

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Denominational Christianity is Not God's Best for the Church**Denominational Christianity is Not God's Best for the Church - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/5 20:51**

Hi All,

I am going to start by making a statement and then an explanation.

"Denominational Christianity is not God's best for the Church"

If Jesus Was here right now on the planet their would be no denominations.Why?Simply because he would be able to teach,answer and explain all our difficult questions with the Authority to back his answers up.Thus ending this unnatural division in the Church.

Furthermore we can even say That if Peter or Paul were here their would be no denominational division because they could answer all our difficult questions on doctrine that divide us using scripture.

For instance if Paul was in your Church on Sunday and we asked him "What does the Bible say about Losing your Salvation" he could answer that accurately with Authority .If we asked him questions like "Can A Christian have A demon" he could answer that or is the "Rapture Post,Mid or Pre Trib" he could answer these questions 100% correctly.

These questions or any other teaching could not cause division because the Apostle would be able to correct it with correct teaching given in Authority.

All of the points in the scripture below are important but look at the fact that Apostles teaching is included.

Acts 2:42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Whats Your Point?

- 1.Like I said Denominations are not the God's Best and we need to recognise this failing.
- 2.Its poor teaching that causes splits.Although the answers are in the scripture for us all their is no universal understanding to doctrine that cause division accepted by all.
- 3.We dont have the Apostles of the First Century Church around that can fix the problem.We may have Apostles as in Church Planters but not ones with the Authority of James ,Peter and Paul who can spiritually discipline with love teachers who step out of line
- 4.God will restore Apostolic Doctrine to end division in the Church
- 5.We however cannot restore Apostolic Doctrine,thats up to God but we can pray for it.Its a bit like David and the temple ,he couldnt build the temple himself but he could help prepare for it.

I feel I should share what God has given me so that it may help you understand why we have so many voices but no uniformity,staff

Re: Denominational Christianity is Not God's Best for the Church - posted by passerby, on: 2019/11/6 0:52

I guess even during the time of the apostles, there were already distinct christian groups, denominations were emerging and bound to happen.

What we can do now is to show charity, goodwill, and respect as we meet and pass one another in the course of our life.

A group of christians which are strongly bounded to each other perhaps is a better way for the survival of the entire church or for personal survival of a christian.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/6 5:29

Hi Passerby,

The simple answer is that although divisions arose Paul quickly or as quick as possible brought Teaching to close those divisions and denominations only happened when the Apostles had passed. The divisions not denominations we can see are in Revelation when we had the seven Churches but they were all measured to the Apostles Doctrine.

Charity goodwill and respect in fairness wont stop division thats like saying "lets all get on together"

On the quote below the it is clear that the early Christians were bonded under the Apostles Doctrine and it wasnt about Survival at all

The quote:

A group of christians which are strongly bounded to each other perhaps is a better way for the survival of the entire church or for personal survival of a christian.

How could anyone think that God wanted or is satisfied with "denominations" when you think of it, its such a silly idea and so far away from God's Best its scary. God wants unity under in the word. Thanks for the reply but God could never be happy with division in the Church of any kind, How could he? staff

Re: - posted by CalvaryCom (), on: 2019/11/6 6:19

In the Pyongyang revival of 1907-10 the Methodist and Presbyterian missionaries put aside their doctrinal differences, sought the Lord in fervent prayer, and saw a Gospel explosion result in hundreds of thousands coming to salvation in Christ.

When the communists came into power in the late forties many believers fled south, hence the strong Christian presence in South Korea to this day.

Re: Denominational Christianity is Not God's Best for the Church - posted by narrowpath, on: 2019/11/6 6:34

All these divisions and denominations are man made. Some of their doctrines are approved of God, others aren't. Some denominations came into place because they countered apostasy in their generation. They are a fact we have to live with for the time being.

Some denominations are very strong where others are weak.

The Brethren put great emphasis on communion, and right so.

The Baptists on baptism and the word, and right so.

Calvary Chapel on teaching through all the bible, and right so.

The Pentecostal on the Holy Spirit, and right so

The Mennonite on holiness, and right so

This is, of course a crude generalisation.

I once went into a brethren assembly that turned pentecostal, and they blended both into something beautiful.

Can we all learn from each other?

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2019/11/6 8:22

No denominations or anything should have any effect on all believers being one in Christ. Jesus built one church and prayed for unity, not division, we must be of one mind on the essentials of the faith.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/6 9:24

Hi Bill,

Of course denominations have an effect on all believers being one in Christ. The fact that they exist means we are not one in Christ and the essentials of the faith vary from denomination to denomination and this is not God's best for the Church.

My point is that if Paul was here or James the essentials would all be the same in every church and so ending denominations and these divisions caused by not understanding the Scriptures correctly.

Paul or James would correctly preach the truth about such things as "Losing Salvation" vs "Once Saved Always Saved"

or Whether the rapture is "Mid Pre or Post" etc and in so doing end division. And although at the moment some of the truth is preached correctly by one denomination and another truth by another there is still division because denominations can't agree on what is the truth. If Paul or James were here this would not be the case or if it was then action would be taken, staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/6 9:31

Hi Narrowpath

You Quote:

All these divisions and denominations are man made. Some of their doctrines are approved of God, others aren't. Some denominations came into place because they countered apostasy in their generation. They are a fact we have to live with for the time being.

I agree totally with this statement and I think in my original post I said the same in point 5

I said:

5. We however cannot restore Apostolic Doctrine, that's up to God but we can pray for it. It's a bit like David and the temple, he couldn't build the temple himself but he could help prepare for it.

We can and should recognize that denominational Christianity is not GOD'S BEST

God does not want any Church to be good in one area and bad in another as pointed out in the book of Revelation, Can we learn from one another? Certainly but it won't end denominational division. Before the sickness can be cured we have to recognise that it is a sickness. staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/6 9:36

Hi Calvary,

Think what could happen if all the denominations came under Apostolic Teaching like in the early Church and were of one correct teaching with no need to put aside doctrinal differences as there would be none, This revival of 1907 would be like a drop of water in a waterfall, staff

Re: staff - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2019/11/6 9:49

Thanks! great explanation, so in today's terms, we might say, so we would all be on the same page.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/6 12:38

Hi Bill,

I guess that's it really God's Best is that we are on the same page doctrinally, This was done when Apostolic Authority was in the Church and we don't have that now. staff

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2019/11/6 20:18

At this point in time, we have to respect the individuality of each person and the individuality of each congregation. Otherwise, we may fall again into violent inquisitions or persecutions of the dark ages.

In their own time, denominations will be dissolved, but in our present condition, obsession/compulsion with the concept of total unity can be a disaster.

Even as we exchange our opinions in this thread, clearly there is no perfect unity but should we quarrel about it.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/6 23:25

Hi Passerby

I would say that the following as far as I can understand what your saying is unscriptural:

That we have to except the "wrong" that is denominations and we have to accept following "wrong teaching" so that we will not be persecuted.

Denominations cannot of themselves dissolve or put another way they cannot self dissolve nor are they in control of time as they are not a living entity

Paul, James and Jesus believed in total unity of the Church under one doctrine and in no way would they except denominations. In fact we could say all of the epistles came about because Paul was constantly communicating through letters what was proper doctrine.

Sometimes people can see honest discussions about genuine subjects as quarrels when they the subject upsets them but it's more liberating if they try and take the scriptural aspects away from the discussion.

