of the church. It is the duty of the home to fill the stomach.

C. Acts 2:46

The earliest disciples worshipped in the temple, but ate their daily meals in one another's homes.

VI. EXTERNAL POVERTY RELIEF

A. John 12:8

If that were its mission, the church would be in constant failure, because the Lord said there would always be poor people. Did Jesus assign to the church what He really didn't expect it to fulfill?

B. Psalm 37:25

Christians don't starve to death! With its ministry to the poor limited to saints only, the church is always able to meet the need.

CONCLUSION

A. 2nd John 9

Those who go beyond the revealed will of God lose their relationship with Him.

B. Revelation 22:18-19

Adding to God's word demands His wrath.