

## Make All Things According To The Divine Pattern

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God has always demanded that men follow His direction in matters of religion. Taking as a text or starting point, Hebrews 8:5, may we all, as fellow travelers to eternity, study together our duty to "make all things according to the divine pattern" as revealed in the New Testament---not my pattern, nor yours, but God's. This is a very practical line of thought for Christians and all men alike, seeing that all men must mold their thinking, their speech, their life and conduct in every way by this divine pattern. We are to be workers for Him and must conform our work and worship to this pattern. It also helps us to teach others the way of life and salvation more perfectly and helps us to fight the "wiles" of error more efficiently.

God says: "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 19:23). Hence, man must have a divine guide to be saved. God also says: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). Cain's way, no doubt, seemed right to him, (Genesis 4:3-7), but not to God. Hence, it was the way of death. Nadab, no doubt, did what seemed right to him when he offered strange fire: but not to God, and was smitten of God while in the very act of worship, because he did not follow the divine directions (Leviticus 10:1, 2). NOTE: God did not tell him NOT to offer this kind of fire; neither did He tell Cain not to offer the fruit of the field as a sacrifice; nor did He tell Moses not to smite the rock the second time. When God tell us how and what to do, that forbids our substituting anything else -- His commands are both inclusive and exclusive. You, too, may be well pleased with what you are and what you are doing religiously, but you are not the one to be pleased in these matters.

You might please your own conscience, as did Saul of Tarsus in Acts 9. Yea, you might please the whole religious world and yet be lost if you do not please God. It is not possible for man to guide himself and please God. We must surrender to God's will and follow it as our only guide. God has given man a guide in religion in all ages of the world and he has always demanded that man follow it and not his own ways or the creeds of man. He has pronounced a curse upon all who change or alter His worship in any way. Listen to Christ, "But in vain do they worship me teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men. Ye leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men. And he said unto them full well do ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your tradition." (Mark 7:7-9). He has forbidden men to alter or change His word, in any way in all ages of the world. Look closely at Galatians 1:8, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be accursed." Deut. 4:1-3 states, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God, which I command you."

Giving man a guide and demanding him to follow it is a manifestation of His love for man, seeing man could not direct himself aright. Hence the need of this lesson, "making all things according to the divine pattern." God's word is our guide book, our chart and compass, our pattern, our blueprint. The purpose of a pattern, guide book or a blueprint is to direct people. And we are to be directed by what the guide book, the pattern says, not by its silence or what it does not say. Sometimes we hear someone say, "Well the Bible doesn't say NOT to do this or that." Can we take a chance on eternity by appealing to the silence of the scriptures, what it does not say? Any guide is worthless unless we follow its directions. If you give a man a blueprint by which to build a house, you expect him to be governed by it and make the house according to the pattern. If you give a woman a pattern by which to make a dress, you expect her to be governed by it and "make all things according to the pattern" -- not by her own wishes, seeing she is not the one to be pleased in that case. Now, this is just what God has done for us in matters of religion -- He has given us His words in the New Testament as a guide book or pattern to govern us in all things that pertain unto life and godliness. Listen to the apostle Peter in 2 Peter 1:3, "seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue." Peter says, "if any man speaketh, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11). It then follows, if God's word has not spoken, man is to be silent. This, in all our faith and practice, is "making all things according to the divine pattern."

When Jehovah gave Moses the command to build the tabernacle in the Old Testament, He said to Moses, "See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern that was showed thee in the mount." (Hebrews 7:5). Moses has no choice as to how to make the tabernacle, what kind of wood, how long, how wide, what kind of covers, etc. He was given a divine pattern, a divine guide, to follow. If Moses had been commanded to build several tabernacles, would they not all have been exactly alike, seeing they were all made by the same pattern? If a man builds you several houses by the same blueprint, will they not all be just alike in their makeup? If not, why not? If a woman makes several dresses by the same pattern, will they not all be just alike? If not, why not? This seems to be too self-evident to be questioned by sensible people.

God, through Christ Jesus, established His church on earth, and gave us the New Testament to guide us, as our pattern or blueprint, in making this church. He did not give you nor me the right to just build the church however seems right to you or to me. If we build anything that pleases Him, it will be built according to the divine pattern given by Jehovah. Does it not follow, if the pattern is followed, that each church will look alike and do things that are alike? How can mankind escape this conclusion? Hear Paul as he speaks under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, "Now, I beseech you, brethren, through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing and that they be no division among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10-13). Does that sound like God is pleased with one religious body doing one thing, and another doing something entirely different? That one church is called by one name, while another is called by another name? Is that what God meant when he said we are to "do all things according to the

divine pattern"? It seems to me that someone is not following the pattern. It may be that none are following the divine pattern, but we cannot be following the pattern and come up doing different things.

Now, I am not being critical in this matter. But, in love for God's word and the souls of men and in view of the Judgment, I must plead earnestly with all within the sound of my voice to be satisfied with God's word and it alone, as our only safe guide in matters of religion. This is not a narrow view of the matter, but it is the broadest view one can have. It is narrow to divide folks into sects and creeds, with each group doing something different from the other group. May we all go back to the Bible as our only guide, speaking as it speaks, and remaining silent where it does not speak. No two truths can contradict each other. When we differ my friend, one of us is wrong. Possibly both of us. But, two cannot differ and still hold to truth. Truth does not divide. Truth unites. Did not Jesus pray for the unity of all believers? Listen to Him, "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (John 17:20, 21). A divided Christianity breeds atheism, a divided Christianity is a slap in the face of Jehovah. But a united Christianity will produce faith in Christ Jesus in the lives of others? Don't you think that we should all speak the same thing? Who out there in radio land will affirm that we should be divided religiously? Who will affirm that it pleases God for us to speak different things?

If all people hear and obey the Gospel now, as those people did in Paul's day, then they will all be saved as they were then. If all obey the same gospel now, will not all be members of the same church --if not, why not? If you do what the people did on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, will you not be a member of the same church as they were and be just what they were religiously. If not, why not? If the same seed is planted, it will produce the same results. Jesus said the seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11). Even the farmer knows that the same seed will produce the same crop. If you plant corn, the harvest will be corn, if you make a crop. But, the religious world has developed the idea that we can plant the same seed and come up with many different results. That, my friend, is not God's arrangement. That is the work of men. God says, "Speak the same thing." Man says, "We speak different things." Whom shall we accept?

There is one point that all of us MUST remember. God never sets aside His law for anyone. This is one point that must be impressed upon our thinking. If man is saved, it will be according to the Lord's arrangements; not mine nor yours. And since God is no respecter of persons as Acts 10:34 so clearly states, we must all agree with and obey the arrangements that the Lord has made. Therefore, the concluding word and exhortation of this program is: With a sincere, fervent, passion for lost and dying men, let us go into the field white for harvest with no word to offer but the "Word of God," with no requirements to make but the Bible conditions of salvation, with no church to offer but the "church of Christ," with no name to offer but the name "Christian," with no discipline to offer but the New Testament. Let us all "speak as the oracles of God." May we make all things "according to the divine pattern."