The point remains and it has to be recognised that if The Apostles were on earth today we would have no denominations, blessing staff

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2019/11/7 2:59

I hope you are not saying that all those who are in denominations are in sin.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/7 5:41

Hi Passerby,

If you read back through the thread you will see that I have not mentioned individuals at all nor sin. People like myself who are part of a denomination are under wrong structure whether we like it or not.

What I have said and I think its easy to agree with is this

Denominations are not God's Best For the Church

Denominations come from not understanding scripture fully and correctly

If The Apostles were here they would be able to fully and correctly interpret scripture with Authority

Because The Apostles are able to fully and correctly interpret scripture with Authority their would be no more denominations as all the scripture that now divides us would be made clear.

staff

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2019/11/7 9:01

Again, Jesus built "one" church and prayed for unity, Denominations divide the church. If you know people that are in denominational churches, most will always try and convince you that theirs is the best church. Every denomination I know of is run by an large organization, and the churches that belong to that organization, are not able to do as they please. I used to be Baptist, and I can tell you, they are probably the most strict about the way your church will be run, if your a member of the baptist organization, which has around 50 million members.

Southern Baptists believe we must hear the Gospel, believe Jesus is Lord, confess that belief before others and repent of our sins, then we must be baptized. Then the Southern Baptists believe a Christian cannot lose his salvation; the Churches of Christ disagree, a believer can "backslide" and end up in Hell just like anybody else.

The fundamental consequence of denominationalism is that error is just as good as truth! If the denominational concept is true, then all denominations are acceptable to God even though they flatly contradict one another regarding worship, salvation, etc. This means error is just as good as truth and unrighteousness is just as good as righteousness. Denominationalism must be wrong because it says that error does not condemn.

Anyone who believes that denominations don't divide, please answer me this, if they don't divide, why even have so many denominations?

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/7 10:50

Hi Bill

Agreeing with your post ,denominations divid the church and as you said if they don't divide why are they even so many denominations.?

I guess what I am adding to that is in the Early Church whenever error came into the body The Apostles countered that error so it would not cause division by using proper doctrine as an antidote. Currently we dont have that antidote but we do need it,staff

Re: - posted by narrowpath, on: 2019/11/7 12:41

Actually, I do believe this is the job of present day apostles and prophets to a degree.

They are not founding apostles like Peter, Paul, James and John but installed as per Eph 4.

here it says:

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

There are but a few apostles and prophets in the wider body of Christ whose voice carry that sort of authority. They can address error and bring necessary correction. I think Derek Prince was one, and there are others like some featured here on SI like Zac Poonen, John Piper, Paul Washer, the late David Wilkerson etc..

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/7 13:54

Hi Narrowpath,

I think you are totally correct in linking the gifts to the discussion of correct teaching.

This is where I part company with your thinking as although the list mentioned of great Christian leaders even Apostles I'm sure ,they don't have the the Apostolic Authority of Paul and Peter etc .The proof of the pudding is in the eating in a sense ,if they did have the Authority they would be no denominations as they would have got rid of them.

Also as far as I know their are great differences between the teaching of David Wilkerson and Paul Washer(hope he is well by the way I havent heard)on Salvation.If Paul and Peter were here they might have a disagreement like in Acts on hypocrisy but that would be cleared up and they would sing from the same hymn sheet.As Bill said its one body,one gospel not two,
staff

Re: Division v. Unity - posted by ccchhrrriiss (), on: 2019/11/7 14:51

Hi Staff,

One of the oft-used defenses for denominational divisions is that the denominations unite various believers by specific belief(s). In other words, individuals who collectively agree upon things gather with one another without fear of leaders mandating from those beliefs within their teachings.

In many ways, this makes a lot of sense. For instance, a set of principles collectively agreed upon as sound doctrine (and required for fellowship or leadership) would prevent someone from entering and teaching otherwise or splintering that fellowship. Denominations have provided institutional stability in such churches.

I believe that this is misguided. Sometimes, an entire sect can go wrong because, well, the leaders do. If you look at many denominations today that have rejected the teachings of Christ in favor of the philosophies of men, you realize that dangers that come with this. When the denominational institution or organization hits a doctrinal iceberg and sinks, the people in it often do too.

Moreover, I believe that there is a more immediate danger. Denominations are often created by the very sectarian beliefs that separate the Body of Christ rather than those core beliefs that bring unity. Denominations are, effectively, sects.

The term "sect" actually derives from the old Latin word "secta" which literally means "a way, road, beaten path." This word is actually derived from the Latin word "sectus" meaning "follow." Ironically, "sectus" is a Latin amalgamation word from the Proto-Indo-European word "sek" meaning "to cut." Thus, literally-speaking, sects are about separation.

<https://www.etymonline.com/word/sect>

Granted, that separation is guided by individuals who truly believe themselves to be sound in doctrine. Yet, this is the real issue.

Most denominational sects form on the basis of doctrinal differences. Yet, most of those doctrinal differences aren't guided around what Christendom would consider "essential truth."

If we were to make a list of all of essential Biblical doctrines, most people in the Body of Christ around the world would agree upon them. Those are things that are agreed upon whether you're a Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc.

At the same time, I do agree that there are some denominations that do teach something that has strayed far from the truth when it comes to essential doctrinal truths. For instance, the Roman Catholic Church set itself up as THE only true church. From the very beginning of its proto-concomitant establishment (circa Constantine), many of its "foundational" doctrines and teachings were already apocryphal and false.

When it comes to those sorts of things, it really just takes one read-through of the Word of God to know this. This is probably why the Catholic Church opposed the availability of the Word of God in the common tongue.

Other major cults did something similar in how they united people behind apocryphal doctrines or heresy. The Mormons actually have established other new "gospels" and works that they consider "scripture" that unites their adherents behind their doctrine. In 1961, the Jehovah's Witnesses (founded in the 1870s) published their "New World Translation" (and they use the word "translation" in a very loose sense) in such a way that it would seem to validate their peculiar doctrinal beliefs.

Like the RCC, it really just takes a person a single read-through of the Bible to understand the flaws in the doctrinal beliefs of those groups (and groups like them).

Modern Christian denominations comprised of real believers in Christ are not simply motivated by a defense against heresy. Rather, they unite behind essentials of the faith. However, most of them also consider certain doctrinal beliefs to be "core" despite the non-essential or a widespread embrace of that particular doctrinal persuasion.

This is where I think that denominations are primarily flawed. Why can we not teach the essentials and allow the grace for believers to follow Christ for the rest?

If you make a list of the more controversial doctrinal views oft-debated here on SermonIndex forums, you'll find what serves as a basis for many denominational congregations. They aren't assembling primarily over the essentials; but, rather, they are uniting over doctrinal matters that they place as having such grave importance that they seem to believe that they are essential.

Obviously, I would never believe that such individuals aren't true children of God. In fact, I admire anyone who follows as they believe the Lord and/or prayerful study has led them. However, I do think that there is an invisible understanding that would limit other true believers from full fellowship with them.

I think that the passages in the New Testament regarding the so-called "Council in Jerusalem" is very important when it comes to the Body of Christ. This is found in Acts 15 and Galatians 2.

I won't go over that (because I think that we have all read it), but it is essentially the first time that Paul the Apostle met with the other apostles. Their meeting, interestingly enough, was in regard to questions about doctrine among the believers inside and outside of Jerusalem.

