

## DOES IT MATTER THAT MUCH?

Michael Pickford

Some firemen arrived at a burning building. Instead of getting busy on the fire they began to argue about which hose to use. Some insisted on the time-tested reliable old green hose. Others strongly felt the new red hose should be used. As they argued, the building collapsed.

Sadly, I've known of many local churches that have split or collapsed due to heated disagreements over doubtful or inconsequential things. Yes, when true religious error or unauthorized practices rear their heads, we must contend for the truth (Jude 1:3). But churches splitting over the color of the new carpet, or when the Lord's supper should occur during the order of the services, or how many songs should be sung before the prayer, or whether or not the parking lot should be paved?


I believe the devil would rather plant a seed of dissension within a local church than sell a barrel of whiskey. I remember one older brother who used to insist on reading Colossians 3:12-14 before every business meeting, *"Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection."* Amen! 🔍

**The elements of our worship, as prescribed by God's word, are as follows:**

- **SINGING:** Ephesians 5:18,19; Colossians 3:16
- **PREACHING/TEACHING:** Acts 2:42; Eph. 4:11,12
- **PRAYING:** Acts 2:42; Acts 12:5
- **LORD'S SUPPER:** 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Acts 20:7
- **GIVING:** 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:6,7

### COME WORSHIP WITH US!

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY...9:00  
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP.....10:00  
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP.....6:00  
WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES....7:00

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- [www.defendthegospel.com](http://www.defendthegospel.com)
  - 1st Sunday Singing Night: 6 pm
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Night: Guest Speaker
  - Men's Business Meeting. 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday evenings following services.



## SOUTHSIDE SEARCHER

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*"They...searched the scriptures daily..."* –Acts 17:11

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## SOME THOUGHTS ON GIVING

Michael Pickford

Giving to the Lord's church is something we are commanded to do (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). Let's consider some thoughts in relation to our giving.

**Our giving should be done on the first day of the week.** This is what Paul commanded in the verses referenced above. The only way the local church is authorized to "make money" is through the freewill offering of its members on the first day of every week.

**We should give as we have been prospered.** God commanded those in Old Testament times to tithe (give a tenth of the best). He hasn't specified an exact amount for Christians. However, we should base it upon how much we have taken in. As we have prospered. Paul also encouraged Christians to give generously (2 Corinthians 9:6-7). Some look at the posted budget and base their giving on that. If the budget is being met or if the church is taking in more than the set budget, they will reduce their giving. Don't. Again, our giving should be based on how we have prospered. There's always more a local church can do with the extra money. More preachers could be supported. More teaching materials could be purchased, etc.

**Our giving is not a substitution for working.** Some feel they've done their part if they give generously every Sunday. But that's just part of it. Each Christian still has to get to work. The sick need visiting, the poor need clothes and food, everyone needs to hear the Gospel. Keep giving generously, but realize this doesn't exempt you from the much work that needs to be done.

**Our work is not a substitution for giving.** This is opposite from the view expressed in the previous point. Some may be very busy leading singing, leading prayers, helping others, sharing the gospel, etc. This is great! But this doesn't exempt one from the command to give. Give too. Give generously!

**We should plan out what we're going to give.** Some wait till the plate is being passed to dig through their purses/billfolds and see what they can scrounge up. This won't do. We should plan out our giving based on our income and be ready to give before the services begin. Each Christian should give "As he purposes in his heart" (2 Corinthians 9:7). 🔍

## SIN IS STILL SIN

John Isaac Edwards

When many sin, they try to excuse themselves of that wrong several ways. Sin is still sin...

1) **Even If You Do Not Get Caught.** Many try to justify their actions by whether or not they get caught. Occasionally you see those who do wrong, but do not get caught. Even though they might not get caught, they are still guilty! We cannot sin without getting caught. God will catch us! Adam and Eve were unable to hide themselves from the Lord (Gen. 3). "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. 15:3). The secrets of men will be made known at the judgment (Rom. 2:16).

