

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)

March 29, 2009

Parachurch organizations

by David King

The dictionary defines parachurch organizations as "vehicles by which Christians work collaboratively both outside of and across their denominations to engage with the world in social welfare and evangelism." These organizations can take the form of businesses, non-profit organizations, or private associations. Examples of parachurch organizations include religious colleges, missionary societies, evangelistic ministries, welfare services, and publishers. (For more information about parachurch organizations see the article at [http://www.reference.com/browse/parachurch.](http://www.reference.com/browse/parachurch))

The Bible does not mention parachurch organizations, primarily because the Christianity described in the New Testament was still in its infancy and these organizations had not yet sprouted up. But in the 2,000 years since then, and especially during the last couple of centuries as religious freedom and prosperity have spread in Western democratic societies, these organizations have mushroomed in size and number. It is safe to say that much of the religious work that is performed today in the name of Christ is channeled through these parachurch organizations in one way or another.

As with all things that pertain to our faith, God's people should ask questions about these entities before blindly jumping on the bandwagon. Does the New Testament approve these organizations as legitimate extensions of the Lord's work? Can a Christian or a local church contribute funds to these organizations, or get directly involved in their operations?

There are a few principles that we must keep in mind in answering these questions.

First—and most obviously—no parachurch organization has the right to promote teachings or practices that are in violation of what God has revealed in His word. Many of these modern entities are based on denominational theology that contradicts simple New Testament teaching regarding salvation, worship, or the church. Obviously, we cannot support error.

Second, the New Testament teaches a distinction between what an individual can do and what a local church can do. "Do not let the church be burdened" (1 Tim. 5:16) is a clear warning of the limits of congregational involvement in social welfare activities. Local churches, in other words, are not free to support every good work that comes begging. There is a higher purpose that must be preserved, a purpose that is often derailed by getting involved in parachurch activities.

Third, oversight of legitimate congregational activities is the responsibility of the congregation, under the supervision of its elders (Ac. 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-3; Ac. 6:1-3; Phil. 4:15-16; 1 Cor. 16:1-3). Many of these parachurch organizations treat churches as mere collection agencies, a steady source of funding. The churches providing the money, of course, have no voice in how the money is spent. All decisions are made by the organization itself.

If a parachurch organization respects these principles, it may exist and individuals may support it. But everyone involved should note the risks, and take care to respect God's will.