

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements
Randy Ellis

Song Leader
Jack Calvert

Lord's Supper
Daniel Allgor Cole Meador
Rodney Ellis

Prayers
Willie Standokes Clay Morris

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Announcements
Daniel Allgor

Song Leader
Clay Morris

Prayers
Mike Davis Jack Calvert

Invitation
Joseph Barry

ABOUT US

Elders
Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis
Jon Barry Bill Brittenham
Mike Davis Clay Morris

Evangelist
Bryan Garlock

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday
Bible Study9:30 A.M.
Worship10:15 A.M.

Monday (Zoom)
Bible Study7:00 P.M

Wednesday
Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

Hear the word of truth Romans 10:13-17

Believe the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

Repent from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

Confess the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

Be Baptized in His name Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

Walk in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

to do a few things to the interior as well. I had two hindrances: cash – and DAD! Now, had I been allowed to do what I wanted, the result might have been “very cool” – *but it would not have been a “restoration.”* To truly restore an automobile, one must go back to the **original** form. Spiritually, when we imitate something other than the original, we might end up with something WE like very much – *yet fail to “restore” Christ’s church!* Brethren, let us be careful that we are imitating the right **thing** for the right **reason**. Our mission is NOT to be like other churches of Christ!



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WHY THIS AND NOT THAT?
Lanny Smith

One of the things which distinguishes faithful churches of Christ from all other churches is their insistence on being Biblical. With us, “being Biblical” is no mere slogan – we actually mean it! We study the text of Scripture to determine its message. In those studies, we also learn the principles of “how” all instruction is given (e.g. statements, examples, and necessary implications). In other words, a serious attempt is made to both *know* and *do* the revealed will of God.

Those who are less serious about this endeavor often question our conclusions – which is actually a good thing! All humans are fallible (including members of the church of Christ), so it is incumbent upon each of us to “search the Scriptures daily, to find out whether those things are so” (Ac.17:11). And this brings me to my topic for this article: “*Why this and not that?*”

Many times, in discussions centering on whether or not the Bible authorizes a particular practice, we are asked questions like this: “*Why do you allow things like*

church buildings, pews, classrooms, microphones, and parking lots; but yet will not allow things like instrumental music in worship?” That is a completely fair and understandable question! To answer, let me use a simple illustration from everyday life.

Remember when we were teenagers, and first got our driver’s licenses? Oh, how eager we were to drive everywhere! Our mother might approach us and say, “I want you to go to the grocery store and buy two pounds of hamburger, some hamburger buns, and a gallon of whole milk.” In carrying out that directive, we have some things that are optional, and some things that are not. Let’s break that down a little further.

In “going” to the store, I have several options. I can walk to the store, ride my bike – or I can jump in my car (yes!) and drive to the store. Mom did not tell me “how” to get there! Further the “grocery store” is also an optional thing. For instance, will I go to Kroger, Wal-Mart, or

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins/sometimes shut-ins: **Bonnie Allgor, Pat Buls, Maxine Burnham, Sonny & Cathy Monaghan, Pete & Beth Rowland, and Francine Davis.**

Please keep **Francine Davis** in your prayers as she adapts to the changes due to her health.

CONGRATULATIONS to **Melody Standokes**. She was baptized into Christ this past week. Please rejoice with her and encourage her.

Meier? Mom did not tell me “which” grocery store, so that is optional. On the other hand, “two pounds of hamburger, some hamburger buns, and a gallon of whole milk” is a bit more restrictive! “Two pounds” does not mean one, three, or five; it means two. “Hamburger buns” does not mean hot dog buns, or a loaf of bread. And “a gallon of whole milk” does not mean a half-gallon, skim milk, nor Pepsi. Yes, it’s just that simple – and yes, you CAN understand this! Now let’s apply that to our question.

When God said for us to “assemble” (Hb.10:25), He did not specify where or how. We could assemble in someone’s home – OR, we could rent, buy, or build a building for this purpose. Such a gathering place might include places to sit (pews), places for special studies (classrooms), ways to better hear preaching (microphones), and even a place to park our cars (parking lot). Since God did not get specific about this matter, such things are open to judgment. On the other hand, the kind of music God wants in worship is a little more specific. “Speaking to

one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Ep.5:19). Notice that the kind of songs are specified. “Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,” does not mean patriotic, country, rap, or the blues. “Speaking... singing and making melody in your heart,” does not mean “playing a piano, guitar, or drum.” Yes, it’s just that simple – and yes, you CAN understand this! That is the answer to our question: “Why this and not that?”