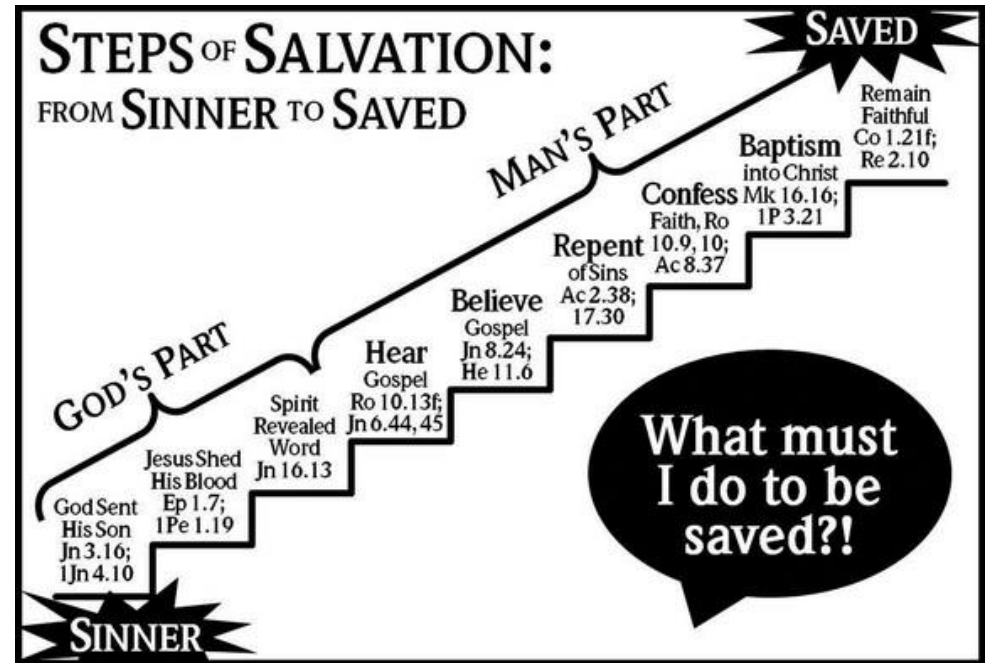
2) **Even If It Is for a Good Cause.** "I know I didn't do right, but it was for a good cause." Paul wrote, "And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just" (Rom. 3:8). Saul spared some of the animals for sacrifice, but was rejected by God (1 Sam. 15). Many churches seek to justify their practices by the good they accomplish. The end does not justify the means!

3) **Even If Others Are Doing Worse.** Someone might say, "Well, I can give you an example of someone doing far worse than I'm doing." Remember Omri, who "...did worse than all that were before him" (1 Ki. 16:25-26)? When we justify our sins on the basis of "others are doing worse", we begin to compare ourselves with others and such is not wise (2 Cor. 10:12). We must measure ourselves by God's word!

4) **Even If It Does Not Bother My Conscience.** One might say, "I did that in all good conscience. Therefore, it must be alright." Saul did "many things contrary to the name of Jesus" (Acts 26:9) and "lived in all good conscience" (Acts 23:1). Have you read Proverbs 14:12 lately? It says, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

5) **Even If It Is Considered Acceptable.** "If you live in Florida, California or Las Vegas, it is acceptable; no one thinks anything about it!" A lot of things may be accepted by society like abortion, gambling, homosexuality, immodesty and the list goes on, but just because a thing is acceptable among men does not mean it is acceptable with God.

These are just a few principles that should help us in determining right and wrong. Sin is still what it's always been (1 Jn. 3:4) and will still do what it's always done (Rom. 6:23). We need to acknowledge our sins and seek God's forgiveness. -



### DUTY LIST...

#### SUNDAY MORNING

- Announcements.....Michael Pickford
- Scripture Reading...Kenny Johnson  
Reading: Proverbs 12:8-14
- Song Leader.....Tim Thompson
- Opening Prayer.....Jeff Isbell
- Lord's Table:
  - Lead.....Kenny Todd
  - Serve.....Lynn Buttrey
  - Serve.....Michael Pickford
- Closing Prayer.....Kenny Todd

#### SUNDAY EVENING

- Song Leader.....Kenny Johnson
- Lord's Table.....Kenny Johnson

#### WEDNESDAY EVENING

- Song Leader.....Michael Pickford
- Invitation.....Kenny Johnson

**Thank You For Serving!**

### GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

There is only one true saving plan of Salvation outlined in Scripture. No substitutes will do. Have you really been saved? Get out your Bible and study the plan below.

- Hear The Gospel: Romans 10:17
- Believe: Mark 16:16; John 8:24
- Repent of Sin: Acts 2:38; 17:30
- Confess Faith: Romans 10:9, 10
- Be Baptized: Mark 16:16;  
Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21
- Remain Faithful: Rev. 2:10

**Obey Today!**

**Home Bible Studies  
Available Upon Request!**