



Scriptures and Doctrine :: Denominations ,.. ?

Denominations ,.. ? - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/11/16 8:55

Denominations ?

should we ask??,....

*But how did this get started ?....

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\*Was denomination God-ordained, or man-made? .....

~~~~~

*What was the Church called in The Bible ?

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\*Should we get back to what The Word/Bible says ?....

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*Has man taken us way, off-track?....

.....man's way vs. God's Way....

^And, How did this happen?...when He has called us into the UNITY of Christ.

*But, What is the unity of Christ?....

**Note:

What I am about to share,I can only share by experiencing.

'- -

elizabeth

Re: Denominations ,.. ? - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/11/16 9:09

Sister,

I wrote this, its chapter 1 of a short 4 chapter book on "starting a house church". I hope it helps abit in this thinking about the foundations of the church and denominations.

Historic Roots

The Church is not a new thing in the earth. We are actually a part of a body of believers that is over 2000 years old! Imagine it. For over 50 generations, the Church has been passed on to each subsequent group of believers and leaders. The Holy Scriptures have also been copied and passed on, and we still have them today. So when starting something new, like a house Church, it is a comfort to realize we are entering into something with great historical weight.

One of the accusations towards people starting house churches is that they are doing something new and innovative, with new doctrines. This can be true if someone is starting a church on their own ideas and basis, and if it does not historically line up with other believers throughout Church history and the Scriptures.

In other cases, some believers have not been able to submit to any Christian authority in their lives, always thinking they are right and others are wrong. In some cases also, believers starting house churches have been greatly hurt by other Christians or Christian leaders and, therefore, are seeking to protect themselves.

Christianity has, for 2000 years, gone through many periods of disagreements and divisions, but each successive generation seems aimed at repeating past mistakes, disagreeing with each other, and, in the end, separating to do their own thing. The current amount of division in the body of Christ speaks of this problem of not being able to agree on th

the common elements of the faith.

First Century Apostasy?

The main driving force of some people to start house churches is the strong belief that the entire Church, by and large, apostatized shortly after or during the life of the Apostle John. This means that the truth was lost, and the Church began to depart from God's intention and direction. Therefore, there is a distrust of all of Church history and now some current house church movements are looked at as the restoring of the original Book of Acts Church.

What this also means is that there was always just a very small minority of those who somehow held to the truth, and the majority was always wrong. Does this type of thinking seem familiar?

I took a phone call once from a man who stated that he could not find others who believed his gospel. My first assumption was that, after he left the pastorate, he was simply having a hard time finding other fellow believers who would hold to similar convictions. After two hours on the phone with this man, I realized he was preaching another gospel (Galatians 1:8). His argument was that, after the death of the apostles, the truth died and only now, in the twenty-first century, it had been revived and he was the messenger. If someone attended a church of any kind, he stated, they were believing a lie (2 Thessalonians 2:11) and lost! When he asked me what my gospel was, I shared with him the blood atonement of Jesus Christ. His reaction was curse words!

One term for this type of thinking is Restorationism, which means the truth was lost with the apostles and now in our modern day is being restored. Such thinking is the seed-bed of many denominations and especially cults. Also this thinking is usually very exclusive, meaning that we have the truth that is restored and others do not. Even other restoration type groups fight amongst each other over who really is the group that the Lord is with. If Jesus came back, we could see the picture of all the leaders of these groups asking the Lord to verify their own church as the true and only church.

How do we know if our actions and words today are following in the same spirit of some of the opposers of the Gospel in the beginning of the Church? One test we can take is to ask ourselves: Do we consider God's Church sacred? (1 Corinthians 3:17). Or do we speak and treat other believers with little care, speaking our mind strongly and seeking to prove what we feel is right at any cost?

I have heard some people in our modern day speak without blushing that the entire Church has been wrong throughout history, and they now understand the true way. Most of the people I have heard espouse these new ideas do not fellowship in any church and also have moral laxity in their lives. In free thinking societies with complete religious freedom, we should have a great fear of God that we do not speak and teach in ways that are departing from "the faith once given to the saints" (Jude 1:3).

Being a Part of the Historic Church

Some believe that Church history began with Martin Luther in AD 1500, and to consider anything before that time is not worthwhile. Such thinking also has created a narrowed vision of the Church Jesus has established.

Perhaps we can consider another way of thinking. We can consider that the Lord has always had His Church (Matthew 16:18). It has not been perfect, has failed and, at times, has needed to be reformed and restored. There has always been a continuation in the work of God, and we are not called to start something new but rather continue something that is old. This does allow for new denominations but these groups should be helping to reform and build upon the 2000-year-old Church we are all a part of.

Individualistic evangelicalism has been leading to what today is over 42,000 denominations worldwide. God has called some of these groups to stand for a truth, yet not apart from the larger testimony of the Church throughout the ages. The Corinthians were of this individual carnal thinking, everyone doing what was right in their own eyes (1 Corinthians 3:4, Judges 21:25). It is a humbling reality that the Church did not begin with us and might not even end with us. We are just a part of God's plan through the ages. Instead of trying to deconstruct what the Church is today, we should be seeking to join with God's testimony and possibly help reform it. What is exciting is that we can actually be a part of the Church Jesus is building in our day (Matthew 16:18). Being involved in a house church meeting can be very much the will of God and his leading.

Some things that keep us in line and with the historic Church is agreement with statements of faith that ancient believers

held to.

