“Liberal Versus Conservative”  
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Slide 1

"Liberal" vs. "Conservative"
CHURCHES OF CHRIST
Why The Division?

Slide 2

Definition of Liberal

1. adj: of, relating to, or based on the liberal arts liberal education
2. archaic: of or befitting a man of free birth
3. a: marked by generosity: openhanded a liberal giver
   b: given or provided in a generous and openhanded way a liberal meal
   c: ample, full
4. obsolete: lacking moral restraint: licentious
5. not literal or strict: loose, a liberal translation
   b: broad-minded; especially: not bound by authoritarianism, orthodoxy, or traditional forms

Merriam-Webster

Slide 3

Definition of Liberal

noun
1. a: one who is open-minded or not strict in the observance of orthodox, traditional, or established forms or ways
2. b capitalized: a member or supporter of a liberal political party
3. c: an advocate or adherent of liberalism especially in individual rights

Merriam-Webster

Slide 4

Definition of Conservative

noun
1. a: an adherent or advocate of political conservatism
2. b capitalized: a member or supporter of a conservative political party
3. a: one who adheres to traditional methods or views
4. b: a cautious or discreet person

Merriam-Webster

Conservative
Definition: Tending or disposed to maintain existing institutions; opposed to change or innovation.

Conservative
Definition: One who, or that which, preserves from ruin, injury, innovation, or radical change; a preserver; a conserver.

Accuracy & Reliable Dictionary  
http://ardictionary.com/Conservative/10782

Slide 5

Today’s Marks of Division

1. LIBERAL:
   Have missionary, benevolent, and educational organizations to execute the work of the church.

2. CONSERVATIVE:
   Have no missionary, benevolent, and educational organizations to execute the work of the church.

The church is the pillar and ground of truth (1 Tim. 3:15). They sent funds to the elders of the church (Acts 11:30). Elders were appointed over every church in Acts 14:23. There was a time when there were no elders in these churches and they were still Scriptural, but unorganized. If there were no elders, something was lacking.
“whatever.” Is there “ever” a time we can do something outside His name and expect His approval? If so, what? 


David’s prayer (Ps. 19:13). 

We should feel need to be constrained by His word →beware of selfishness→sin Num. 15:30, 31; Deut. 18:20; 1 Chron. 13:1-12; 15:12, 13. 

We have no right to question God’s ways (Isa. 45:9, 10; Peter, Mk. 8:32). 

The enticement of presumption is real as some were willing to fight, presuming God would deliver them (Num. 14:41-45). Coupled with pride (2 Chron. 26:16-18ff).
Slide 12

PRO-INSTITUTIONAL ARGUMENT

- LIES THERE WHO EXPOSE AN "HERETIC" ISSUE AND THEN SEEK TO MAINTAIN A "TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY"
- PROVIDE A PARALLEL FOR INRULANCE (i.e., THEIR "TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY"

Slide 13

"And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.'"

Mark 16:15

- "GO" ACTION
- "PREACH" THE GOSPEL
- SPECIFIC AUTHORITY

Slide 14

"If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows."

1 Timothy 5:16

- THE CHURCH IS NOT TO BE BURDENED WITH RELIEVING CERTAIN WIDOWS — THE INDIVIDUAL IS!

Slide 15

"If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows."

1 Timothy 5:16

- WHAT CHURCH → THIS: CHURCH (every part works)
- NOT THIS: CHURCH → COLLEGE → CHURCH GROWTH/EDIFICATION

The Local Church is its Own Benevolent Society

Slide 16

"from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."

Ephesians 4:16

- THE BOTTOM LINE IS BOTH OF US CAN 'BE IN HEAVEN'

(01.15.2003)
Slide 18

WHERE IS THE AUTHORITY?

- In the Scriptures
- In the church
- In the church leaders
- In the church members

Slide 19

RE: Lk. 6:30, 35 who is addressed (see, Lk. 6:29)?

