



Sunday – Feb. 12, 2023

The Lakeland Hills Leader

Lakeland Hills church of Christ

2510 Lakeland Hills Blvd
Lakeland, FL 33805
(863) 688-4336

Schedule of Services

Sunday

9:00 AM Bible Study
9:50 AM Worship
6:00 PM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study

Visit our Website:

www.lakelandhillschurchofchrist.com

For Sermon & Class outlines,
Bible Study Materials and
Other Information.

Visit our Facebook Page:

www.facebook.com/LakelandHillschurchofchrist for events,
information, and links to
our YouTube Archives

Visit us on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCu7AG_3jUtpBDlr2NPqB3iw for
Live Streams and Video
Archives.

Elders

Bob Marschall
Leon Miller
Larry Wisdom

Deacons

Bucky Day
Sherman Johnson
Michael Sadler
David Williams

Evangelist

Chuck Kozens

What is the Work of the Church

By Andy Sochor

A question, one that will come up from time to time, is about what local churches are to be doing. If you ask various people, you will likely get many different answers. This is the reason why there is an almost limitless number of activities and “ministries” offered by churches today. Is it necessary – or even good – for churches to do all of these things? What is the work of the church? There are four points for us to consider here.

The New Testament Must Determine This.

This goes back to Bible authority. Jesus has all authority so we are to do what He has instructed (Matthew 28:18, 20). This includes what we do individually AND collectively in our local churches. Paul told Timothy, “*Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus*” (2 Timothy 1:13). Whatever is done by a local church must be in harmony with the New Testament pattern.

The Church Is to Do the Work of Evangelism

Evangelism has to do with proclaiming the gospel and teaching those who are not yet Christians. The church is the “*pillar and support of the truth*” (1 Timothy 3:15). By upholding and defending the truth, the church will necessarily be involved in the work of evangelism.

The church in Thessalonica was an example of this. In his first letter to them, Paul wrote, “*For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything*” (1 Thessalonians 1:8). Like this congregation, churches today need to spread the gospel to their communities and beyond.

The Church Is to Do the Work of Edification

This is about strengthening and building up those who are in the church. The church is described in the New Testament as a “self-edifying body.” Paul wrote, “*From whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love*” (Ephesians 4:16). As each part works together, we are all encouraged, strengthened, and equipped.

This is one of the reasons why we assemble together. The Hebrew writer said, “*And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near*” (Hebrews 10:24-25). Those who make a habit of missing these assemblies are failing to participate in and benefit from one of the primary works of the church.

The Church Is Authorized to Do the Work of Benevolence

This was worded differently than the two previous points for a reason. Evangelism and edification are *ongoing* works of the church (there will *always* be a need for spreading the gospel and encouraging the brethren). In contrast, benevolence is done *as needed*. An example of this was the church in Antioch. Upon hearing of the needs among the Christians in Judea, they “determined to send a contribution” to

help them (Acts 11:29-30). This would be a temporary situation.

It is important to note that in every New Testament example of churches providing benevolence, the recipients were *always* Christians (Acts 4:32; 11:29; Romans 15:26; 1 Corinthians 16:1; 2 Corinthians 8:4). As individuals, we can help others as we seek to “*do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith*” (Galatians 6:10). Yet local churches are more limited in what they are authorized to do. Paul instructed Timothy about widows who were worthy of being helped, but “*the church must not be burdened*” if there were others who could care for them first (1 Timothy 5:16). In a sense, the church is a “last resort” to help Christians when family or other brethren cannot provide the help they need.

Conclusion

So, what is the work of the church? The New Testament describes the church’s work as spreading the gospel, building up its own, and helping certain ones in need. Adding other works are not only unauthorized, but they also distract from the work that God has given the church to do. So let us work together in our local churches to do what the Lord has instructed us to do.