

Offers money to those in need in the community?

Establishes community widow and orphan homes?

Using the Funds of the Church

Sets up soup kitchens or food drives to feed the poor?

Establishes “cause” foundations to raise money?

Using the Funds of the Church

- **Benevolent:**
 - “expressing goodwill or kindly feelings; desiring to help others, charitable; intended for benefits rather than profit”
 - **Synonyms:** “good, kind, humane, generous, philanthropic”
 - **Antonyms:** “cruel”

Using the Funds of the Church

- **James 1:26-27** – Does this apply to churches?
 - **Vs. 19-25** – Context is dealing with individuals
 - **James 2:2** still individual context
 - **“Episkeptomai”** means “to consider, inspect, care about”
 - Very specific categories of people
 - “Spirit of command” is to consider others first, esp. those who are less fortunate

Using the Funds of the Church: The Money

- **I Cor. 16:1-4, II Cor. 8, 9**
- **Difference between individual and collective**
– **I Tim. 5:16, Acts 5:4, I Cor. 16:1-2**
- **These “gifts” were from the “churches”, not simply a group of brethren taking up a collection separate from the assembly**
- **“given orders to the churches of Galatia” – “institute, command” – vs. Acts 5**

Using the Funds of the Church: The Usage

- **A needy saint in a local congregation – I Tim. 5:16, Acts 6:1**
 - **We do find authority for the church to support a widow-Very specific qualifications**
- **Needy saints in other congregations – I Cor. 16, 2 Cor. 8, 9, Acts 11:28-30**
 - **Process? Funds go to the elders to be distributed – see also Acts 4, 5, 6 (apostle's feet)**
- **Must actually be saints in “need” – not “want”**

Using the Funds of the Church: The Usage

- Support of local preacher(s) – **I Cor. 9:13-14**
- Support of outside preacher(s) – **Phil. 4:15-17, 2 Cor. 11:8-9**
- Support of elder(s) who “rule well” – **1 Tim. 5:17-18**
- Expedients to obey commands as a church
 - To assemble on the first day of the week, to offer up worship to God (**I Cor. 11, 16**, see **Acts 20:7**) – requires a place to do so, electric bill, water bill, supplies, etc...

Using the Funds of the Church: The Usage

- Expedients to obey commands as a church (cont'd)
 - To partake of Lord's Supper (**1 Cor. 11, Acts 20:7**) – requires unleavened bread, grape juice, tray, etc
 - To establish itself and promote itself in a community as a “pillar and ground of the truth” (**1 Tim. 3:15, 1 Cor. 14:23**)

Using the Funds of the Church: What we don't find

- **“Sponsoring church” – multiple churches sending funds to one single church which then sends those funds to an individual or other churches**
- **Any suggestion of authority or example of the church supporting random members of the community. (How would we determine true need?) Even Christian widows who have family members are not to be “taken into the number”. This then excludes secular orphan homes, widow homes, soup kitchens, etc. (These are not expedients to obey any collective command given to the church)**

Using the Funds of the Church: What we don't find

- Any suggestion of authority or example for a fellowship hall, gym, prayer breakfast, or other social effort sponsored and paid by the collective church – I Cor. 11, Acts 20, Acts 2; These are not expedients to obey any collective command given to the church.**
- A church sending funds directly to a Christian at another congregation – See Acts 11**
- Active efforts to receive contributions from non-Christians, or Christians who are members at other congregations**

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Using the Funds of the Church

Is this mean-hearted? Unloving?

Consider **Lev. 10:1-4**

“By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.”

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