

The Prattmont Church of Christ is just what the name suggests, a church that belongs to Christ. We are not a denomination; we are simply a group of Christians trying very hard to practice the teachings of our Head, Jesus Christ. The New Testament offers a complete pattern for what each local church should be like—its organization, its worship, its work, etc. We are committed to following that pattern. We cordially invite you to attend our services. We would also welcome any comments or questions about this bulletin.

**TIMES OF SERVICES:**

*Sunday*

Bible Study ..... 9:00 A.M.  
 Worship ..... 10:00 A.M.  
 Training Class .... 5:00 P.M.  
 Worship ..... 6:00 P.M.

*Wednesday:*

Bible Study ..... 7:00 P.M.



*Weekly Bulletin*  
 April 15, 2018

**Back to the Beginning: A Study of Local Churches in the New Testament (Part 3)**

*by Bryan Gibson*

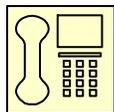
**New Testament churches** were heavily involved in what was clearly their primary work: teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. From what was collected from their own members on the first day of the week, they gave financial support to those who preached the gospel (Philippians 1:3-5; 4:15-18; 2 Corinthians 11:7-9). Great effort was expended to teach their own members (Acts 11:26; 14:21-22; 15:30-35), with at least two purposes in mind: to build them up spiritually, and to equip them to become teachers themselves (2 Timothy 2:2; Ephesians 4:11-16). And, of course, they also made efforts to reach the lost. The church at Antioch, for example, was active in sending out preachers to areas that had not yet heard the gospel (Acts 13:1-4; 14:26-27; 15:39-40). May the same be said of local churches today that was said of the church at Thessalonica: “For from

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you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place” (1 Thessalonians 1:8).

**New Testament churches** provided aid for needy Christians, those who had become destitute due to circumstances beyond their control. They provided this aid only when those Christians had no other means of support, either from family members (1 Timothy 5:4, 8, 16), or from their own ability to work (Ephesians 4:28; 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12). If we go back to the “beginning,” to the New Testament, here are the examples we find: (1) The church at Jerusalem cared for its own needy (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35; 6:1-6). (2) The church at Antioch sent aid to brethren in what may have been several different churches in Judea (Acts 11:27-30). (3) Several churches sent aid to the church in Jerusalem (Romans 15:25-26; 1 Corinthians 16:1-3; 2 Corinthians 8-9). In these examples where aid was sent to other churches, it was only because those churches were unable to care for their own. Too, keep in mind two points made previously. These churches did not send this aid through a “sponsoring church,” nor did they turn this responsibility over to some human organization. Each church had its own “gift” (1 Corinthians 16:3); each church chose its own messengers to bear that gift (1 Corinthians 16:3; 2 Corinthians 8:18-19); each church sent directly to where the need existed (see the passages above); and it was never intended for one church to remain dependent upon another (2 Corinthians 8:13-15). In other words, efforts were made to maintain the independence of each local church.

**New Testament churches** were not involved in social and recreational programs, nor were they involved in secular education. You can find those sorts of programs in many churches today, but you can’t go back to the beginning and find them. There’s no reason why we can’t do today what they did then. The truth is, we must—if we want to maintain fellowship with the Father and with the Son (1 John 2:24; 2 John 1:9).

## Beautiful Feet

“How beautiful are the feet of those who...develop cures for terminal diseases?” Nope. “How beautiful are the feet of those who...create the latest technological advance?” Nope. “How beautiful are the feet of those who...feed the hungry?” Nope. These people are all doing wonderful things, but NO ONE is doing ANYTHING more important than preaching the gospel (whether they be “full time” evangelists or not). It is the greatest work, fulfilling the greatest need, and offering the greatest hope. “How beautiful are the feet of those who **preach the gospel of peace...**” (Romans 10:15).

## Who Really Gets It?

“Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him SHOW by good CONDUCT that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom” (James 3:13).

The one who really “gets it” is the one who understands how to apply it.