While the Book of Acts (written most likely by Luke the Physician) details this from a third-person perspective, the Book of Galatians details this from Paul's perspective. One thing that you realize is that Paul was not enamored by the positions or reputations of man -- including the Apostles (Galatians 2:6, 11-14).

Yet, I think that there is an interesting thing in Galatians that often goes unnoticed. In verse 9, Paul mentions that he and Barnabas were given the "right hand of fellowship" by Peter, James and John.

The term "right hand of fellowship" is interesting here. Some denominations have turned this into an actual ritualistic endeavor or ceremony -- literally offering or shaking a hand as a sign of acceptance. If you read commentary on this, it seems that the perspective differs from writer to writer. Matthew Henry wrote that it was a symbol of acceptance and "equality" from the apostles to Paul and Barnabas.

The passage itself in Greek (uses the term "dexios koinōnia") and simply implies extending the right hand for fellowship or communion. In essence, they got to know Paul and Barnabas and recognized the grace that God had truly given them.

This actually makes me think of two things.

Shortly after I came to Christ as a young teenager, I traveled to the Lindale, Texas area to meet Leonard Ravenhill. I did this on a whim and, after getting directions from a local person working on his truck on the side of the road, showed up unannounced at his home. His wife, Martha, answered the door. After she checked with her husband to see if he would meet with me, she led me to a seat in their house (*while my friend with a driver's license waited outside). I was very nervous.

Brother Ravenhill walked in and sat down across from me. He began asking me questions. I don't remember all of those questions, but I remember feeling almost uncomfortable -- as if he was interviewing me. I answered all of his questions honestly. Eventually, I said something that seemed to trigger a response. Prior to that, he seemed almost a bit cold or academic. When I answered that final question, he smiled, immediately seemed more relaxed and nodded to Mrs. Ravenhill. At that point, one of those most stirring, effective and inspirational conversations of my life began.

In fact, Brother Ravenhill mentioned that he would do this (the interview) in order to know if he was making the best use of his time. Up to that point, he seemed quite stern and unfeeling. Then, after he smiled, I felt like he was warm and welcoming. I suspect that this is similar to offering the right hand of fellowship without actually shaking a hand.

Secondly, I remember taking a required sociology course in college. One part of the course covered was a survey of primitive anthropology. The professor covered the concept of the handshake. With only a few minor exceptions, almost every culture on earth uses a handshake -- and the practice goes back for thousands of years. Even those few cultures that don't use it use other types of greetings (often two-handed bowing or extending the right hand in the air) that convey the same thing.

Anthropologists trace the origin to the concept that most people are right-handed. Since the right hand is the dominant hand, it is the one most often used for hunting, fighting, writing and cooking. They reason that the handshake or extending the right hand (either in the air or to someone) was a way of showing peaceful intentions and acceptance. It is also about openly offering yourself to that person. It is the opposite of "raising a hand against" someone. Whereas lifting up of hands is a sign of surrender, the lifting of the right hand was a sign of acknowledgement and acceptance.

Symbolically speaking, I think that this is what is lacking through the advent of denominations. While you can visit denominational congregations and be welcomed (and, of course, given many handshakes by the pastors, leaders and congregation), there is still a bit of non-acceptance without complete and full compliance to the denominations or congregations list of "we believe" doctrines.

In fact, it seems that sectarian beliefs within the faith divide believers from fellowship with the greater Body of Christ much more than it unites local believers of like mind behind a particular set of non-essential beliefs.

If you look at many of the more divisive debates on SermonIndex over the last 16 years, you'll find that most of them were on those same issues for which many denominations are formed. In churches, you'll be welcomed, but the full measure of welcome (and ministry or leadership) is reserved for those who adhere to very particular set of seemingly dogmatic beliefs. This is a far-cry from how Paul and Barnabas were welcomed with a "right hand of fellowship" by the apostles with very little emphasis on specific doctrinal adherence.

I've often lamented the fact that our local churches and denominations feel a need to push for acceptance of oft-disputed teachings if they are to be accepted. Even if I believe in something like tithing, head coverings or the idea of a catching a way of the Bride of Christ before the tribulation, is this something that should be demanded of the congregation for full fellowship? Why can't we teach the essentials of the faith and then teach about the various beliefs on non-essentials? It just seems that pastors should be able to allow the Holy Spirit to lead and guide believers in such matters or issues that aren't essential to faith in Christ.

This is where denominations miss the mark. They imply that those who agree upon the "we believe" doctrines are inherently "better informed," "more mature" or even "more faithful" than those who do not. This lacks the humility of extending t

hat right hand of fellowship after seeing others (as Matthew Henry saw it) as being "equals" in the faith.

Denominations cause us to forego the emptying of ourselves and making ourselves as "nothing." It is that Philippians 2 encouragement that is needed more than ever in the Body of Christ at this point of history.

Re: Chris - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2019/11/7 15:22

Some really good thoughts there Chris. I've often heard that the RC Church, doesn't even consider themselves to be any denomination.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/7 16:17

Hi Chris

Good post

Thats a long one so I'll comment in pieces .

I think that their can be no defence of the Church having denominations except that we are not in a position to change where we are.

Yeah even if we have all the core beliefs then their still will be doctrinal issues that will divide us into denominations.

Denominations all comes down to doctrine and the Jerusalem Council shows that the The Apostles had the Spiritual Authority to sort out divisions even before they arose as in the light burden given to Gentile Christians.

Not ALL division is due to doctrine but all denominational division is due to doctrine.

What you say about humility and denominations is very interesting and hits the mark.

On Pastors and denominations and independant churches we the church have a problem though inso much as the position of Pastor in the modern Church is unbiblical and it usurps its place in the structure of the Church.

I realize we cant solve the problem of denominations ,I realize that but God can and we have to wait for him to make his move.All I am asking is that we recognize that even though we cannot do much if anything about denominations we can recognize that denominational Christianity is clearly Not God's Best for the Church.

My personal belief and I dont want to make a denomination about it ha ha is that God will soon begin to make a move that we didnt even think was possible or probable to remove these man made barriers staff

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/9 12:10

Chris, I really appreciated your lengthy yet well written post as I share those same sentiments on this topic. In the past, as I've tried finding a church with my wife and two kids, I've been ousted over non-essential doctrinal differences, such on as the timing of the rapture and Calvinism vs free will in salvation. It's been very discouraging to have to experience that kind of thing while trying to find a church to be a part of with my family.

Imo it's unrealistic to think that God will somehow get all Christians to agree on every non-essential doctrine, before Christ's Second Coming. With all due respect I don't see that taught or promised in the Bible, as Chris pointed out from Scripture.

Romans 14 is another scripture that comes to mind. Paul lays out there that we should expect there to be differences of opinion or belief in non-essential matters and that we should not let that divide us as Christians.

To expect all Christians to agree on every single non-essential issue before being able to fellowship is sad and will only continue to flame the fires of unbiblical divisions within the Body of Christ.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/9 15:04

Hi Oracio,

The view you put forward is I agree probably the prevailing view i.e that it is unrealistic that all Christians would come to agree on all issues before the second coming.

I believe although this view is the most popular and rational view ,it is also wrong.

Paul excepts that their are differences of opinion granted but he would never except a difference of opinion that would cause denomination to occur.

If Paul or James or Peter or Jesus even was here they would be able to teach what is of God and what is not and in so doing would eradicate the need for that division or denomination.

