

The Church of Jesus Christ Is Not Denominational

(John 17:20-21)

- Introduction:
1. How many times have we heard the phrase, “Attend the church of your choice?”
 2. How many times have we heard someone say, “It doesn’t matter what church you belong to; we’re all serving the Lord?”
 3. Before we hang our hats on such assertions, consider the following...
 - a. Does that apply to churches that do not believe Jesus is deity?
 - b. Does that apply to churches that do not believe in the godhead?
 - c. Does that apply to churches who do not believe in the sufficiency of the Bible?
 - d. Does that apply to churches who worship Satan?
 4. According to the World Christian Encyclopedia, there are 33,000 denominations in the United States.
 5. My questions tonight are:
 - a. Do you think this is a good thing?
 - b. Is this what God intended?
 - c. Is this pleasing to God?
 - d. Can we be non-denominational today?

I. Let’s Begin Answering Those Questions

- A. First of all, let’s acknowledge that not everyone sees a problem with the myriad of denominations.
 1. ***“Denominations were probably not Christ’s first choice for His church. We recall His prayer that His church would be one (John 17:20-21), and can imagine that He would have preferred for His church to remain fully unified for the cause of Christ. But denominations came to help serve the purpose of God in many important ways” ... “Thank God there will be no denominational divisions in Heaven” (What People Ask About the Church, by Dale Robbins).***
- B. We must ask, “What does the Scripture say?” (Romans 4:3).
 1. (John 17:20-21) Jesus prayed for unity and oneness.
 2. (1 Corinthians 1:10) Paul pleaded for no division.
 3. (1 Corinthians 12:25) No division in the body.
 4. (Ephesians 4:4-6) Oneness.

II. If This Was Not God’s Plan, Then Why Does It Exist Today?

- A. I can answer that in a word - “SIN!”
- B. Denominationalism exists because we seek to fulfill our own desires above the desires of God.
- C. Yes, but isn’t the existence of denominations due to the fact that we cannot understand the Bible alike?

1. No!
2. That insults the intelligence of God who gave us the Bible.
3. We do understand the Bible alike. It's the opinions of men over which we disagree and divide!
 1. God spoke to Moses from a burning bush - (Exodus 3:3-6), and we agree. What kind of bush was it? - Opinion and we would disagree.
 2. Is it right to baptize believers? - (Mark 16:16), and we agree. Is it right to baptize babies on the faith of their parents? - Opinion, and we disagree.
 3. Is it right to immerse/bury people in baptism? - (Romans 6:3), and we agree. Is it right to sprinkle people and count that as baptism? - Opinion, and we disagree.
- D. Ills. of coins... How the Devil is confusing people today.

III. How Can We Be Non-Denominational Today?

- A. Is it possible? Yes!
- B. It will require courage.
- C. Ills. of Baseball.
- D. Ills. of Airport.
- E. Ills of Island approach.
- F. We must get back to, and embrace the question, "What does the Scripture say" (Romans 4:3)?

- Conclusion:
1. Brethren, our plea here is to be non/un-denominational.
 2. I don't want to be a Church of Christ brand.
 3. I'm not promoting a Church of Christ brand of Christianity.
 4. Don't call me a "Church of Christ." Don't call me a "Church of Christ Preacher." Don't tell others you go to a "Church of Christ Church."
 5. When I use the expression, "the church of Christ," I'm not speaking of a brand of Christianity that only contains a portion of all Christians.
 6. When I use that expression, I use it in the way the Bible uses it. It is the body of the saved, and there are none saved outside of it.
 7. The question is, are you a part of this church, and if you aren't or are not sure whether you are or not, then ask yourself that question, "What does the Scripture say?"
 8. (Acts 2:36-38).