



Bible Benevolence

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“The history of the restoration movement shows that the less devotion men have to Christ the more they stand in need of human organizations” – SAO I, 212

Church benevolence

Issue in church benevolence is NOT whether . . .

1. needy should receive care
2. Christians are responsible
3. means should be used

Church benevolence

Issue in church benevolence . . .

Is a church (collectivity)
responsible for all the needy
(general benevolence)?

If so, may it donate to organiza-
tions that do the work?

I. A Congregation Is Not Same As An Individual

Church. . .a collectivity of Christians

...a regularly summoned legislative body,
assembly...an assemblage, gathering,
Ac.19:32, 39, 40. Congregation, Ac.7:38;
Mt.18:17 – BDAG.

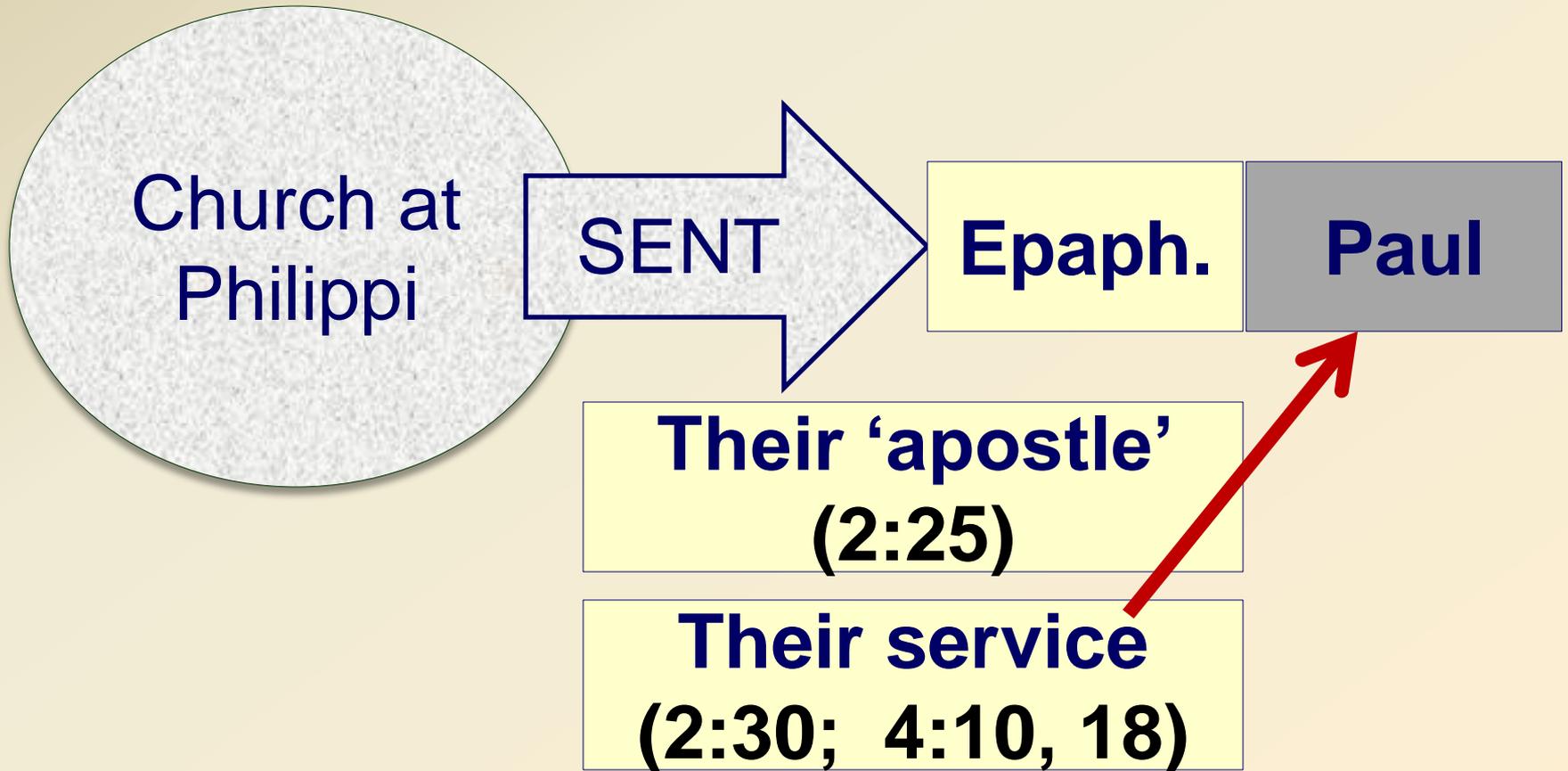
...a congregation of Christians, implying
interacting membership—‘congregation,
church’ . . . For the NT, however, it is
important to understand the meaning of
ἐκκλησία as ‘an assembly of God’s people’

– L-N.