Nobody is saying that we need to agree on every single non essential before being able to have fellowship,thats not the point.In fact its denominations that are stopping Christians from fellowshiping not the other way around,

The point is that denominations are not from God and we should recognize that fact.I do believe it is scriptural that God will restore Apostolic Doctrine and Authority to the Church before the second coming and inso doing will eradicate denominational man made barriers that inhibit fellowship as it does now.It is up to God to restore though in his time not up to us and anyway we cant do it even if we wanted too,staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/9 17:59

We are the Church of the unrealistic,the Red Sea ,water into wine,Pentecost or the resurrected Christ appearing to over 500 .Its not a small thing for God to bring the Body back under one structure and it may look impossible but isnt that what Our God's speciality is? staff

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/9 18:01

Hi staff, this is from your OP,

Quote:

-----4.God will restore Apostolic Doctrine to end division in the Church

5.We however cannot restore Apostolic Doctrine,thats up to God but we can pray for it.Its a bit like David and the temple,he couldnt build the temple himself but he could help prepare for it.

I feel I should share what God has given me so that it may help you understand why we have so many voices but no uniformity,staff

My concern is that on the one hand, you seem to acknowledge that denominations were started on account of non-essential doctrines over which Christians should not divide (at least it seems that way in your other posts after your OP); and on the other hand, you seem to say we should pray for and expect for God to show all Christians the correct understanding regarding those non-essentials so that there won't be anymore divisions and denominations, right?

My question is, why not pray for God to break down denominational barriers by helping us see the foolishness and carnality of dividing over non-essentials? To me that seems more biblical than to expect for God to show all believers the correct understanding of all non-essential doctrines.

In other words, I believe we should pray for and work toward accepting one another in spite of our differences and disagreements on non-essentials.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/9 18:09

staff, this is my challenge to you brother, do you believe God is able to break down denominational walls by opening eyes to the foolishness of dividing over non-essentials? My point is that it would take just as much of a miracle for all believers to unite via God convicting us of the foolishness of dividing over non-essentials as it would for us to unite via Him revealing all true interpretations on non-essentials. The former, however, seems to be more biblical for us to pray for and expect imo.

Re: brother staff - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/9 20:57

Hey brother, it seems that I may have misunderstood your viewpoint in this thread and for that I apologize.

I thought you came across as having a mindset of demanding that all Christians agree on non-essentials.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/9 21:26

Hi Oracio

Im really just saying deonominations arent Gods best and I think he will do something about it but we cant because it would involve a souverign move of God to do it.

Im also saying the divisions that cause denominations to exist are doctrinal and for God to make a move he will have to nullify any doctrinal issues that are causing these divisions. These issues usually I find are big issues and are not non esseietial issues .

After all divisions like once saved always saved vs losing ur salvation or even are the gifts of the Church for today have answers. One is right and one is wrong; both cant be right. Jesus if he was sitting here between you and me in conversation would come down on one side or the other and give scriptural reference why.

So he definitely can if he wants bring everyone back under the Apostles Doctrine which doesnt cater for divisions that are the cause for denominational Christianity , thanks for being understanding when we write things down they become harder to explain than face to face urs staff

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2019/11/10 7:52

I think no one can claim that denominations are God's first hand plan. But God has definitely caused denominations to be born.

1 Cor 11:19 - And indeed, there must be divisions among you to show which of you are approved.

God has caused these divisions (Denominations) to separate the approved people from those who are not.

Many Christians see denominations as some wrong or detestable thing. Catholics often make fun of protestants by showing the divisions among them. But if a person knows God's heart, he will acknowledge that God favors divisions over a whole bunch of corrupted people in some kind of unity. God calls people always to come out of Babylon which is a corrupt Christian system. He does not tell them to stay there and preserve unity over quality.

For example the birth of protestants itself was a division from Catholic Church which was a single denomination. We all know God caused it to separate a people for himself out of dark Catholic church.

Similarly in generations to come, God has made certain denominations to be born out of darkness. For example Methodists by John Wesley was one such movement. Salvation army by William Booth is also another. Today I believe CFC Churches planted by Zac Poonen is one such initiative by God.

If I was in John Wesley's time then I would have joined the Methodist movement and similarly Salvation army if I was in Booth's time.

Such denominations were formed by God but later the leaders missed the objective of the founders of these movements and clung on to the pattern formed by the founders. That is why Most of such denominations which started well are today very corrupt.

If we are a disciple of Jesus then we should identify the movement of God and long to be part of it. Even if such movement requires us to give up our traditional denominations, we should be willing to pay the price. Many Christians of Luther's time found the movement of God through Luther and came out of their Church system to form the Protestants of today.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/10 11:09

Hi Sree

Denominations are not Gods first or second hand plan but come from man.

Denominations come out of movements .The movements are blessed by God but not the denominations.As you say John Wesley and Booth were movements that eventually turned into denominations when things went stale.

On The verse you quote to back up the existence of denominations,I cant see any link but Paul seemed to be admonishing them on their behaviour and not linked to denominations at all.

1 Cor 11:19

17But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worse. 18 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part I believe it. 19For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you. 20Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, 21for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. 22What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you

Movements are from God but not so they turn into denominations which cant be blessed by God as they are not from him,

The further away from John Wesley and Booth the movement got the deader it became,staff

Re: Staff - posted by Sree (), on: 2019/11/10 17:40

You do not seem to understand the meaning of denomination.

Dictionary definition - a recognized autonomous branch of the Christian Church.

In short it is just a division or a branch of Christianity. It is true that Protestants have lot of branches or divisions or denominations, however you put it up. But based on 1 Cor 11:19 that I quoted, God himself will allow divisions, which is Good in God's eyes. This meaning of the verse which is very clear, no one can deny it. The purpose of division is to separate the God approved people from those who are not.

Based on the verse it is clear that divisions among believers is not a wrong thing. God allows it. So having divisions in Protestant Churches in the name of denominations is not a bad thing in God's eyes. This is far better than Protestant Churches staying as a single denomination that is fully corrupt.

This is how God sees things. As a protestant I am not ashamed of multiple denominations as God himself is not ashamed of dividing his disciples.

Lets take the example of John Wesley, he started the Methodist denomination or movement. Whatever you call it. A person who followed John Wesley and his teaching will not associate with any other church during Wesley's time. SO clearly it is similar to modern day Denominations. I find nothing wrong with Methodist becoming a denomination if they hold the values of John Wesley, but sadly they do not. Hence God has to bring his people out of it into other movements of God.

In short the essence of my post is, divisions among disciples of Jesus is acceptable (good) in God's eyes compared to a united Church which is totally corrupt.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/10 18:26

Hi Sree,
Im going to comment on your ending qoute first,

The best of God is a united Church that is not corrupt compares to a united Church that is corrupt(although if it is corrupt it could never be united except in evil)

God allows things that are not right like division just as he allowed slavery for a time as he weaned Israel off the practice or the practice of more than one wife until he weaned them off that etc

You are making no distinction between division and denomination .The division allowed in Corinthians has nothing to do with denominations ,The division in Corinthians is to do with bad behaviour not poor doctrine.
Divisions are not acceptable by God in the long run,we are one Church and one bride.Divisions are acceptable and holy within the One Church such as the gifts list out and we are to watch out not to have petty squabbles and to look after the weaker brother and sister.

I am not talking what is good or better but what is God's best and denominational Christianiy has a fundemental problem ,its Authority is unbiblical and not from God.

It leads invariably to the Pastor being in a usurped role out of line with its proper pecking order not to mention Committees being in control of Churches(which is in fact witchcraft)

Just because God plays the hand thats dealt doesnt mean he agrees with the game but rather he works all things(good and bad) for the good for those in Christ Jesus.

