

YOUR CHURCH AND THE BIBLE, No. 1

INTRODUCTION

- I. There are literally thousands of separate and distinct denominations in the so-called Christian world today.
 - A. Each denomination was founded by men, in different times and different parts of the world, and no two are exactly alike, **in spite** of the teaching of the scriptures that state that believers in Christ are to be **ONE**, and we are to all teach the same thing without being divided. John 17:20-21; 1 Cor. 12:13; 1:10
 - B. It behooves us **all** to compare what we are religiously with what the Bible says, to be **sure** we are right with God, and on the way to everlasting life in heaven.
- II. Now let's look at some specific things regarding YOUR CHURCH AND THE BIBLE.

DISCUSSION

I. FIRST, YOUR CHURCH AND IT'S NAME IS IMPORTANT.

- A. Names have always been important in spiritual matters.
 1. Sometimes the "name" refers to "authority", and it must be authorized by Christ. Acts 4:10-12
 2. Then, sometimes the word "name" is simply an "identifying" word, to separate one thing from another.
- B. In the Bible, there are various identifying terms for the church OF the Bible.
 1. Sometimes the church is identified as the "church of God. 1 Cor. 1;2; 1 Tim. 3:15
 2. Sometimes it is simply identified as "the church."
 3. Sometimes it is identified as the "church of Christ." Rom. 16:16
 - a. It **is** such because it was built by Christ belonging to Him (Matt. 16:18); He is the head of the church (Col. 1:18); He is the Savior of the church (Eph. 5:23).
 - b. Collectively, various congregations were "churches of Christ." (Rom. 16:16)
 - 1) The word here is "church**es**" (in the plural), so in the singular, each one would be a "church of Christ."
 - 2) Sometimes each congregation was associated with the "City" in which it existed, but it was still the church of Christ **IN** that city.

II. SECOND, YOUR CHURCH AND ITS FOUNDING IS IMPORTANT.

- A. Christ is the **founder** of HIS church, and He is the only foundation of the true church. Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:11
- B. The **time** the church was founded, which was in A.D. 33, on the first Pentecost day after the resurrection and ascending of Jesus into heaven, at a time known as the "last days." Isa. 2:2-3; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:16-17
- C. The **place** for the beginning of the church was Jerusalem, and **no other place.** Isa. 2:1-3; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-3; 2:1, 5, 38; 47

III. THIRD, YOUR CHURCH AND AUTHORITY IS IMPORTANT.

- A. Christ has "**all authority**" in religious matters, and shares it with no one else. Matt. 28:18; John 12:48; Col. 1:18; 3:17
- B. Today, in Catholicism, the POPE has all authority for that church, but no other religious body.
- C. Protestant denominations of **men** TODAY, establish their own authority through synods and councils, and decree for their "church" WHAT to believe and teach.
 1. They sometimes admit that they differ with the early church.
 2. In 1890, Edward Hiscox, a Baptist theologian, produced a *Standard Manual for Baptist Churches*, and on page 22 of that manual said, "It is most likely that in the apostolic age when there was but 'one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,' and no different denominations existed, the baptism of a convert, by that very act, constituted him a member of the church, and at once endowed him with all the rights and privileges of full membership. In that sense, 'baptism was the door into the church.' **Now it is different; and while the churches are desirous of receiving members, they are wary and cautious tht they do not receive unworthy persons.**"
 - a. Hiscox could only speak for his denomination, but we ask WHY is it different today?
 - b. Do they think Christ was mistaken, or do they want to make salvation easier to obtain?

CONCLUSION

- I. Other matters than the name of the church, the founding of the church, and the authority **in** that church are important, but other matters, such as 1) The **worship** of the church, and 2) **Salvation** in the church, are also important, but are matters which we shall discuss in another lesson.

II. If your church is NOT described in a positive way in the Bible, what assurance do you have that God is pleased with it, or that you should belong to it?

A, The day the church began, the Jews asked what they needed to do in view of their sins, and Peter told them they needed to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2;38).

B. Some 3,000 people, that day, were baptized, and added **to** the church because they were saved. Acts 2;47

C. If you do what they did, the Lord will do for you what He did for them.

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