

Pattern - cont.

16:10). They turn religion into what they want, not what is found in the New Testament. Some will even ridicule the “patternist mentality” or, the “old paths mentality,” or “pattern theology” and “legalistic patternist”.

There are also brethren who will do this. Brethren in the 1850's to 1900's ignored the New Testament pattern and ended up forming the Christian Church and Disciples of Christ. Brethren in the 1940's to 1960's ignored the pattern and ended up forming the institutional Churches of Christ. Brethren in the 1980's to 1990's ignored the pattern and are now leaving Churches of Christ for the denominations.

The words, “Behold the pattern” in Joshua 22:28, are good for us to think about today. We need to “behold the pattern” found in the New Testament because it is 1) divine in origin (Matthew 28:18); 2) complete in design (2 Timothy 3:16-17); and, 3) successful in practice (Acts 2:47; 5:14; 9:31; 16:5).

Yes, we serve a God of patterns! And, thank God he gives us a pattern to follow. Let us all remain true to the New Testament pattern, or return to it if we have left it! - Chris Reeves

- Scripture of the Week -

*“And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”
- Luke 6:46 -*

Jesus asked a great question here and he wants us to think about the difference between saying and doing. We don't want to simply say that Jesus is our Lord; we want to prove it daily by doing what he said.

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

Behold the Pattern

Patterns are helpful. If you have ever done any sewing, you know the importance of following a pattern if you want your clothing to turn out right. If you have every built a model plane or car, like I did as a kid, you know the importance of following a pattern or blueprint if you want your model to turn out right.

Patterns are diagrams or blueprints that tell you how to build something or do something. Often a pattern has been made by someone else who has already done something and they are showing you how to do the same thing. When you follow a pattern, everything will turn out just right. When you don't follow it, there will be a big problem.

We Serve A God of Patterns

It may come to the surprise of many people that we serve a God of patterns. The tabernacle and Solomon's temple in the Old Testament were built according to patterns, and the church in the New Testament was built according to a pattern as well.

The pattern of the tabernacle in the Old Testament was built by Moses and Israelites according to a pattern

that God had given them in Mount Sinai (Exodus 25:8-9,40; 26:30; 27:8; Numbers 8:4; Acts 7:44; Hebrews 8:5; 9:24).

When you read the texts above you will see three important things about the tabernacle building and the pattern that God gave:

First, the attitude (emotion) of the Israelites in building the tabernacle had to be joined with the authority that was expressed in the pattern (Exodus 25:1-9; 35:20ff). The Israelites were not allowed to get all excited in building, but not follow the pattern.

Second, the talent (skill) of the Israelites in building the tabernacle had to be joined with the authority that was expressed in the pattern (Exodus 35:30ff). The Israelites were not allowed to focus on their talents, but not follow the pattern.

Third, when the tabernacle was complete, the building was examined to see if it matched the pattern (Exodus 39:32-43). The Israelites were not allowed to stray from the pattern during the building process, from beginning to end.

The pattern of the temple in the Old Testament and built by Solomon also had a pattern (1 Chronicle 28:11-12,8-19). And,

like the building of the tabernacle, both the attitude (emotion) and the talent (skill) of the Israelites in building had to be joined with the authority of the pattern given by God (1 Chronicles 28:21).

When we turn to the New Testament, it is no surprise that we find the same concept of a pattern. For example there is a pattern of conversion that is found in the gospel (Romans 6:17; "form" = pattern; mold; cast; die). This pattern (hear the gospel, believe it, repent of sins, confess that Jesus is the Christ, be baptized for the remission of sins, and live a faithful life) is the pattern and it must be followed in order to be pleasing to God.

There is also a pattern for the church that is found in the gospel (2 Timothy 1:13; "pattern" = outline; sketch; to delineate). And, there is even a pattern for the world to follow and that is the example of a faithful Christian (1 Timothy 1:16; Titus 2:7).

No-Pattern Religion

Some people in the religious world today, like King Ahaz of old, are not content to abide by God's pattern, but they seek a worldly pattern (2 Kings