

“WHOSE RIGHT IT IS”, #4

INTRODUCTION

In 3 previous lessons entitled “Whose Right It is”, we examined the only time this term is recorded in the Bible (Ezek. 21:27), where God is declaring that Coniah was the last legal king of Judah, before the future King would rule on David’s throne in heaven—namely, Jesus Christ. Next we made application of the principle in the right of that King to give the “right” of people to Hear, Believe, Repent and be Baptized to become children of God, as suggested in John 1:12. In our 3rd lesson, we applied the principle regarding unborn babies in giving them the right to be born, rather than to be aborted.

In this lesson, we shall look at what the New Testament teaches about the divine right of the Lord’s church to exist, and no divine right for denominations to exist, and to point out that IF denominations have the right to exist, then the church has NO right to exist, but if the church **does** have the right to exist, then denominations have **no** right to exist.

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, the church of Christ HAS THE DIVINE RIGHT TO EXIST.

- A. The “church” (house of God, or heavenly kingdom) has the divine right to to exist—for a number of reasons, all beginning with the letter “P”.
1. One reason is that it was PLANNED by God in eternity. Eph. 3:10-11
 2. Another reason is that it was PROPHESED by inspired prophets throughout the Old Testament. Isa. 2:2-3; Dan. 2:44
 3. Still another reason is that it was PROMISED by the Lord. Matt. 16:13-18 (explain fully)
 4. Yet another reason is that it was PURCHASED by the blood of Jesus. Acts 20:28
 5. A final reason is that it was PREACHED by inspired men in the first century.
 - a. Beginning with John, it’s coming was preached. Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Luke 16:16
 - b. After Pentecost, the existence of the kingdom was preached. Acts 8:12
- B. The apostles foretold that **sinful changes** WOULD take place that would put the ONE church into obscurity for awhile. Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 4:1
1. By the 7th century, the true church had been replaced by a false church, known as the Roman Catholic Church, ruled over by a Pope in the city of Rome, Italy.
 2. In the 16th century, Protesting religious bodies began to spring up against Rome, and were known as Protestant denominations, which were basically intended to **reform** the apostate church, **or** to simply form their own protesting churches, to worship as they pleased.
- C. The original church was simply the church of CHRIST, and did not have a denominational name, for it was not originally a denomination, nor was formed to “protest” any existing religion of man.
1. The original church of Christ was made up of local independent congregations that were overseen by elders, and not single Pastors as practiced among most denominations now.
 2. They were bound by the teaching of the Lord and the apostles in the written word as recorded in the New Testament. Acts 2:42; John 12:48; 17:20-21
 3. Their worship consisted of prayer, giving, the Lord’s supper each week, the singing of hymns without the accompaniment of organs or pianos, and the preaching of the word of God, without the use of human doctrines and creed books. Matt. 15:9; 1 Pet. 4:11
 4. They taught and practiced the same plan of salvation: Faith in Jesus, Repentance

of sins, Confession of their faith, and Baptism “for the remission of sins.” Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38

5. Not a single denomination that exists today, was even in existence in the first century, and the church existed **without denominations**.
 - a. Denominations are the products of men’s labors, and none of them are even named in the New Testament.
 - b. The church first existed without denominations, and they are not part **of** that church, just because they **claim** to believe in Jesus Christ.

II. 2nd, what about denominations, DO THEY HAVE THE DIVINE RIGHT TO EXIST?

- A. The word “denomination” simply means **“the act of naming a divided part of something”**, such as the names Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, or Pentecostal, all of which began after 1500 A.D.
 1. These denominations or divisions of Protestantism all believe and teach different things that keep them distinct one from another.
 2. Actually, when a division takes place, it separates itself from that from which it was separated, meaning that they are connected more to Catholicism than to the original church of the Lord, and many of them, in their creed books, even claim allegiance **to** “the holy Catholic Church.”
 - a. If an arm is divided FROM the physical body, the body can still exist without the arm, as it is no longer a part of the body.
 - b. When men form new teaching, and give their product a human name, it is not part of the original body of Christ.
 - c. The ONE body of Christ exists apart from and without any denomination or **all** the denominations, of which there are over 35,000 in the world.
 - d. The Lord actually **condemns** division in the church today. 1 Cor. 1:10-13; John 17:20-21
- B. DO DENOMINATIONS HAVE THE DIVINE RIGHT TO LIVE OR EXIST?
 1. The church of Christ **has** the divine right to live, for the reasons we have already shown, and as long as we have the New Testament, that church can and will exist. Luke 8:11; 1 Pet. 1:23-25
 2. Denominations have **no** divine right to have ever been formed in the first place, and consequently have no divine right to exist.
 3. If they **do** have the divine right to exist, that means the Lord is pleased with them, and since we have so many denominations, the original church of Christ has no need to live, for there are enough “denominations” already.
 - a. Most denominations today do not claim to **be** the original church of Christ, and classify themselves as part **of** that church.
 - b. The believe that the “church of Christ” in reality consists of **all of the denominations** in the world, and they resent any one group actually **being** that original church, and want us to join with them in this claim.

CONCLUSION

- I. The church of Christ was divinely created by the Lord, and denominations have separated themselves from that plan—without his approval.
- II. Let’s share the truth with the world. Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16

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