All recognize this distinction between individual and collective entities

Cow	Cows	Herd
Quail	Quails	Covey
Link	Links	Chain
Tackle	Tackles	Team
Christian	Christians	Church
Church	Churches	??

All recognize this distinction between individual and collective entities



What makes up a local church?

Church in Jerusalem, Acts 4:

- 1) Collectivity – more than one, 32
- 2) Agreement to work together, 32
- 3) Pooling of resources, 34
- 4) Oversight, 35
- 5) Use, 35

I. A Congregation Is Not Same As An Individual

II. What About Galatians 6:10?

Three Questions

1. **What is the 'good'?**

Context determines if physical/spiritual

- 1, spiritual
- 2, carry lumber? ...backpack?
- 3-5, spiritual
- 6, probably participation of taught with teacher
- 7-8, corn crop?
- 9, corn harvest?
- 10, good . . . in context benefits all

Three Questions

1. What is the 'good'?

2. **Who receives this good?**

"All" . . . including rich

- Jesus – rich ruler: Money? Food?
Or **spiritual 'good'**?
- 2 Tim.3:17, universal need.

Three Questions

1. What is the 'good'?
2. Who receives this 'good'?

3. **Who does this good?**

Individual or church?

- Lk.6:45, good man brings . . . good
- Ep.4:28, let him labor . . . good
- Phm.14, your good deed . . . (Phile.)
- Gal.6 context: individual action

Three Questions

1. What is the 'good'?
2. Who receives this 'good'?

3. Who does this good?

What about plural pronouns 'us' / 'we'?

- Pronoun stands in place of noun
 - *Gal.6:10 – 'we' & 'us' churches??
Paul includes himself...(1 Co.12¹⁴)
 - *Ro.6:3-4 – 'we' & 'us' were baptized into Christ – Paul includes himself...

Three Questions

1. What is the 'good'?
2. Who receives this 'good'?

3. Who does this good?

What about plural pronouns 'us' / 'we'?

“A pronoun which refers to a collective noun is singular if the group acts as a unit...plural if the individuals of the group act as individuals”

*The band has won fame because of its leader. The band have ordered their new instruments” – Walsh, 27.

- 1 Tim.5:16, **it...** [church]
- Gal.6:10, **we...us** [individuals]

Three Questions

1. What is the 'good'?
2. Who receives this 'good'?

3. Who does this good?

What about plural pronouns 'us' / 'we'?

*Illustrated: sermon to congregation
addresses individuals –*

- **Let us be thankful for our jobs,
our families, our health.”**
- **Thank you for listening.**
- **Don't forget who you are.**

Three Questions

1. What is the 'good'?
2. Who receives this 'good'?

3. Who does this good?

What about plural pronouns 'us' / 'we'?

Must plural pronouns refer to church action? Galatians –

1. 6:12, plural: circumcision (5:2-3)
2. 3:27, plural: baptism
3. 5:13, serve one another – churches?
4. 6:10, if church to do good to **all** (pl.), send donations to all **churches**?

Three Questions

1. What is the 'good'?
2. Who receives this 'good'?

3. Who does this good?

What about plural pronouns 'us' / 'we'?

“Let us”

1. 5:25, walk in the Spirit
2. 5:26, not become conceited...
3. 6:9, not grow weary...we shall reap . . . (2 Th.3:13, *brethren*)
4. Hb.10:22-24, etc.

Hebrews 10

22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together . . . – Who?

Standard proponents want this to be church action, but deny the church can do it

“According to the Scriptures, churches of Christ, each acting in its congregational capacity, are adequate to accomplish all of the work of benevolence that God has given the church to do. And they should do this work w/o delegating it by the contribution of their funds to benevolent organizations”
– Porter affirmed; Deaver denied.

Even if Gal.6:10 were church action, it would not authorize donations to organizations to do church's work

1 Co.16:1-2	Gal.6:10
1. Congregational action	1. Individual action
2. First day of the week	2. As we have opportunity
3. Collection	3. No collection
4. Poor saints	4. All