



Benevolence:
Collective and
Individual



Three Great Works Of:

- ◆ The child of God under the law: prayer, fasting, and alms,
- ◆ The church: evangelism, edification, and limited benevolence,
- ◆ The Christian: serving God, serving Christ, serving one another.
- ◆ Each is responsible to all of the works, especially the great ones, and not to neglect any or defer them to others.



Individual Versus Collective Works

- ◆ Assertions by institutional preachers: *"The church can do anything that an individual can do, and an individual Christian can do anything the church can do; the Bible makes no distinction between duties of the Christian and works of the church."*



Individual Versus Collective Works

- ◆ If one can provide a single example that runs counter to a statement, then that statement is no longer true.
- ◆ 1Tim. 5:16 - "If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows."



Individual Versus Collective Works

- ◆ 1Cor. 5:4-5 - "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."



Individual Versus Collective Works

- ◆ Acts 6:3-5 - "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; 4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word. 5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose..."



Individual Versus Collective Works

- ◆ There exist duties of the individual Christian that simply cannot be performed by the church.
- ◆ 2Cor. 9:7 - "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."



Individual Versus Collective Works

- ◆ 1John 1:9 - "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- ◆ 1Cor. 7:3 - "Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband."
- ◆ The duties of the church in limited benevolence and the duties of individuals in unlimited benevolence cannot be scripturally performed by the other.



◆ Limited Benevolence

- Acts 2:44-45 - “Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.”



◆ Limited Benevolence

- Acts 4:34-35 - “Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, 35 and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.”



◆ Limited Benevolence

- Acts 6:1-3 - “Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business”



◆ Limited Benevolence

- Acts 11:27-30 - “Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar. 29 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. 30 This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.”



◆ Limited Benevolence

- Rom. 15:25-27 - “But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. 26 For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. 27 It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.”



◆ Limited Benevolence

- 1Cor. 16:1-3 - “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. 3 And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem.”



◆ Limited Benevolence

- 2Cor. 8:3-4 - “For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, 4 imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.”



◆ Limited Benevolence

- 2Cor. 9:1, 7-8, 12 - “Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 12 For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God.”



◆ Limited Benevolence

– 1Tim. 5:4-5 - “But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. 5 Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.”



◆ Limited Benevolence

- 1Tim. 5:9-11 - “Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, 10 well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work. 11 But refuse the younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry.”



◆ Limited Benevolence

- 1Tim. 5:16 - “If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.”



Individual Benevolence Is Unlimited

- ◆ Gal. 6:9-10 - “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”



Individual Benevolence Is Unlimited

- ◆ James 1:26-27 - “If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. 27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”



Benevolence: Collective and Individual

- ◆ Let the church do the works authorized in scripture, and let individual Christians eagerly engage in the remaining undone tasks.