

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Denominations – Biblical or not?

Denominations – Biblical or not? - posted by Miccah (), on: 2008/10/16 15:22

Are they biblical?

A have noticed that a lot of folks that belong to a certain denomination believe that that denomination is preaching the truth of scripture. I listened to this Paul Washer Sermon (<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/viewcat.php?cid442&min160&orderbytitleA&show20>) The Meaning of the Cross - Paul Washer where he makes a good comparison between two people who use the Bible as their authority, one being a believer and the other a deceiver. He states that both use the Bible as the main authority of why they believe the way they do (I'll give you two guesses on who he is talking about :-)).

IMO, all denominations, including non-denominational, tend to use scripture to back their own fleshly beliefs about the Lord. If we cannot stand on the Word of God for what it says and what it is, then we stand on the words of men instead. As many of you do, I as well choose God.

How do we as a body of believers continue to spread the gospel to others without slanting it towards our own personal religiosity? Do we continue to stand on the backs of denominations (solid denominations included) because there is great men that have been and still are a part of them? Or do we put aside the denomination business and become sons and daughters of the most high God regardless of what man teaches us about Him?

1 Corinthians 2 comes to mind a bit for both sides of the for and against answers.

I do want to point out that I am not against teachers, pastors, elders etc...as long as they meet the biblical criteria, but only disagree with the man-made denominations. Thoughts?

Re: Denominations – Biblical or not? - posted by sojourner7 (), on: 2008/10/16 17:11

When we get to glory and stand before the Throne; we will find God is not concerned about which church you belonged to; He only wants to know that you know the LORD and loved Jesus and followed Him faithfully and served Him with your life. Denominations are the cause of much discord and strife that should not be found in the Body of Christ. One faith, One God, One Body, One Spirit that should bind us together as one!!

Re: Denominations – Biblical or not? - posted by live4jc, on: 2008/10/16 18:11

Hi Miccah,

In my opinion, denominations are neither biblical nor unbiblical. I believe there are good denominational churches and good non denominational churches. How a particular body of believers functions, in accordance with the Word of God and the direction of the Holy Spirit, is probably most important.

I see both advantages and disadvantages to having denominations. One advantage, would be that if you were wanting to find a new church and knew that a particular church was Baptist or Pentecostal or Reformed etc etc, then you would have a good idea of what the basic beliefs of that church would be, which would aid you in making your decision. However, on the other hand, a church which subscribes to a particular denomination, generally follows a fairly well defined set of beliefs or doctrines. Again, I think this can have both pros and cons about it.

For me, it comes down to the degree to which a particular church body is following God's Word and the leading of the Holy Spirit. I believe that Christians from all churches should be encouraged to fellowship with those who attend churches

of all stripes, provided they are true to the Word of God.

In Jesus,
John

Re: Denominations – Biblical or not? - posted by LiveforGod (), on: 2008/10/16 18:35

Quote:

-----but only disagree with the man-made denominations.

I totally agree with you brother. Oh i just wonder how deeply saddened must our Lord be when he looks at all this strife, division, and at times rivalry we have created . All Children of God make up the Lord's bride. It is only one, and it belongs to him. It is his Church, his people. I do not want to be part of anything else that is not God's Church.

Quote:

-----Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." Col. 1:24.

The church is the body of Christ. And its being the body of Christ, necessarily includes all His members. Therefore to call an earthly building the church is ridiculous, and to call an organized division the church is subverting the truth. No sect contains all the body of Christ, therefore, no sect is the church of God. Then as honest men, who expect to be judged by the Word of God, let us never call anything the church but the body of Christ; i. e., all the saved, either universally, or in any given locality. D.S.Warner

Oh that we would just obey God in everything his word says. If we only accepted it as it is. We tend to make things so complicated, why? Just trust the Lord, trust in his word, and leave the rest to him, he will give you the understanding.