Slide 20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scripture</th>
<th>Who is Helped?</th>
<th>Who Helped Them?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acts 2:44-45</td>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>Local Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts 4:32-35</td>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>Local Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts 6:1-6</td>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>Local Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts 11:27-30</td>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>Local Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rom. 15:22-29</td>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>Local Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cor. 16:1-4</td>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>Local Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Cor. 8, 9</td>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>Local Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Tim. 5:5-16</td>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>Local Church</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Slide 21

Today's Marks of Division

1. LIBERAL: Emphasize the physical man by appealing to the carnal nature with “church banquets,” “church kitchens,” “church camps,” and “fellowship halls.”
2. CONSERVATIVE: Do not believe the church is to provide the social needs of man (Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 11:22, 33; John 6:26-35; 51, 52, 63-69; 18:36).

Slide 22

Today’s Marks of Division

1. LIBERAL: Seek to get crowds with “youth meetings,” “rallies,” carnal rewards such as trips to Opryland…
2. CONSERVATIVE: Engage in none of these things, but seek to draw men to Christ with the preaching of the gospel (John 6:45; 12:31-33; Rom. 1:16).

Slide 23

Today’s Marks of Division

1. LIBERAL: Emphasize the physical man by appealing to the carnal nature with “church banquets,” “church kitchens,” “church camps,” and “fellowship halls.”
2. CONSERVATIVE: Do not believe the church is to provide the social needs of man (Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 11:22, 33; John 6:26-35; 51, 52, 63-69; 18:36).

John 6:45, “It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.”

Note the barrage of questions, 1 Cor. 11:22, “What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.”

Does this sound like it is no big deal? If there was ever a place to provide a solution like a “church kitchen” or “fellowship” hall, here is the place to authorize it. In contrast, what is the admonition of the apostle (1 Cor. 11:33, 34)?
Today's Marks of Division
1. LIBERAL:
   Elevate preachers above the rest of the members by using titles as "doctor."
2. CONSERVATIVE:
   Reject all such titles as unscriptural (Matt. 23:6-12; 1 Cor. 3:5-8).

Today's Marks of Division
1. LIBERAL:
   Do much of their work through what they call the "sponsoring church" arrangement—
   many churches pooling their funds under one eldership to do a general work all churches are equally related to do.
2. CONSERVATIVE:
   Reject this arrangement as a violation of the New Testament pattern of congregational cooperation.
   In New Testament times one church only helped another church when the receiving church was in a dire need (Acts 11:27-30).

Cooperation Among Churches

Preach Gospel

EVANGELISM

Acts 13:1-3; Phil. 4:15-16; 2 Cor. 11:8

Preacher

Not Scriptural

Cooperation Among Churches

A church
A work
A gift

Sponsoring Church Arrangement

Centralization of Power

Not Scriptural
Today they have a kids ministry, student ministry, university ministry, community ministry, worship ministry, disciples ministry, missions, counseling center and a young children’s world. Under their missions, this is what they advertised as of 5/19/2017, restoring homeless in Brazil, combatting human trafficking in Southeast Asia, making peace in the Muslim-majority world. They show a picture of only two families who do any “mission work.” Obviously, they send their money to human institutions to combat human trafficking. Regardless, preaching the gospel to change hearts and souls is really not a part of their work. They have humanitarian and social gospels which they serve. They do not resemble anything of the first century church. On their Instagram, they advertise people to share their camp pictures. They advertise Easter service. On their worship night advertisement, they have a picture of a band in the pulpit. On their facebook they advertise Date Night Scavenger Hunt.

2 Timothy 2:14, 15: “Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

A reason why teachers must devote so much time to study. “My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment” (Jas. 3:1).

Ephesians 5:19, “speaking [vocal] to one another [congregational, not solo or church choir] in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing [not humming or drumming] and making melody in your heart [not on your harp] to the Lord.”

Exod. 19:16-24 seems directly connected to the 20:18-20. Note where the fear of God is to be and what its benefit is, 20:20.

