

General Topics :: Rightly dividing the bible among sects, cults, and denominations.**Rightly dividing the bible among sects, cults, and denominations. - posted by DEADn (), on: 2013/2/28 19:14**

Among religious institutions there seems to be always a feud as to who is right and who is wrong on issues that are central to the faith as well as issues that are more in house debates (ie. tongues, miracles, to dance or not to dance, dress attire, being born again).

Throughout the last 15 years I occasionally take a step back and ask why do these things happen?

I grew up Lutheran Missouri Synod. When I went back there for a couple of visits have becoming born again I found it boring, traditional, and very dead to my soul. I even told my dad this to which he was very upset. I didn't care because I knew what was within me and it wasn't within this Lutheran church. They are basically a stripped down version of the Catholic Church yet I asked why do they teach what they teach? They teach traditions just as the Catholics do only stripped down.

Not long after leaving this church I found myself in the Pentecostal church, Assemblies of God. TOTAL CULTURE SHOCK!! Yet I found they were teaching things that the Lutheran church doesn't teach. Issues such as tongues, the gifts of the Spirit, dancing (in the Spirit) as well as preaching repentance of sins and being born again and even a degree of 'holiness'.

Baptists seem to emphasize baptism and once saved always saved. The more Fundamental ones emphasize styles of dress and appearance and even hellfire and brimstone. The Church of Christ emphasizes singing without music and baptism is necessary for salvation. Oneness Pentecostals emphasize Jesus Only and Baptism in Jesus Name only as well as 'holiness'.

It causes me to ask, are these churches really preaching the Gospel and/or are they taking things they like out of the Bible and emphasizing certain teachings because it suits their own personal standards?

The issue of tongues. Only emphasized in the Pentecostal church. Why only the Pentecostal church? Do Pentecostals have an agenda with it or do tongues actually exist? How about Prophets? discussion is usually only found in Pentecostal churches because other churches say there are no modern day Prophets. Only the ancient prophecies.

Baptists have their arguments on it and yet when I read the bible I see tongues have 'offices' in scripture. There is some kind of prayer language and there is also the Upper Room experience type of thing. Pentecostals believe tongues happen today yet outsiders don't? Talk to a Pentecostal and a Baptist about tongues and they arrive at totally different conclusions on tongues. Why? Is one quenching the Spirit and the other yielding to the Spirit? Did someone divide up the scripture wrong or are they following denominational agendas?

Baptism can be another issue. Baptism as an infant or baptism after being born again and how does one church use the bible to teach it one and another church use it to teach it another way? Who is rightly dividing the bible?

When I have studied the bible I don't take into account a baptist or pentecostal or Lutheran way of seeing it. I look at it for what it is and then when I see a truth I often ask myself, why is so and so church teaching this differently?

Why do more Fundamentalists believer's like to focus more on dress attire to preach holiness. Is that what holiness is? dressing attire to reflect an inward man? Independent Baptist churches like to preach men should have short hair. Women longer hair. Women should wear dresses. Yes, this is spoken about in scripture and to one sect of Christians but is that an absolute truth or a simple directive to a certain culture at that time because of certain circumstances? This teaching has done alot of damage in the church and yet is it part of the Gospel or a personal pet peeve of church leaders to instill from the pulpit? In so many cases it has turned into a ball and chain especially for women.

I am sorry to be long on this but it is an indepth topic and something that I ALWAYS have in the back of my mind when I hear churches pushing some agenda and asking why the emphasis on it and are they really being balanced in what they teach and if not why not?

John

Re: Rightly dividing the bible among sects, cults, and denominations. - posted by beekpr, on: 2013/2/28 21:09

DEADn - I believe that you are "dead on"! Churches do have an agenda, but I am not always sure that it is God's agenda! I am grieved at how many people seem to be content to parrot what their denominational tradition teaches without prayerfully searching the Scriptures themselves. I love my Bible and the God Whose blessed Spirit directs those who study it with a desire to know His counsel. It is a Divine miracle that so many authors could write so many books over such a prolonged period of time and still be in perfect doctrinal harmony - now that is His agenda! I suspect that God could do a great work in any denomination (or congregation) if people would seek Him with all their hearts and be willing to change their tradition if it fails to line up with the Word. Also, the same Spirit Who inspired the Bible alone can make it come alive in the minds of those who read. He only comes to us as we ask God to enlighten our understanding, acknowledging that we are unable to see on our own.

I expressed my burden for the Church along this line recently in a poem, "Holy Fire", in the Devotional Thoughts forum.

Re: Rightly dividing the bible among sects, cults, and denominations. - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2013/2/28 21:51

John, you are not the first person to ask this question and neither will you be the last one.

I have strong convictions on some of the issues you mentioned and I could give you chapter/verse to prove it. However, when you focus on doing hoping this will earn you brownie points with God you are dabbling in legalism. But if you immerse yourself in allowing Jesus to be in you who is in the Father He will teach you these things He wants you to know and do. What you do will be an outgrowth of his living in you.

When Jesus dwells within you you will not look like the world, nor will you act like the world nor think like the world because the world is at odds with the Father and Jesus. Read John 17 - study it as though your life depends on it. Doing so may take some of the heat off this issue for you...

God bless.

Re: - posted by DEADn (), on: 2013/2/28 22:08

I often wonder how much bondage some missionaries place on converts in foreign countries as a result of their misplaced focus on certain issues.

I have always tried to balance my understanding of the bible in interpreting it so that even if I have a discussion with someone I can tell them what I am understanding about certain things. The issue of tongues is always one that comes up with Baptists. It is a foreign concept with Lutherans. They look at you funny, lol.