When the Sadducees challanged Jesus regarding the marriage of woman to seven brothers he corrected their doctrine which had divided them from the Pharisees,namely that their was a resurrection which they did not believe .Proper Doctrine makes denominations unnessacary.To the Sadducees he answered

Jesus answered, "You are mistaken because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God

He didnt namby pamby them and say its ok to have ur denomination or sect based on not knowing the scriptures or God s Power but rather corrected them with Authority.

In his good time God will use proper Apostolic Doctrine to bring the Church in line with the word wholly and so ending denomination by proper doctrine,staff

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/11/11 13:01

Hi Staff:

you said: "In his good time God will use proper Apostolic Doctrine to bring the Church in line with the word wholly and so ending denomination by proper doctrine"

I think there's a lot of truth in what youre saying but Im not so sure how God will bring such unification.

To me...its impossible to get past human limitations. Even in your last quote..."proper apostolic doctrine" just who says what is proper for everyone to come into alignment with it? We are fraught with caveats in every turn.

What God's final unification will look like is for the prophets to see and declare. I have not seen what such a unification will look like or even if I had a glimpse, articulate that unity in accuracy.

The whole subject dies the death of a thousand caveats.

even if I say "we refuse all denominations", those who would agree with you...do they now add this statement to their 'statement of faith' for their Church? By that simple action you are in fact imitating the very thing denominations do.

I think Sree had some good things to say about denominations...but the issue itself is so thorny no matter how you handle it, you or someone else will bleed over it.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/11 20:59

Hi Gloryandgrace,

I think the important point and the main point you make and the one that seems impossible with man but is possible with God is

How God will Bring such unification?

So if we try to bring about unification then as you say it will "die a thousand caveats".

That's why I was careful in saying although we can recognize what's wrong we can't do anything about it as you say the issue is so thorny and not in our ability to solve.

The problem is doctrine and only when God restores Apostolic Doctrine will the problem be solved i.e. when we all come under Apostolic Doctrine there will be no denominations as we will be under the one doctrine.

We need not reject or refuse all denominations because it will solve nothing.

So that leaves us with the Answer which is:

God will restore Apostolic Doctrine with a world wide move of his Spirit in his own time, Not by might but by his Spirit.

Is there anything we can do?

Recognize denominations aren't God's best,

Pray for God to restore Apostolic Doctrine in the Church

Recognize the move of the Spirit when he comes,

urs staff

P.S

I believe what I'm saying is from the Spirit and I only bring the topic up as to help understanding of what is to come.

I hazard to guess that everyone on the forum would be happy if we understood the word as one to a mature man.

Some of the doctrine I hold dear maybe wrong for instance I'm a pre-tribber and when Apostolic Doctrine is restored I might not be.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/12 12:34

For a while I attended a church that accepted Baptist believers as well as those who believe in infant baptism. They performed infant baptisms separate from their main Sunday services, and those who were Baptist were not obligated to attend those baptisms. There was mutual respect and unity. It showed that churches can have unity despite such disagreements on non-essential doctrines.

I think an ideal church in this present age would allow for believers to disagree on all non-essentials while maintaining unity. For example, believers who believed in the continuation of certain spiritual gifts would be able to fellowship right alongside cessationist believers. Continuationists could have their own meetings (whether on Sundays or otherwise) where they could practice the gifts. And they could all come together in meetings where there would be mutual respect and edification.

The same unity would be displayed among Calvinists and non-Calvinists, Pre-Trib and Post-Trib believers, etc.

Again, I don't believe the Lord would command for us all to agree on non-essential doctrines. I believe He would have us working toward uniting despite our minor differences. The disunity and contentions displayed among different denominations is a mark of immaturity and carnality. They refuse to give any space to anyone or anything that doesn't embrace their pet doctrines.

I think we need to be careful when speaking about the restoration of Apostolic Doctrine in the last days. Because someone may arise in our midst and claim that they are restoring Apostolic Doctrine in these last days and seek to reset the record straight on non-essential doctrines. That has happened several times and cults have been born.

I believe we already have Apostolic Doctrine in terms of essential biblical doctrines that separate us from false religions and cults. We need to unite in the essentials we all embrace and be charitable toward one another in non-essentials.

We can civilly and respectfully discuss our disagreements on non-essentials, without being mean toward one another or

dividing over those disagreements. The problem arises when we refuse to give the other brother or sister room to disagree, when we demand that they see things our way else we start calling them names or tell them to shut up. This should not be.

Re: Oracio - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2019/11/12 14:18

Quote:
-----Oracio asked...We can civilly and respectfully discuss our disagreements on non-essentials, without being mean toward one another or dividing over those disagreements. The problem arises when we refuse to give the other brother or sister room to disagree, when we demand that they see things our way else we start calling them names or tell them to shut up. This should not be.

Brother, this is why I hardly ever post here anymore, I just do more reading, because some folks here believe their opinions are literally scripture.

Re: brother Bill - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/12 15:18

Brother, I'm not gonna lie, that's one reason I've also taken a hiatus from posting here at times. I know that in times past I've either instigated a negative reaction or reacted myself and got caught up in that kind of contention here.

One thing that works against us here is that it's hard to convey our full expressions in text form. For me personally, I tend to be forthright and just speak things as I see them without giving that much thought, so I have to be careful not to come across as being too harsh.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/12 15:58

Hi Oracio,
It's hard to get a point across using the written word even the bible! If Peter or James were here talking straight to us the message would be conveyed quicker and clearer as is the case when we use SI forums too.

So I'm not talking about Civility or trying to understand other Christians point of view or even coming together on programmes where ever possible, I'm taking these points as a given that we do these anyway. I'm not talking about being Charitable in non essentials this is a given and but we still have denominations a manmade division.

Non of the above lead to denominations

In reponse to your quote:
I think we need to be careful when speaking about the restoration of Apostolic Doctrine in the last days. Because someone may arise in our midst and claim that they are restoring Apostolic Doctrine in these last days and seek to "reset" the record straight on non-essential doctrines. That has happened several times and cults have been born.

Paul clearly writes about non essential arguments so I think that subject is well taken care off and I am only dealing here with the issues that cause denominational division.

We cannot fail to do what is right and listen to what is right out of fear that a cult might arise or something bad might happen. We cant be governed by "fear", If thats the case we will miss any move of God. If John Wesley knew what would happen to the Methodists after he was gone he might not have preached at all!

In response to your quote:
I believe we already have Apostolic Doctrine in terms of essential biblical doctrines that separate us from false religions and cults. We need to unite in the essentials we all embrace and be charitable toward one another in non-essentials.

The Apostolic Doctrine is there alright in the bible but we have no Apostolic Authority or Apostolic structure in the Church to administer it.

How can I believing in the gifts unite daily and agree with a Baptist who doesnt believe in the gifts?
How Can I who believes you cannot lose your salvation attend a fellowship that believes you can and sit there in unity and in agreement? When I see that as a works gospel and another person doesnt.

The world should be laughing at us Christians who have a bible with 66 books and about 40 different writers but cannot answer or agree on the basic questions.

So again I say God will move by his Spirit to restore Apostolic Authority and indeed Apostolic Doctrine will be able to refute cults and any non essential beliefs that causes division if that's anyone's worry about the restoration of Apostolic Authority in the Church.