God bless you

Re: Denominations – Biblical or not?, on: 2008/10/16 22:44

Following Jesus is the only way there can be unity in the body of Christ today. Let me paint a picture of modern day denominationalism. Is there anything wrong with this picture? Let's say a preacher comes to hold a revival. He seems to be an Apollos (eloquent speaker). The first night of the service he declares that salvation is by faith only, but the next night he contends that salvation is by faith exercised in obedience to the gospel rather than by faith alone (Rom. 10:16-17; 2 Thess. 1:7-8; James 2:24). The third night of the meeting he declares that either sprinkling, pouring, or immersion constitutes baptism. Then the fourth night, he plainly shows that immersion only is scriptural baptism (Rom. 6:3-4). That isn't all! The fifth night of preaching, he tells the people that they ought to baptize their babies, but at the sixth service he says that penitent believers are the only scriptural subjects for baptism (Acts 2:38; 22:16). Are you following me? He has more to say. At the seventh service he preaches "once saved, always saved," but the eighth, he tells the people that they can be lost through unbelief "after" they have been saved (Heb. 3:1-12). To top that off, the next night he says that it is all right to have a human creed, but during the last service of the meeting, he affirms that we should take the Bible as our only guide in religion (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Friend, how long would you listen to that preacher? Is it wrong for ONE preacher to preach that way? Sure it is! (1 Cor. 4:17). Do you know that the majority of people are perfectly willing for TEN preachers to preach these conflicting ideas? They call it denominationalism! That is division! That is NOT the unity Christ prayed for! (John 17:20-21). God is NOT the author of such confusion! (1 Cor. 14:33). It DOES make a difference what we believe and preach! If we don't abide in the doctrine of Christ, we do not have God (2 John 9). Examine these Scriptures to see if this is the truth (Acts 17:11). If we reject the words of Jesus, we will be judged by Him in the last day (John 12:48).

the above was printed in a newspaper

Re: Denominations – Biblical or not? - posted by repentcanada, on: 2008/10/16 22:55

They are not good. You have whole denominations who are sick with sin and error and those facts are then transferred to every local church within their denomination.

Re: Denominations – Biblical or not? - posted by A-Run (), on: 2008/10/17 7:19

(http://www.cfcindia.com/web/mainpages/topical_bible_study.php#A_Six_Fold_Freedom) http://www.cfcindia.com/web/mainpages/topical_bible_study.php#A_Six_Fold_Freedom

Hi

I think this teaching by Zac Poonen (pls follow above link and listen to "Freedom From Denominationalism" under the topic: 'A SIX-FOLD FREEDOM') is beneficial and does throw some light on the subject of denominations.

Re: Denominations – Biblical or not? - posted by rowdy2 (), on: 2008/10/17 7:47

Reply to all

Peace is not found anywhere in the world but only in the body of Christ. We have to stay focused on God and not become part of the babel of men and women, who are the authors of confusion. Religious confusion is the spirit of the world. We are one in Christ Jesus, saints of New Jerusalem that accept Him and His peace and love. Peace is a gift from God to the Body of Christ Jesus, but not the world.

All that are in Christ Jesus are not part of the pit of tribulation and confusion. We don't walk in darkness but in light, we separate from them and gather in our Lord. We walk in Light not in man's wisdom and its darkness. When you seek power and authority then the part of you that is a sinner is in charge. When we are humble, we are as a child putting our trust in God our Father and putting God in charge of our lives.

God loves us and is able to preserve us even in a world with the lost that are under His wrath. So please let us walk before God in light and peace praising His Holy Name together as neighbors and members of one body. He is near that justifies us.

KJV

Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book? When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back this I know; for God is for me. In God will I praise his word: in the Lord will I praise his word. In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.

For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living? Psalms 56: 8-13

KJV

The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. John 3: 35-36 KJV

Eddie

Re: Denominations – Biblical or not? - posted by LoveGodsWay2, on: 2008/10/17 8:12

The church I attend is part of a denomination. Overall our church is fairly healthy, but not perfect. I have attended other churches in the same denomination that are clearly unhealthy.

The point I'm making is that many churches' problems are not with their denomination, but with their local leaders.

For example, some major denominations are giving their approval to homosexuality. And the healthier local churches of that denomination are breaking away from them.

Re: - posted by RevBenjamin, on: 2008/10/17 13:41

Quote:
-----How do we as a body of believers continue to spread the gospel to others without slanting it towards our own personal religiosity?

Paul simply stated this:

God forbid that I should preach anything but Christ and Him crucified.

I believe this is the Good News, the Gospel reconciling sinners to God through Jesus Christ.

R.G. Benjamin

Re: - posted by elected (), on: 2008/10/17 15:37

Quote:

When we get to glory and stand before the Throne,
we will find God is not concerned about which
church you belonged to; He only wants to know
that you know the LORD and loved Jesus and
followed Him faithfully and served Him with
your life.

I essentially agree with what this brother says. Its all about Jesus, if you are in a denomination or out of it, if Jesus is your greatest passion and the one whom you follow as your Lord and Saviour you are on the path leading to life everlasting. Denominations teach much about dogma and doctrine, everyone of them emphasizes certain aspects of the truth of bible or Jesus to the neglect of other truths. Jesus is the Truth, denominations often start from a man or men of God who rediscovered certain bible truths that have been laying "hidden" in the bible from lack of revelation or blindness from Christians.

