

The Advantage of Christ's Church

No quarrel with denominations if they are approved of God

- Has anyone proven denominationalism by Scripture?
- If denominations are not God's idea, why take a chance on them?
 - Pr.14:12, There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.
- If denominations are authorized by Scripture, it will not be difficult to prove.
1 Th.5:21

N. T. Church

- Almost all agree that one can be in NT church without being in a denomination.
- Lk.8:11
- Ac.2 ... 8 ... 9 ... 11 ... 18
 - *Lord's church*
 - *No denomination*
- 1 Co.1:10

I. Lord's Church is not Superior to Denominations...

1. Intellectually

Mk.11:18, Jewish murder plot

- *Jews fear Him* because all the people are astonished...at His teaching.
- His influence on others scared Jews

Ac.2:41, kind reception, welcome; acknowledge truth of.

Ac.4:13, *unlearned* is not *illiterate*... v.14

1 Co.1:26-29, **get wise about wisdom**

Ezk.33, trivial listeners do not prosper

2. Socially / Financially

Mk.10:...22, But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

...23, Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!”

Ac.3:6, Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”

3. Numerically

Christianity . . . Islam

Numbers do not determine truth.

- Ex.23:2, You shall not follow a crowd to do evil
- Jg.7
- 1 K.18

4. Morally

Many in denominations have high morals

Ac.10, Cornelius

Contrast Ac.5, Ananias and Sapphira

1 Co.5:1

Lord's church has no monopoly
on intellect, social skills, finances,
numbers, or morals...

I. Lord's Church is not Superior to Denominations...

**II. What is the Advantage
of the Lord's Church?**

People who respect authority of Scripture (truth...salvation, Jn.8)

- Seek word of God.
 - Others: “take my word for it”

People who respect authority of Scripture

- Seek word of God.
- Satisfied with word of God.
 - Ac.2:...37-41, 42...
 - Mk.16; Ac.2:41 (Lk.8:40)
 - Baptized Jews were excluded from all fellowship with Jewish brethren...
 - Ac.8:39; 16:34

Proselyte baptism

The first indubitable references to proselyte baptism belong to the 1st Cen. A.D.

...Epictetus at the end of the century makes mention of baptism as a distinguishing feature of the real convert to Judaism.'

'When we see a man playing a double game we are accustomed to say, 'He is not a Jew but pretends to be one.' But when he accepts the experience of the baptized and chosen, then he is in name and reality a Jew' (Dissertations II.9.9-21)

John's protest

“John's protest (Mt.3:9) was not directed against the belief that God would fulfill the promises made to the covenant people. He rejected the notion that the Jew had a right to the Kingdom, simply as a Jew” –G. R. Beasley-Murray, 23

Paul's language

“Paul's language in Ro.6:1ff (et al.) implies that baptism is an initiation into life in Christ and the church. I do not think that Paul could have bracketed himself with other Christians in his use of the first person plural in Ro.6:1f. if baptism, had not been for him the critical turning point in life, marking his deliverance from sin and experience of the new life of the Spirit. We are asked to assume an intolerable position if it be suggested that baptism could have brought that experience to Paul several years after his conversion...” – ib., 95

People who respect authority of Scripture

- Seek word of God.
- Satisfied with word of God.
 - Ac.2:...37-41 (Lk.8:40) 42...
 - Mk.16; Ac.2:41 (Lk.8:40)
 - Jews baptized...excluded...
 - Joy – Ac.8:39; 16:34
 - Ac.4:13-18, different conditions...
 - 2 K.5 . . .
 - Mt.13:44-46

People who respect authority of Scripture

- Seek word of God.
- Satisfied with word of God.
- Subject to word of God.
 - Rule of faith and practice.

Do Scriptures change people . . .
or do people change Scripture?

It does make a difference

- Prov.14:12
- Jer.5:31
- 2 Jn.9
 - Chevy
 - Mt.20
 - Mt.28

Lk.2:44
Ac.8:20

Conclusion:

- To be satisfied with less than Lord's plan is to be satisfied with sin and satan.
- Ps.127:1

“The Bible has called into existence tens of thousands of other books”