

DISCERNING AUTHORITY:



Church Cooperation



The Matter of Church Autonomy

- The Pattern Established by Christ

2nd Corinthians 5:9

- Autonomy Defined

“self-governing; not subject to control from outside”

- Autonomy Exemplified

Acts 14:23; 1st Peter 5:2



The Matter of Church Autonomy

- **The Work & Oversight: Limited**

- **Work of the Local Church**

1st Thess. 1:6-8; Acts 11:25, 26; Acts 6:1-6; 1st Cor. 16:1-4

- **Oversight of the Elders**

Acts 20:28; 1st Peter 5:1, 2



The Matter of Church Autonomy

- **Autonomy: How Maintained & How Surrendered**
 - **Maintained: Each Church Doing its Own Work**
 - **Surrendered: Another Organization Takes Over**



Cooperation: A Right Way & A Wrong Way

- **The Right Way [Authorized by Scripture]**
 - **Preaching the Word of God**
1st Thess. 1:8; Acts 18:1-11; 2nd Cor. 11:8
 - **Benevolence**
Rom. 15:25, 26; 1st Cor. 16:1-4
 - **Edification**
Ephesians 4:11-16



Cooperation: A Right Way & A Wrong Way

- **The Wrong Way [NOT Authorized]**
 - Preaching the Word of God
 - Sponsoring church arrangement; Missionary Societies
 - Benevolence
 - Church of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.
 - Edification
 - Colleges, Universities, 'Preacher Schools'



Cooperation: A Right Way & A Wrong Way

- *Concurrent vs. Joint Efforts*
 - Concurrent: Autonomy Maintained
 - No centralized organization or funding
 - Joint: Autonomy Surrendered
 - Oversight by one church or human institution over other churches