Those who are serious about learning the will of God will “rightly divide” that word in order to determine exactly what God wants (2Tm.2:15). They will be sure to do ONLY that which is authorized (Col.3:17). They will NOT add to God’s word, nor take from it (Dt.4:2; Rv.22:17-18). And, as I said at the beginning of this article, it is this very effort to be Biblical that distinguishes us from every other religious body on the face of the earth; it is what makes a church that is truly “of Christ” (cf. Ep.5:23-24).

Questions such as the one addressed in this article are fair and legitimate. We hope we have clarified this matter for you. And we hope that you will join us in our quest for truth!

IMITATING AN IMITATION?

Lanny Smith

Often, we hear NT Christians speak of “restoring the church” and “following the pattern.” Such words are sweet music to my ears, because I believe in those concepts, too! All who profess faith in Christ need to be reacquainted with the notion of following the Bible alone – hence the concept of **restoring** (bringing back) **the church** (people of God) **to the pattern** (of Scripture, cf. 2Tm.1:13). However, I sometimes worry that some of my brethren have a flawed concept of “restoration.” Those of whom I speak do not seek to restore the original, *but a cheap imitation of the original*

– a serious mistake, indeed! Please think with me for a while about this matter.

By way of illustration, people who use copy machines understand that in the copy, there is a certain amount of degradation from the original. Further, when you make “a copy of a copy,” there is even further degradation. Hence, theoretically, one could make so many copies from copies that (eventually) it would not resemble the original at all.

Several years ago, I watched with interest some construction workers who were adding a porch onto my house. As they cut the rafters, I noticed that they had one marked “PAT” (short for “pattern”). This was a smart move! You see if they had cut each rafter from the previous one (rather than the pattern), then each rafter would have gotten just a little longer each time. That would have yielded a grotesque and dysfunctional result for my new porch; so I am glad that those men followed the pattern!

Now, let’s apply what we have learned. I fear that some have a concept of “restoration” which amounts to imitating a particular local church (or churches) of Christ in the United States. If a majority of brethren practice something, it must be right! If my favorite church (or preacher) does something, then it must be right. With all due respect to all of my brethren who strive to do right, *no church or preacher is the standard for us to follow* (2Cor.10:12-13)! I should not have to state the obvious, but I will: ANY Christian can err from the truth (1Cor.10:12); and ANY church can err from the truth (Ac.20:29-31). Therefore, it is unwise to become followers of men. This is why, when Paul said, “Imitate me,” he quickly added, “just as I also imitate Christ” (1Cor.11:1). You see, ultimately, *Christ is the standard by which faithfulness is measured*. Hence, when Paul had to “restore”

the church at Corinth, his appeal was to **the original** – that which he had “received from the Lord” (cf. 1Cor.11:17-26). The failure to restore the original ultimately leads to denominationalism!

“That doesn’t affect us,” you say? How many churches of Christ meet every Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night – *simply because everyone else does?* I know of some Christians who feel they “must” seek out a church on Wednesday night, *even though they are away from home*, because that has become “the pattern” for them. Do not misunderstand: there is nothing wrong with meeting with saints on Wednesday night when you’re travelling; I do so myself! *But it is NOT required by “the pattern!”* And yet, many do it for that very reason, i.e., they think it’s required! In their minds, it is “heresy” to suggest otherwise.

Now, consider the “flip side” of the same problem: Some new method or manner of doing the Lord’s work has great appeal with certain people in a certain place. Admittedly, it is NOT wrong; but new, fresh – *AND disturbing!* Sadly, some will make it their mission to imitate the new, *just because it IS new!* With good intentions, they seek to “force” change, whether people like it or not. This can often result in heartbreaking division; not because it is sinful, but because someone is **determined** to “imitate an imitation” – *no matter what the consequences!* This approach is just as flawed as the approach of those who are “bound” by tradition (carefully consider Rm.14:19).

When I was a teenager, I had a 1963 Ford Fairlane 500. It was in pretty good shape; but I wanted to “fix it up,” as we used to say. I wanted to paint it candy-apple red, and put on wide tires with “mag” wheels. I wanted