There can be no real argument in my opinion that denominations are anything but tolerated by God but that he has a bigger plan and greater plan than a Church divided by essential doctrinal issues, staff

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/12 18:02

Hi staff, you wrote:

Quote:
-----How can I believing in the gifts unite daily and agree with a Baptist who doesn't believe in the gifts?
How Can I who believes you cannot lose your salvation attend a fellowship that believes you can and sit there in unity and in agreement? When I see that as a works gospel and another person doesn't.

Are you saying that belief in the gift of tongues being for today and belief in eternal security are essential doctrines to you, over which you must divide from others?

Neither John Wesley (whom you commended in this thread) nor William Booth believed in eternal security nor in the gift of tongues being for today.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/13 8:52

Hi Oracio,
There is a wide difference between Baptists and Pentecostals (generalizing) on the gifts and tongues are a small part of that.
It's not that we must divide from others, we already have, the horse has bolted Pentecostals are one set of denominations and Baptists are another. It's not that both sets of believers don't recognize that the other are saved, it's just that there is a division there caused by doctrine already.
Varying beliefs in eternal security makes one Church totally different than another.
Just because I recognize the good in John Wesley doesn't mean that I think he was right on all doctrine and he more than likely would not fellowship with a Church I attend and I would find his Church hard for me to attend. So there is a division between John Wesley and myself on doctrine. One of us is right perhaps John Wesley, perhaps not and the other is wrong. Both are not right and if it was down to a small issue like described in the bible it wouldn't cause a denominational split but on the bigger issues it does, staff

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/13 20:40

Hi staff, it seems that we are understanding each other's views on this topic now as opposed to talking past each other and for that I'm glad.

What I get is that, while you do not see those two doctrines you mentioned as essential for salvation, you do see them as essential for fellowship within the same church.

So that's where we disagree. I see those two doctrinal issues (as well as others that some may consider to be essential for close fellowship), as being non-essential for both salvation and close fellowship.

Just like that church I mentioned was able to work things out despite the differences among them regarding baptism, churches can work things out regarding other non-essential doctrines, including the two you mentioned. The problem is that they don't want to even try to show grace and respect for other believers who disagree on those points. I'm referring to showing grace and respect in terms of welcoming others into their local church's membership.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/14 5:56

Hi Oracio,
Sorry maybe its my explanation but your missing my point.

A:Its not just the couple of doctrines mentioned they are just examples.It could be other examples

B:These Doctrines and others have already caused division and already stopped fellowship.The divisions are their whet her essential or non essential.

C:Churches cant work things out despite differences ,if they could then their would be no denominatioal differences.So t heir is no real fellowship between Medthodist and Pentecostals.

Why would I ever want to go to Methodist Church me being a Pentecostal?!'d find it dead and would have to question so me of their beliefs.

D:Your basically saying to me Churches can get over denominationalism by being nice to each other and show Grace t hen we will have no division.This is not accurate and it wont work when it comes to denominations.

E:We wont have close fellowship as our denomiational differences will quickly arise.We may get on well but their will alw ays be a barrier.

But this is what your really missing Oracio from my posts.

Doctrinal differences(whatever they may be) cause Denominations.

Denominations are not from God

The only way to have one Church with no denominations is correct Doctrine.

staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/14 6:08

Hi Again Oracio

Id be interested what your actual view is on the points below would be.

Doctrinal differences can cause Denominations.

(Bearing in mind not all Doctrinal Differences cause denominations)

Denominations are not from God

The only way to have one Church with no denominations is correct Doctrine.

staff

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/14 15:33

Hi staff, I donâ€™t think Iâ€™m missing your point but simply disagreeing with your viewpoint on this topic. And thatâ€™s okay. I used to think similarly. I do think itâ€™s unfortunate with all due respect. Because itâ€™s a viewpoint wherein one refuses to accept that Christians can have close fellowship despite disagreements in non-essentials.

Quote:

-----A:Its not just the couple of doctrines mentioned they are just examples.It could be other examples

I understand that. Again, those and other doctrines are non-essentials and should not cause divisions among Christians.

Quote:

-----B:These Doctrines and others have already caused division and already stopped fellowship.The divisions are their whether essentia
I or non essential.

Right, but it doesnâ€™t mean the divisions on non-essentials are justifiable in Godâ€™s sight.

Quote:
-----C:Churches cant work things out despite differences ,if they could then their would be no denominatioal differences.So their is no real fellowship between Medthodist and Pentecostals.

Again, they could all have a Sunday Service where certain gifts were not practiced but there would only be worship singing and preaching and teaching of God's Word, and mutual respect. Then they could have other meetings (whether on Sundays or otherwise) where those certain gifts could be practiced. Just like the church I mentioned had separate infant baptism ceremonies apart from the regular Sunday Service. Believers Baptism vs Pedobaptism has also been a non-essential issue which many have treated as essential for close fellowship. That's just one example.

Quote:
-----Why would I ever want to go to Methodist Church me being a Pentecostal?I'd find it dead and would have to question some of their beliefs.

I'm not saying you should try to go to a church where you're not welcome because of your stance on non-essentials. I'm saying it's the denominational church's fault for not being willing to accept you and show respect despite the disagreements on non-essentials.

At the same time, you also would have to respect their concerns and their emphasis on the preaching and teaching of God's Word. And I'm not referring to liberal and apostate churches.

Quote:
-----D:Your basically saying to me Churches can get over denominationalism by being nice to each other and show Grace then we will have no division.This is not accurate and it wont work when it comes to denominations.

Again, this is where we disagree. If Christians and churches were truly Spirit-filled, they would be more willing to work with churches and Christians who may disagree in non-essentials.

Quote:
-----E:We wont have close fellowship as our denomiational differences will quickly arise.We may get on well but their will always be a barrier.

But this is what your really missing Oracio from my posts.

Again, I don't think I'm missing your points but simply disagree brother. Despite denominational differences quickly arising, Christians can work toward unity if they are truly Spirit-filled.

Quote:
-----Doctrinal differences(whatever they may be) cause Denominations.
Denominations are not from God
The only way to have one Church with no denominations is correct Doctrine.

Again I disagree brother. Another way to have one Church, besides getting straightened out in non-essentials or having correct Doctrine, is to accept and work with one another despite those differences.

Quote:
-----Id be interested what your actual view is on the points below would be.

I'm not fully convinced one way or the other regarding those two doctrinal issues. I see good arguments on both sides.

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/11/14 16:02

Can I share an analogy and get some feedback?

Granted, this is not some 'position' I hold it more of a thinking out loud analogy that could use some scrutiny.

Here's the analogy.

There were 12 tribes in Israel, each of these "ites"...you know the Gadites, Ruebenites, Benjamin et al comprised Israel. God left the 'human' differences of tribes intact for reasons of his own. These tribes had their own lands and leaders and families. They all were called upon to war when needed, to give aid when needed and were all looked upon by God as Israel as a whole.

Jesus spoke of the Church in like manner when in Revelation he dealt with the 'Church-of' and then praised or corrected them. But the 7 comprised the 1 true Church.

It maybe the Calvinites and the Arminianites, the Pentacostalites and the Baptites are looked upon by God in a similar manner.

All of these "ites" have their own leaders, families and inheritance...but are all still considered the Church of God.

God permitting these divisions because of our flesh works within the 'bounds' of our denominations doing his will through us not just in spite of, but because of denominational differences.

I very much agree with Staff's idea that denominations are not the 'perfect' that has come, but I also agree with Oracio on many points as well.