And then with a fella who is Church of Christ. His emphasis is 'what did Jesus say?' which sounds very noble but then I asked, well, does Paul disagree with Jesus? If so then I suppose the NT is really messed up. This fella says Jesus said we must repent and be baptized for salvation. With baptism a person cannot be saved.

I can talk to near every person from any church and quickly find out what their quirk/focus happens to be. Then you tend to find out how they live out their lives accordingly and many times it is in ignorant bondage.

oh, by the way, in the new modern church, the gospel is turned into a gospel of success so to live in God to be truly successful and that means positive things happen to you in this physical world. OH Please!!!! Success is a business term and not a gospel term. Faithful is a Gospel term. And in the world's eyes what is Faithful to God is foolishness in the world's eyes. The Apostles were foolish to the end. They were not successful. They had not quiet death bed but theirs was torture to death because of their faith. We can't fit such a concept into being successful because it is like trying to fit a square through a circle. It doesn't work unless we put a spin on it. Such is the case with success leaders of the Gospel. I sit back and cry inside, shake my head, and often times feel helpless as I supposedly hear of people being swindled of their blind faith and money in order for success.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2013/2/28 22:20

Brothers, these are good thoughts, we also have had a burden to see the unity of believers not under one specific label etc. we are publishing a free book to encourage the simple gathering of believers apart from denominations with Jesus Christ as the head: www.gospelfellowships.net

Re: - posted by andres (), on: 2013/3/1 4:16

DEADn,

Have you shared these things with the elders of your Body, mabey they can give you council about these feelings and views you have...

Mabey they will also take council from your words,

andy

Re: - posted by DEADn (), on: 2013/3/1 7:20

Andy

I have voiced myself in the past with a few pastors after a service. I usually am told that certain teachings are what the body of that church believes. I don't always hear about their own personal study.

Recently I tweeted a concern about a topic to a youth pastors wife. She actually does the work while her husband is a stay at home dad. She told me she can provide a link to help my understanding and it turned out to be a statement of beliefs from the Nazarene church. I thought 'really?' I wonder if this is how some cults start, get disillusioned with the main stream church and then some go off on their own starting their own church and followers.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2013/3/1 8:46

Quote:
-----Recently I tweeted a concern about a topic to a youth pastors wife. She actually does the work while her husband is a stay at home dad. She told me she can provide a link to help my understanding and it turned out to be a statement of beliefs from the Nazarene church. I thought 'really?' I wonder if this is how some cults start, get disillusioned with the mainstream church and then some go off on their own starting their own church and followers.

We need to look like how the Lord looks at the Church. He does not seem denominations but believers, He sees those who are truly born of Him.

2 Timothy 2:19 says: Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."

So we can tell the people of God who are leaving a life of sin, they are the true believers. Also most denominations start as simple groups of believers who feel a great desire to be more closer to the book of acts, thus all these groups started with very good intentions. The sad thing is in the end it creates more division. We can learn from every denomination a precious truth that they emphasize so they are not wrong by themselves.

There is a need to see great unity amongst true believers and groups, this is one burden behind www.gospelfellowships.net brother. Not to organize groups in a denominational structure but to allow them to connect under the headship of Jesus Christ where there is no denominational leader nor strict guidelines, as the Spirit of God grows and guides each body of Christ that meets together.

Re: - posted by andres (), on: 2013/3/2 22:13

" Not to organize groups in a denominational structure but to allow them to connect under the headship of Jesus Christ where there is no denominational leader nor strict guidelines, as the Spirit of God grows and guides each body of Christ that meets together."

Dear Greg,
How does this look like in time and space?
Sincerely asking
andy

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2013/3/3 8:44

Dear Brother,

Great question. Practically that is what we are working on in a 500 page book that encourages great simple practical steps to gather as believers in Jesus Christ in even just groups of 2-3 where Jesus Christ says He is in the midst.

We are having a conference call prayer meeting opportunity where I am sharing on this simply, if you had the chance please join us:

<http://gospelfellowships.net/2013/03/03/persecution-watch-prayer-call-tuesday-march-5th-about-gospel-fellowships/>

Re: - posted by murrcoir (), on: 2013/3/3 18:09

Why can't men just wait for God to move that will come..

We plan, organize, write books, set up web sites, the list could go on.

Moses also made the same mistake. When he looked upon the bondage and oppression imposed upon the Hebrews (his own people) by the Egyptians, he killed an Egyptian (Ex. 2:11-12).

Moses' desire to help God's people was right but he tried to do it on his own strength.

But the day came when he saw a burning bush that wasn't consumed this time, you'll not go in your own ability. You'll go in my power, strength and wisdom to deliver the Children of Israel out of Egypt.

Wait for the burning bush..

Re: Rightly dividing the bible among sects, cults, and denominatons. - posted by Sree (), on: 2013/3/3 21:00

Why are there many denominations that are contradicting one another?

Have you ever seen a fake 1 cent coin? But you could see many fake \$100 bills. So only precious things are faked. Bible and the Gospel is precious. That is why there are different groups that try to make different versions of it that appear like original but are missing something in it and is not complete.

Why does certain denomination give importance to certain things while certain denominations does not?

It depends on the thing we are talking about. There are many who major in minor things. For example tongues do exist but the Bible talks very little about it. But there are denominations that major in this minor thing. Holiness is a major thing that the Bible emphasizes a lot in the New Covenant but there are very few denominations that hold them.

Also people fail to take a balanced view on things. They take hold of extreme ends. For example when Pentecostals started embarrassing so much on gifts and when people saw the fake gifts shown by people just to get the approval of men, they went to the other extreme of not believing in gifts forming the brotherhood community.

Brother Zac Poonen explains it with an illustration like this, God's truth is like white light which is made of 7 different colors

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rs. People take 1 or 2 or 3 of these colors and believe that they have the complete truth. But it is still not white. To see the white light you need all 7 the colors.