

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRESSIVISM by Carl McMurray

*So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:10 ESV)*

Do good, right? That's what the Bible says, right? And since the above letter was written to the church in Galatia then here is Bible authority for the church to "do good to everyone", right? This is the thinking of the liberal/progressive/institutional mindset. Passages like this one and James 1:27 have been used to justify church funding for day-schools, elementary schools, colleges, orphan homes, retirement homes, clinics, unwed mothers homes, ball teams, gyms, church kitchens, meals, retreats, gas and grocery and bill money for anyone who knocks at the church door, and the list never ends. After all, these are ALL good works aren't they? So it's ok for the church to pay for them! Wrong.

This passage *does* teach us to do good, as James 1:27 does, but the context puts it squarely on the individual to do it, *NOT* the Lord's church. Ephesians is written to a church also, but Eph. 6:4 puts it on fathers to discipline their children, not the church. In the first letter to the Thessalonians Paul told them in chapter 4:11 to mind their own business and work with their hands. That's not the church going into business, that's instruction for the individual. "Visit the sick" doesn't any more mean build a church of Christ clinic than "visit the prisoners" means build a church of Christ jail. A text taken out of context is a pretext!

The problem is not that the Bible is not being taught at this church or that church. The problem is that it is being taught wrong. It's not that passages of scripture are not being applied. The problem is that they are being applied wrong, "distorted...to their own destruction," (2 Peter 3:16) and too many know too little Bible to tell the difference.

The liberal/progressive/institutional mindset starts with emotionalism and so-called good works and interprets the scriptures toward those ends instead of starting with a humble heart to obey and please the Lord, and interpreting the word in THAT direction. Pleasing my emotional self and pleasing God are two completely different goals, two different mindsets, that affect how we read and understand God's word. It explains why good people stand on both sides of the fence, sincerely and honestly. But both sides cannot be right. The end results are too far apart. Will we go to God's message with a desire to satisfy self and my heart, my emotions? Or will we go to the word to objectively discover God's way, God's plan; and be satisfied in trusting him? That is the question we all must answer.