

# “THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

## Only Singing-Only Saints!

In Hebrews 8:5, the divine writer tells us of the admonition God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai—“*...as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, see, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount.*” Evidently, God wanted Moses to understand that He would not permit any deviation from the details of anything pertaining to the construction of the tabernacle, its furnishings, the priest’s garments, and all that was involved in worshipping Him (cf. Ex. 25:9, 40; Num. 8:4; Josh. 22:28).

Many people who claim to love God, and who have read this passage many times, often overlook, if not completely ignore, an important Bible principle established here. In order for worship under Moses’ Law to be acceptable, the people had to follow the *Divine* pattern. The same principle is true of worship during the Christian age—to be acceptable, it must be: “in spirit and in truth” (Jn. 4:24). Jesus himself, when He spoke to religious people, said, “*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity*” (Matt. 7:21-23).

Strong’s dictionary defines the Hebrew word rendered “*pattern*” in Exodus 25:9, 40; Numbers 8:4; and Joshua 22:28 as: “*structure; by implication, a model, resemblance: figure, form, likeness, pattern, similitude.*”

The Greek word *tupos* is rendered “*pattern*” in Hebrew 8:5 and Titus 2:7 and is defined by Strong as: “*a die (as struck), i.e., (by implication) a stamp or scar; by analogy, a shape, i.e., a statue, (figuratively) style, or resemblance; specially, a sampler (type), i.e., a model (for imitation) or instance (for warning):-en-(ex-)ample, fashion, figure, form, manner, pattern, print.*”

In the King James Version of the New Testament, this Greek word is rendered “*print*” in John 20:25; “*figures*” in Acts 7:43; “*the fashion*” in Acts 7:44; “*manner*” in Acts 23:25; “*the figure*” in Romans 5:14; “*that form*” in Romans 6:17; and “*example(s)*” in 1 Corinthians 10:6 and 1 Timothy 4:12. This same Greek word is rendered “*ensample(s)*” in a number of verses (1 Cor. 10:11; Phil. 3:17; 2 Thess. 3:9; 1 Pet. 5:3).

By considering all of this information, we should get the picture—the pattern principle was alive and well when Christ’s inspired apostles wrote, a fact that no honest Bible student can deny. Hence, in order to worship God “*in spirit and in truth,*” we must worship “*according to the pattern*” given in the New Testament.

## Only Singing!

But not all Bible students are honest. Some do not wish to respect the pattern principle, even though it is evident by looking at various New Testament passages regarding the work and worship of the first-century church.

For example, in the matter of music in worship to God, many use various mechanical musical instruments in their worship. Sadly, some brethren who were formerly of the Lord’s body have become apostates by ignoring the New Testament pattern, using mechanical instruments of music in their worship. Please consider these New Testament passages:

1. Matthew 26:30 and Mark 14:26—“*...they had sung a hymn...*”
2. Acts 16:25—“*...Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God.*”
3. Romans 15:9—“*...and sing unto thy name.*”
4. 1 Corinthians 14:15—“*I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding..*”
5. Ephesians 5:19—“*...singing and making melody in your heart...*”
6. Colossians 3:16—“*...singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*”
7. Hebrews 2:12—“*in the midst of the church I will sing praise unto thee.*”
8. James 5:13—“*...Is any merry? Let him sing psalms.*”
9. Revelation 5:9—“*And they sung a new song...*”

10. Revelation 14:3—“*And they sung as it were a new song before the throne...*”
11. Revelation 15:3—“*And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God...*”

In the above list, we have every passage in the New Testament (KJV) that uses the word sing, singing, sung, or sang. What then is the pattern? This should not be hard to understand. It is *singing* and only *singing*! Even though we have this Scriptural evidence, when it comes to music in worship to God, many continue to ignore the New Testament!

### Only Saints!

Likewise, we can determine the pattern for benevolence by observing a number of New Testament passages. Note the references that follow. They clearly show who received the relief and who provided it:

1. Acts 2:44, 45—*Saints* were relieved by the church.
2. Acts 4:34, 35—*Saints* were relieved by the church.
3. Acts 6:1-6—*Saints* (widows) were relieved by the church.
4. Acts 11:27-30—*Saints* were relieved by the church.
5. Romans 15:25-31—*Saints* were relieved by the church.
6. 1 Corinthians 16:1-3—*Saints* were relieved by the church.
7. 2 Corinthians 8—*Saints* were relieved by the church.
8. 2 Corinthians 9—*Saints* were relieved by the church.
9. 1 Timothy 5:9-16—*Saints* or “*widows indeed*” were relieved by the church.

In the preceding passages, the context shows that the benevolence pattern is for the church—not a human institution, such as a benevolent society or a sponsoring church organization—to provide relief to needy saints and only to needy saints. What do you conclude when you consider these passages?

Further, the relief the church in the New Testament gave to needy saints was likely temporary in nature. An exception would be “*widows indeed*” (1 Tim. 5:3-5; Acts 6:1-6).

Examples of present temporary needs would be needs that result from such natural disasters as fires, floods, and earthquakes. When hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast in the fall of 2005, and more recently hurricanes Harvey and Irma this year, some brethren in these areas had to flee their homes and needed temporary relief and shelter. Various local churches of Christ and individual brethren provided such temporary relief by sending money and goods to the brethren (saints) in need.

Other situations could include medical emergencies and/or personal property losses resulting from house fires and such like. Paul commanded the church in Corinth to give or “*lay by in store*” for the poor saints, not the needy of the world (1 Cor. 16:1-2). Also, the Bible *never* implies or states that the church is to make poor saints—except for “*widows indeed*” (1 Tim. 5:3-5; cf. Acts 6:1-6), its wards.

### Conclusion

When we, by examining all Scriptures that apply, compare the New Testament church’s work and worship with regard to music in worship and benevolence, we clearly see definite patterns.

- Only singing of “*psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs*” is authorized, and
- The church is authorized to provide, from its local treasury, funds to needy “*saints*”—not to the needy in general of the world.

What about the pattern for giving? What about the pattern for the Lord’s Supper? What about the pattern for teaching? What about the pattern for qualifications of elders? The New Testament Scriptures reveal to us the divine patterns regarding every aspect of work and worship in the Lord’s church. If we desire to be pleasing to God, we have no choice but to follow these divinely revealed patterns. Just as God commanded and expected Moses to “*make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount*” (Heb. 8:5), it follows that He expects local congregations of His church to work and worship “*according to the pattern*” of “*sound doctrine*” (Titus 2:1). Let us heed the inspired apostle’s words, “*Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus*” (2 Tim. 1:13). – *tgmc* ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Tommy Glendol McClure, Editor and Evangelist - 925-759-4357

Web Site: [www.lodiCAchurchofchrist.com](http://www.lodiCAchurchofchrist.com) - Email: [lodicachurchofchrist@gmail.com](mailto:lodicachurchofchrist@gmail.com) - Phone: 209-365-9250