I have no answer to the conundrum that denominations by their very nature create, but I cant ignore the work of God done because denomination emphasize various biblical truths and act upon them to the good of the Church as a whole.

All I'm saying is the division that a denomination may create doctrinally is overcome by godliness and love toward one another as Oracio so eloquently stated. But doctrinal positions do not overcome carnality and ungodliness no matter the doctrine or the carnal man no matter what tribe he may be from.

Right doctrine...which I am 100% for is only part of what it means to be a mature man in Christ. Righteous living among the lost and the Church is equally necessary in healing divisions created by carnal minds swinging doctrinal swords.

Just a few of my thoughts...what do you think?

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/14 17:23

Hi Oracio,

I honestly and respectfully think you are avoiding the question.

Even if I reduce it down to one question which is.

Are denominations from God or not?

Bearing in mind if they are not then we have a problem that has not been solved, a pretty major one.

I pick out this quote because it is the nub of your argument.:

Again, this is where we disagree. If Christians and churches were truly Spirit-filled, they would be more willing to work with churches and Christians who may disagree in non-essentials.

Firstly we've had Spirit Filled Churches forever and they are not willing to fellowship with each other even though they do recognize that the other is saved. So it hasn't worked to get rid of the man made barrier due to doctrinal differences. One man's non-essential is another man's essential. Jesus, Paul or Peter would not put up with doctrine that was wrong and that had caused a division to form. They would have corrected the wrong doctrine. They wouldn't say be civil, kind, gracious

and be Spirit filled the division will heal itself. If being civil, kind, gracious and spirit filled was enough to stop denominational divisions why do we still have those man made divisions? Its because the divisions are caused by doctrine and can only be solved by doctrine.

Finally your quote:

I'm saying it's the denominational church's fault for not being willing to accept you and show respect despite the disagreements on non-essentials.

No its not there fault for not being willing to accept me as they might be right and I might be wrong!

You see they cant respect my views if my views are wrong .Which brings me back to the point ,When two doctrines oppose each other ,one is right and one is wrong.If the Apostles were here they would tell the difference,If Jesus was here he would tell the difference between which doctrine was correct and which is not.Furthermore he wouldnt say be Spirit filled and it will all be ok.Being truly Spirit filled is not the answer to denominational splits.

,staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/14 17:47

Hi GloryandGrace

The tribal splits of the 12 tribes were nothing to do with doctrine,they all believed the same thing so in that sense the analogy doesnt quite hold water respectfully.

If the Rueben believed 90% and Gad believed 50% of the truth and lets say Benjamn 15% of the truth then that would be a good analogy.I would even say it kinda backs my arguement up that for them to come together as a force for aid or war or sacrifice and to work at their very best they needed to believe the same thing.So the divisions were not denominational or wrong in any way.So we cannot equate a denomination like Pentecostal as a Gad and Methodist as a Judah .Even though Judah and Gad and Rueben had differences they were not doctrinal.

I neither do ignore that certain moves of God highlighted or emphasized various biblical truths but once the movement lapsed into an organised denominational structure the good became less and less.I do however have a very simple answer to the conundrum that denominations create.God gets rid of them is the answer by restoring Apostolic Authority by a move of his Spirit.

Your Quote

I have no answer to the conundrum that denominations by their very nature create, but I cant ignore the work of God done because denomination emphasize various biblical truths and act upon them to the good of the Church as a whole.

Love toward each other and Godliness cannot without proper doctrine overcome denominational divisions.Surely Godliness or being like God is knowing is also knowing Gods teachings.?

Your Quote:

All I'm saying is the division that a denomination may create doctrinally is overcome by godliness and love toward one another as Oracio so eloquently stated. But doctrinal positions do not overcome carnality and ungodliness no matter the doctrine or the carnal man no matter what tribe he may be from.

If love and kindness and being Spirit filled was the answer to false Doctrine or incomplete doctrine then we would have no denominations right now but the proof of the pudding is in the eating,staff

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/14 17:55

Hi Marvin, great analogy which I think explains well what God's been doing. While it's not God's ideal, there is no doubt that He's used denominations as you pointed out.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/14 17:59

Hi staff, I have tried explaining myself as best as I could. If you still believe I'm missing your point, what can I say? It's all good bro. No worries.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/14 19:03

Hi Oracio

So

Are Denominations from God or not?

I dont think you can answer that question respectfully,its all good staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/14 19:18

Hi GlorynGrace,

I thought further about your analogy and I think ultimately the northern tribes by wrong doctrine went into oblivion .They never reunited with the south and Gods judgement fell upon them.

Only when all the tribes believed the one doctrine and came under Godly authority did they achieve anything.It wasnt Go ds Best that the twelve tribes started believing and worshipping differently and so it is with Christians he wants everyone to come under the one set of teaching which they dont at the moment,staff

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/14 22:31

Hi staff, no and yes. They are not God's best or ideal situation, but He has sovereignly allowed them to exist and has used them nonetheless. Sort of like how he allowed certain things in the OT although they weren't His best. For example, God did not prefer polygamy in the OT but sovereignly allowed it and used certain men in spite of it, and even used polygamous marriages and relationships for His sovereign purposes (e.g. Jacob with Leah and Rachel and Bilhah and Zilpah).

God's heart has always been for there to be only one Church, but human weaknesses and carnality have caused multitudes of denominations to spring up and exist.

Some denominations have been coming around and making strides towards more unity, towards being more accepting of believers who have differing views.

I'll give another example from that same church I mentioned earlier. Their denomination's Statement of Faith has Premillennialism as their "official" end times view. But this church has come to the point of ignoring that part of their denomination's Statement of Faith and has allowed Amillennial and Postmillennial believers into their membership. From what I understand the denomination as a whole will likely get rid of Premillennialism from their Statement of Faith soon if they haven't done so yet.

I once went to a Baptist church that would not accept me into their membership due to me being Amillennial and their Statement of Faith having Premillennialism on it. They thought it would open up the door to liberalism if they allowed the Amillennial view.

So that's another example of how churches can in fact work toward unity despite disagreements in non-essentials.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/14 23:33

Another thought came to mind. It's been said that severe persecution tends to force believers to lay aside their non-essential differences. So maybe that's what it will take, for Christians to be forced to go underground under severe persecution. Who knows.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/15 6:42

Hi Oracio,

Your Quote:

Your Quote:

God's heart has always been for there to be only one Church, but human weaknesses and carnality have caused multitudes of denominations to spring up and exist.

Some denominations have been coming around and making strides towards more unity, towards being more accepting of believers who have differing views.

The reason for denominations to exist is usually because they are the end of some movement of God. They have a different "Doctrine" that singles them out from another denomination. Ultimately it's their doctrine that's the difference and the effects of that doctrine.

Lets all be lovey dovey and unity will occur, we will allow a whole lot of false doctrine be thought and accepted (non essentials as you call them). If they are non essentials what's the point in teaching them on a Sunday morning or Wednesday evening or Saturday afternoon when ever ur Church meets,

Its a fantasy in my opinion to say Churches are making strides to unity. It sounds very close to ecumenism to me.

Wiki:
(The term "ecumenism" refers to efforts by Christians of different Church traditions to develop closer relationships and better understandings.)