Emphases are good but we need to be balanced in exposition of bible truths. Luther rediscovered justification by faith and here comes reformation of the church. Calvin goes a little deeper to rediscover the sovereignty of God, the anabaptists and baptists were enlightened about the truth about the teaching of water baptism. God raised Wesley to proclaim and spread scriptural holiness throughout the land (Great Britain) and teach about the perfect love and what a powerful revival came out of methodist movement. A century later Finney a Spirit filled man, not only experienced and saw powerful revivals gripping whole communities and transforming the lives of thousands but he also rediscovered those sacred spiritual laws about genuine revival that blessed many in the succeeding generations. A new era of mass evangelism started with D. L Moody that brought a fresh breeze of Holy Spirit to churches throughout America and Great Britain, stirring them to win the lost for Christ. Phoebe, Anna Whittall Smith, William Boardman, A. B. Simpson. Andrew Murray, Torrey, William Booth were Spirit filled men and women of God, part of what was called holiness movement or Keswick movement who expounded with anointing resting upon them the doctrine of sanctification by faith and Holy Spirit Baptism (or the necessity to be filled with the Spirit).

Along these spiritual movements came restoration movements like the disciples of Christ or church of Christ and Plymouth brethren ect., even though with some divisive or exclusive tendencies still they were fervent to get back to primitive christianity of apostolic time, putting aside creeds and confessions or human traditions, they were zealous for a restoration of primitive christianity. Alas, as good or sincere their motives might have been for restoration to primitive christianity, their initiative failed. But thanks to plymouth brethren we have today rediscovered the truth of Christ second coming as a King to reign and establish a 1000 years of peace and prosperity on earth.

Not to forget men of God like David Brainerd, William Carey (called father of modern missions), Hudson Taylor who were pioneers in missions, such men like these and others like them with a similar passion for the salvation of heathens in foreign land or homeland were trumpets of God in the wilderness calling the church to be militant and proclaim the gospel to the end of the earth in obedient to Christ's great commission to make disciples of all nations.

Throughout all these Spirit inspired movements God has been gradually restoring and recovering the bible truths to the church.

My point is that we need to see the "whole picture" in the bible and not get stuck in denominationalism, or stuck in emphasizing certain truths to the neglect of other truths that we see in the "whole picture" of the bible. We need to move forward and keep in step with the wind of the Spirit and not put God in a box. Christ is our doctrine, his became our wisdom, justification, sanctification, redemption. He is our Divine healer, our coming King. The whole counsel of God is revealed only through Him.

I believe the way to get free of denominationalism is to be a humble christian and not to let knowledge to puff us up. Jesus is the living Truth, and only in Him we can see and have the "whole picture truth", but even if we don't agree about non-essentials we should agree on the essentials of our faith and walk in love, which is the greatest of gifts. After all the only true denomination common with all genuine christians through out history in this age of grace is CHRISTIAN. Christ in heaven will only recognize as his followers those who were like him, who partook of his divine nature and did the will of God on earth.

Our problem today is "too much knowledge about God", I believe the greatest need we have is to dig up the "old" wells and walk the old paths and after we have appropriated by faith these "old" truths in our lives and trodden the old paths of holiness we can expect for fresh rediscoveries from God's Word.

We often pray for revival and we need one, not only a revival but a continual revival, a daily Spirit filled life is the norm not the exception. Denominations have their rise, their glory and their fall from grace, movements die away or slow down often after the men of God pass away and they live their legacy and example for us to follow. The wise christian who has spiritual discernment should follow the MOVE of the Spirit and join that local Body of Christ where the presence of God is a priority and not the program. We desperately need revival, yes, but we should not forget that in this age of apostasy and babylonian captivity God has his chosen remnant throughout denominations or out of denominations and only in their midst the real fire of God's presence in burning and will continue to burn for the glory of God till the glorious second coming of our Lord Jesus.

Re: - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2008/10/17 15:49

"Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you. Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, 'I am of Paul,' and 'I am of Apollos,' and 'I am of Cephas,' and 'I am of Christ.'" Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" (1Cor.10:10-13).

Paul rebuked the Corinthian believers because they were dividing up into different groups and following after their favorite teacher. It is no different when we divide up into our various denominations. Many Christians follow after the teaching of their various denominations and not after the doctrine of Christ and the true teacher of the Church, the Holy Spirit.

Today we are saying: "I am of the Baptists", another says "I am of the Pentecostals", etc. etc. We have to see Christ as the Head of His Body (the Church). We have been called to walk in the unity of the Spirit with one another, but to a large extent the Church is divided through all of these various denominations or non denominations.

In John 17 Jesus prayed: "That they all may be one; as Thou Father, are in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 17:21).