Compare, Heb. 12:18-29. Note what we have come to: 1. Mount Zion, 2. city of God, 3. enumerable company of angels, 4. church of the firstborn, 5. God, 6. spirits of just men (saints of all ages), 7. Jesus and His blood. Note what this awesome scene which is viewed only through an eye of faith yields—fear (Heb. 12:28).
How Did We Become So Divided?

- A shift away from Bible authority (Exod. 19:12, bounds; Col. 3:17)
  - Ever ask, “Any word from the Lord?” (Jer. 37:17)
  - Many are no longer ready to hear what the Lord has commanded (Num. 9:8; 2 Kin. 17:14; Nah. 2:9; Jer. 13:11, etc.).
  - Little interest in knowing and keeping what the Lord has revealed (Rev. 2:6, 1 Cor. 11:20; 1 Thess. 2:15)

God’s people had boundaries even from their beginning (Exod. 19:12). Authority is finding out what is permissible and acceptable to God. Observe principle: Staying on the King’s highway not veering off to the right or left (Num. 20:17; Deut. 4:2; 5:32; 17:11, 20; 28:14; Josh. 1:7; 23:6; 2 Kin. 22:2).

Numbers 9:8. When the people had a question about the Passover, Moses could not presume, but had to go to the Lord to get the answer. The people of Israel became so hardened, that they would no longer hear, 2 King. 17:14, etc. Rather than inventing and maintaining human traditions, lets keep the traditions of the Lord and the apostles. 2 Thess. 2:15, “Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.”

How Did We Become So Divided?

- Viewing God’s silence as permissive rather than restrictive
  - Deuteronomy 4:2, “You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.”
  - Revelation 22:18, 19
  - Hebrews 7:13-14
  - 1 Chron. 26:16-20

Did God ever say, “not to build a new cart?” By telling Israel how He wanted the ark of the covenant transported, He excluded every other form of transportation—including this new cart!

What Mark Can We Make?

- Fear God and keep His commandments (Eccl. 12:13)
- Demonstrate an attitude of “teach me.”
  - Job 6:24, “Teach me, and I will hold my tongue; Cause me to understand wherein I have erred” (cf. Job 34:32).
  - Psalm 86:11, “Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name.”
  - Psalm 143:10, “Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness.”
- Be content with what is written (1 Cor. 4:6).
- Hold fast the apostles’ traditions (1 Thess. 2:15; Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:24).

RE: Heb. 10, a controversy had arisen over v. 25 where one was teaching that this passage has in view the first day of the week—exhort one another and so much the more as you see the “first day of the week approaching”? Is this passage really focusing on people exhorting one another to attend only on the first day of the week and ignoring all the other meeting times? People were on the verge of departing from God (Heb. 3:12, 13). They were near departing from Christ to revert back to the Law of Moses and the Aaronic priesthood. The writer of Hebrews has explained that we have a better hope, sacrifices, promises, priesthood, and a covenant. He exhorts them they have a better possession (Heb. 10:34). He then gives them a list of Old Testament heroes who looked forward to the better country of heaven. Defining the day in Hebrews 10:25 to be the first day of the week makes no sense and has no contextual support. The phrase “the day” is never used for Sunday. It frequently refers to the day reckoning (cf. Lk. 17:29). The context determines the meaning of the day. He had previously spoken of judgment (Heb. 9:27-28). He then exorts them to hold fast as you see the day approaching (Heb. 10:19-25). Three things are mentioned in particular: draw near with a true heart, hold fast the confession of our hope, consider one another in order to stir up love and good works. Forsaking the assembling violates all three of these areas and shows no consideration toward others, let alone God. He then follows this warning with what he began—judgment (Heb. 10:26ff). Because we have judgment day in view, we exhort one
another to stay faithful to the Lord and keep the apostles commands. This would necessarily include being faithful in each and every service of the local church—the assembling of ourselves together. Rather than focusing on the minimum that is required of us, let us refuse excuse making and give ourselves wholly to the Lord. Does my attendance reflect a faith that is unwavering, reverent to God, and considerate of others? Does it match Saul’s example (Acts 11:25, 26). Would we have been there when the church assembled and would we have been there to be taught by Saul and Barnabas?