Oracio in fairness you are hiding behind the term "non essentials" .If we strip down the Gospel of Jesus Christ enough we can find something that all agree on .These other teachings can be discarded they are non essential or dont open your mouth about these other teaching because you will offend a brother or sister. That is an extremely dangerous path to go down.

staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/15 7:03

Hi all
I get a feeling that there is a lot of fear in accepting what I'm saying. Not because what I'm saying isn't true or even very obvious
i.e Denominations are not what God's wants and denominations have different doctrines from each other thus causing them to divide or stay divided.
The fear is coming from my answer to the problem. Basically because you are not sure of my solution to the problem you won't accept even simple obvious truths easily.

The excuses given to support denominations is quite staggering given that SI members are noted for their love of persecution and die hard Christianity, we will never surrender kinda stuff.

Is the "restoration of Apostolic Doctrine and Authority" so worrying to you or so frightful to you that we have to make up excuses for the continued existence of denominations?

urs staff

Re: no fear just not sold - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/11/15 10:12

Hi Staff: In your last post you challenged us to look at the motive behind our postings...and to see if fear towards an established "apostolic doctrine" being brought to bare upon us is why we answer as we do?

As for me, I don't recognize fear of apostolic doctrine as my motive or basis for my answers.

So, let me back up just a little.

Your premise...denominations are a hindrance to Christian unity and in short a boat-anchor to the body of Christ trying to move forward as a whole to preach and live out the gospel? That's what I interpret at least.

On the surface this premise is hardly worth refuting because most everyone can posit some anecdotal commentary or e

xperience that a 'denomination' had some negative impact on them.
With that...the premise gets a free pass.

But lets take the premise out...like a 4 wheel drive and give it some obstacles to tackle.

1. Are all complaints about denominationalism valid, and if they are not 'all' valid what criteria can one use to sift through these complaints and come away with truth about the real culprit?
2. If there is any good emerging from denominationalism in what form does it take?
3. If there is good from denominations can the same 'good' be derived from difference sources without denominational enclosure?
4. What does the replacement denomination look like that will supersede all of these inferior forms?
5. Upon what basis can those within denominations go forward to erode and replace denominations that is not itself merely another denomination?
6. Can denominations be replaced without returning to Roman Catholicism in its basic form ie, Popes, priest, temples, traditions and parish?
7. Upon whom has God placed this mandate to undertake the removal of a world-wide, world-scale, world-affecting denominational model with a non-denominational model that has it's own intrinsic ability to remain stable and true to that model?

Denominations exist because the human mind cannot conceive anything else but a denomination.

Try it on for fun, try thinking of a set of doctrines called "apostolic doctrine" that are uniformly believed among a set of people who willingly adhere to them. Then add to that a white-blood-cell namely a rejecting quality within those believers that refuse anything but apostolic doctrine. Add to that a leadership which only teaches 'apostolic doctrine' and, which admits only those who will abide by such doctrine.

To do so in any real detail always emerges in the form of...you guessed it, another denomination...and one that claims a authority over all lesser forms.

My point I hope to make... is denomination are here to stay until God has divinely orchestrated a new mode of unifying believers while giving them freedom of expression within the confines of their own cultures, races and traditions.

We may in fact sense the need for improvement but to even see what that looks like...other than the reimaging of another denomination cannot be done outside of a complete paradigm shift as was given in going from old testament to new.

Lastly, to many since they cannot conceive of anything but 'another' denomination will be fearful of the removal of their denominations because the last thing they want is a cold dead Presbyterianism... or a howling Toronto movement... or a lippy kum-by-ya inclusion of everything episcopal Church.

Im just not sold on jettisoning denominationalism since there is simply nothing else that can be conceived at this time in the world.

Thanks for the thought provoking topic.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/15 13:30

Hi Glory and Grace,

It seems to me you are changing your tune but i'll entertain the melody you are playing!! I think I've answered all these points but i'll do it again.

1. Are all complaints about denominationalism valid, and if they are not 'all' valid what criteria can one use to sift through these complaints and come away with truth about the real culprit?

Answer:I readily accept that good has come out of movements of God that have then turned into a denominations.God can use people in denominations to bring the unsaved to salvation.Its not an endorsement of that denomination though.

2. If there is any good emerging from denominationalism in what form does it take?

Answer:Compares to the real deal which is Apostolic Structure I can't see any good coming out of a denomination (as opposed to the movement of God that preceeded the denomination.)

3. If there is good from denominations can the same 'good' be derived from difference sources without denominational enclosure?

Answer : God can use all things(even rubbish things like denominations)for the good for those who are in Christ Jesus.i.e just because God uses something doesn't mean its from him or its his best

4. What does the replacement denomination look like that will supersede all of these inferior forms?

Answer :Now this I did answer over and over and over.It will be the same structure as was at the foundation of the Church which is the Apostolic structure as is stated in Acts and Revelation.It is not a replacement denomination but it is a replacement structure.

5. Upon what basis can those within denominations go forward to erode and replace denominations that is not itself merely another denomination?

Answer :No it is not another denomination but we will all come under Apostolic teaching and Authority in a short period of time not in a long period of time as the term erosion suggests

6. Can denominations be replaced without returning to Roman Catholicism in its basic form ie, Popes, priest, temples, traditions and parish?

Answer: Yes because Roman Catholicism is based on false and poor doctrine once that doctrine is replaced with Apostolic doctrine then people will come out of it or not.But Apostles would never accept most of their teachings.

7. Upon whom has God placed this mandate to undertake the removal of a world-wide, world-scale, world-affecting denominational model with a non-denominational model that has it's own intrinsic ability to remain stable and true to that model?

Answer:If you are asking who will achieve this,then we do not know yet but by a world wide move of his Spirit Apostolic doctrine will be restored.Basically in fairness you are asking me who are the Twelve Apostles before they have been revealed .How would I know who they are until God reveals them.

Is appearance of stability that important to you?But there has never been more stable a structure than under James,Peter,Paul and the new testament Church.

Your Quote

Denominations exist because the human mind cannot conceive anything else but a denomination.

Answer :I can conceive something other than a denomination.

Your Quote:

My point I hope to make... is denomination are here to stay until God has divinely orchestrated a new mode of unifying believers while giving them freedom of expression within the confines of their own cultures, races and traditions.

On this I do agree Denominations are here to stay "UNTIL GOD HAS DIVINELY ORCHESTRATED."

In God's timing he does orchestrate a move of his Spirit that will not introduce a new mode but will restore an old mode i.e the structure of the first century church which did unify believers under one doctrine while giving them freedom of expression and it did take into account cultures,races and traditions but if the those cultures and traditions were not of God they were thrown out which I am sure you would agree was the right thing to do.

Your Quote:

Im just not sold on jettisoning denominationalism since there is simply nothing else that can be conceived at this time in the world.

I think in this Quote you have made my argument for me perfectly.

You see Glory and Grace in that Quote their is exactly what I said in the previous post ,Their is a "Fear".You are afraid of jettisoning denominationalism because you cant see anything better .Basically you are saying "better the devil you know" You are saying on the one hand denominations maybe not God's best but on the other hand you are saying we have to stick with them because we dont know any better.I have to admit what I am saying brings even "fear" into my own heart.i.e living Christianity like the first century Christian.

In closing I agree with you if thats what you are saying and indeed at the very start of the thread I said the same which is basically "denominations are not God's Best but their is nothing we can do about it at this present time except to recognize that very fact which is that denominations are not God's Best and understand what God's Best is"

I can conceive something better that is the structure of the first century Church,staff

Ps thanks to all for bringing out the relevant points like the Good Berean would do and continue to do so if you feel inclined