

# ENTERTAINMENT AN UNSCRIPTUAL WORK FOR THE CHURCH

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. For some time past even till the present some churches of Christ have been engaged in providing or furnishing various forms of entertainment and facilities for entertainment for their members and other invited quests.
  - a. By entertainment we mean such things as church suppers, church fellowship meals, church parties, fun and games, etc. etc
2. We have consistently refrained from doing so and have continually opposed such practices by local churches of Christ on the basis of Scriptural grounds.
3. In this lesson we shall offer several Scriptural reasons why it is wrong – sinful – for local churches of Christ to engage in the practice of furnishing or providing entertainment for anyone for any reason.

## II. DISCUSSION

### A. IT IS NOT WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH TO ENTERTAIN EITHER SAINTS OR SINNERS.

1. If so, where is the “book, chapter and verse” authorizing it?
2. Jesus did not come to earth to “seek to entertain,” but “to seek and to save that which was lost,” Lk.19:10.
3. The gospel of Christ is not God’s “power to entertain anyone,” but “the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth,” Rom.1:16.
4. The church belonging to Christ is not the “support of entertainment,” but “the pillar and ground of the truth,” 1Tim.3:15.
5. The mission of the church in the world is:
  - a. To preach the gospel to save the lost, 1Tim.3:15; Phil.1:5; 4:14-17; Mk.16:15,16.
  - b. To edify the saved (its members), Eph.4:11,12; 1Th.5:11; Ac.20:28; 1Pet.5:1-3.
  - c. To minister to its own in time of need, Ac.2:44,45; 4:32; 6:1-6; 11:27-30; 1Cor.16:1,2; Rom.15:25-27; 1Tim.5:16.

### B. IT IS NOT SCRIPTURAL FOR THE CHURCH TO FURNISH OR TO PROVIDE ENTERTAINMENT, FOR NO SCRIPTURE AUTHORIZES IT. NO SCRIPTURE SPEAKS OF IT!

1. We must respect the silence of the scripture, 1Cor.4:6; 1Pet.4:11; Heb.7:12-14; 2Jno.9-11.
2. The idea that we can do something because it is not expressly forbidden in the Scriptures **creates respect for what the Bible does not say, rather than what it does say.**

3. When one's action in religion is governed on the assumption that he can do what is not expressly forbidden, the door is opened wide for human opinion and human innovation.
  - a. Through that door comes such things as mechanical instrumental music in worship, praying through Mary, infant baptism, burning incense, religious titles for men, etc. etc.
4. The Scriptures say: Deut.4:2; 1Cor.4:6; 1Pet.4:11; 2Jno.9; Rev.22:18,19.

**C. ENTERTAINMENT IS NOT “CHURCH BUSINESS”; IT IS HOME OR FAMILY BUSINESS.**

1. The church does have business, but not the business of entertainment, Ac.6:3.
2. Paul told the Corinthians that they had houses to eat and drink in, and if any man hunger, let him eat at home, 1Cor.11:22,34.
3. The disciples in Jerusalem ate at home, “...and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart,” Ac.2:46 (ASV).
4. From these passages, we learn this truth:
  - a. Christians have houses to eat and drink in.
  - b. The social aspect of life is **family business** and God does not authorize the social business of the family mixed with the spiritual business of the church.
5. It is the social business of the home to “wash feet” or to show hospitality, 1Tim.5:10.
  - a. We have pointed out to our General Baptist friends who make “foot-washing” church business, that is it not church business but the business of the home to show hospitality.
  - b. “Foot-washing” is in the realm of the social and should not be mixed with the spiritual.
  - c. Just so, entertainment is in the realm of the social and should not be mixed with the spiritual.

**D. FOR THE CHURCH TO FURNISH ENTERTAINMENT OR TO PROVIDE FACILITIES FOR ENTERTAINMENT IS TO PUT NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE HOLY AND THE COMMON, THE SACRED AND THE SECULAR.**

1. This is something God has never permitted with his blessings.
2. God has always made a difference between the holy and the common, Ezek.22:26. (ASV translates it “common” instead of “profane” as in the KJV).

3. Entertainment is not authorized in the N.T. which is sealed with the blood of Christ, Mt.26:28; Heb.9:23-28.
  - a. Therefore it is common and cannot be a part of the work or worship of the church with God's approval.
  - b. All things used in God's service must come under the blood of Christ.

**E. IT LEADS AWAY FROM SPIRITUALITY BY SUBSTITUTING "FOOD FOR THE STOMACH" FOR FOOD FOR THE SOUL: MUSIC AND LAUGHTER FOR MEDITATION AND PRAYER.**

1. One Baptist preacher recently said to Darryl Messer, "Such things are going to be the death of us yet!"
2. Phil.3:17-19 with emphasis on v.19: "Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly..."
3. The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom, not carnal in nature, and does not appeal to the fleshly appetite, Rom.14:17; 1Jno.18:36.

**F. THE BIBLE TERM "FELLOWSHIP" IS NEVER USED IN REFERENCE TO ENTERTAINMENT AND SOCIAL FUNCTIONS.**

1. The Bible does not teach just any kind of "fellowship": the term is limited to what the Bible teaches about it.
2. Bible fellowship is based upon gospel teaching, 1Jno.1:3,4,7.
3. It is fellowship men enjoy with one another and with God because Jesus died, and which would have been impossible without his death.
4. This place, this auditorium, this place of worship is our fellowship hall.
5. Jesus did not die to bring men and women together to drink coffee and eat doughnuts or to have fun and frolic in church suppers and playing of games.
6. Jesus' death brings worshippers together:
  - a. In fellowship in song, Eph.5:19; Col.3:16.
  - b. In fellowship in prayer, Ac.2:42.
  - c. In fellowship in the support of gospel preachers and preaching of the gospel, Ac.20:7; Phil.1:5; 4:14-17.
  - d. In fellowship in giving, Ac.2:42.
  - e. In fellowship in eating the Lord's supper, Ac.2:42; 20:7; 1Cor.11:23-26; 10:16,17.
  - f. In suffering for the cause of Christ, Phil.3:10.
  - g. In fellowship in the harmony that exists among members of the church one with another, 1Cor.12:18-27.
  - h. In fellowship with God, Christ and the Holy Spirit, 1Jno.1:3,7; Phil.2:1.

- i. In fellowship of the ministering to the saints in need, 2Cor.8:4; 9:13; Rom.15:26.

**G. CHURCH-FURNISHED ENTERTAINMENT WAS OPPOSED BY GOSPEL PREACHERS IN TERMS NO ONE COULD MISUNDERSTAND OVER 50 YEARS AGO.**

1. One example: B.C. Goodpasture, in an editorial in the **Gospel Advocate** (May 20, 1948) said:
  - a. “It is not the mission of the church to furnish amusement for the world or even for its own members.”
  - b. “The church would come off a poor second if it undertook to compete with institutions established for the express purpose of entertaining people.”
  - c. “Only as the church becomes worldly, as it pillows its head on the lap of Delilah, will it want to turn from its wonted course to relatively unimportant matters.”

**III. CONCLUSION**

1. Local churches entertaining people is not:
  - a. Preaching the gospel to lost souls.
  - b. Edifying the saved.
  - c. Converting souls to Christ, even if it happens to fill buildings with people.
  - d. The work of the church.
2. Local churches entertaining people:
  - a. Is without divine authority.
  - b. Is acting solely by human authority. Cf. Mt.15:9.
  - c. Is sinful.

(Credit to Donald Townsley, Guardian of Truth, Jan.3, 1991)