Along with common practices such as communion and water baptism, we can ensure we are a part of the Lord's work by not being apart from other believers, or being so exclusive that we do not agree with any other believers in Church history.

Starting a house church can be a very simple thing to do but we must carry with it the solemn sense of carrying on what Jesus and the early apostles did.

Where is Jesus?

Some have asked: "Where is Jesus in the midst of so many denominations in Christianity today?" This is a good question, as the original intention of the Lord was surely not for so many churches to exist and compete against each other. One answer we can give: He is walking in the midst of all these groups and different churches. He is acknowledging those who are his, part of his one Church (Ephesians 4:5), those who are "in Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In the book of Revelation, we see the picture of Jesus in the midst of the early churches: "And among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest." (Revelation 1:13). What a wonderful picture to meditate on.

What will set our hearts in the same mind of the Lord is to also seek to be unified with all brothers and sisters in the Lord no matter what name of church or doctrinal emphasis or preference. Of course, that does not mean we unify with what is heretical or wrong. But it does mean we are filled with grace towards others and we realize that we only see "in part" (1 Corinthians 13:12) until the day we are before the Lord in heaven.

As you seek to follow the living Christ in exploring starting a house church, start with this prayer:

Lord, I am prone to see so earth-bound, the outward and what I have grown up in. Please give me a vision to see your Church as You see it. Allow me to be a part of Your work in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

from: <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/701703>

perhaps it could help also to understand the early church to read the writings of one of the first disciples of the apostles who carried the church along to the next generation:

Early Church Father Series: St. Ignatius of Antioch
By Greg Gordon
<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/919546>

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/11/16 9:38

Dear Brother Greg,
Thank you so much on the deletions this morning, and I am ever-so-grateful for this web-site that you have made available to us here.
...a true blessing...I only found you, by Art Katz, many years ago.
Am thankful !

I see you have took a lot of thought about so many denomination too.
You have wrote extensively, I see, and forgive me, but it will take me some time to absorb much of what you have graciously pointed out... I will try.

Thank you! •

elizabeth

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/11/16 10:49

For some of you who may have not caught my post early-on,.. I wanted to clarify ,.. I ask brother Greg to delete,..as something happened and away (send)went my post before I had began.

elizabeth

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/11/16 14:59

Re:
Brother Greg,
Re: Denominations, ... ?
Reply To This Post |
Sister,
I wrote this, its chapter 1 of a short 4 chapter book on "starting a house church". I hope it helps abit in this thinking about the foundations of the church and denominations.
Brother Greg,
Sorry, I was not referring about home church, I was thinking along the lines of The Church,...its relationship w/God, the Body of Christ, unity,..and the many denominations,.... going way back to the beginning,.. searching Scriptures, to see why,.... turning aside to see....(if we will) the foundations of the Church and denominations... yes !
Thank you, brother.
elizabeth

elizabeth

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/11/16 16:10

(1)But how did the Church get started ?...

Reflecting on the knowledge of the foundation and the beginning of the Church....
*Mt.16:18,
...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.....the foundation..
.This Rock / The Word of God (This Rock, ... the revealed Word of God.)
...built upon The Rock, that The floods cannot wash away,... everlasting.

So Peter started The Church as he preached his first message on the day of Pentecost,.. the Church began as in the New Testament...
They did not have the New Testament,..
they were dependent upon OT,... Jesus's teaching when He walked w/them, and revealing of The Spirit of God.

Isn't it strange that Jesus, before His death, He had told Peter, "Upon this Rock I will build my Church,... ?" and through Peter was the first church message sent.
I want to really absorb this message.

Act2:14-36,

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.
16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

22 ¶ Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

29 ¶ Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

34 ¶ For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

36 ¶ Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

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The very first message,.. and no mention of denominations.... wasn't that strange,.. ?

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elizabeth

Adding:

Then some time later, found out the man was having an extra marital affair, with someone in the assembly. This did not devastate me though, because I was not putting my trust in man, but in God.

The Lord did this for this undeserving vessel , that I am so thankful for,.. although I went, He caused a reservation within me, to not follow man, but to always look to Him , and His Word.

Sounds as if I am bragging,.. I am NOT,.. It was NOT me , but it was His great mercy,.. I was young, and did not plan it.

So I got His Word, and He taught me,as He said He would.

By my experience w/Him, my belief is , that when The Lord starts drawing different individuals to Himself, they do as I experienced,.. become hungry, and either go into what is a tradition to them or look for a church to go to.

And some will just start following after whatever Denomination they get involved in.

And so we have growth in each, and break apart and make another.

elizabeth

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/18 6:32

Hi Elizabeth,

What differs one denomination from another is Doctrine or Teaching they dont break apart because of of some organic benign gentle growth.Growth in an individual may cause them to go from one denomination to another where they find the teaching or worship more in line with what they believe,staff

Your Quote:

By my experience w/Him, my belief is , that when The Lord starts drawing different individuals to Himself, they do as I experienced,.. become hungry, and either go into what is a tradition to them or look for a church to go to.

And some will just start following after whatever Denomination they get involved in.

And so we have growth in each, and break apart and make another.

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/11/18 13:09

Staff,

Thank you, ..

Re:

What differs one denomination from another is Doctrine or Teaching they dont break apart because of of some organic benign gentle growth.Growth in an individual may cause them to go from one denomination to another where they find the teaching or worship more in line with what they believe, staff

I agree w/ what you said Staff

Isn't it odd, that all the Disciples/ Apostles of Jesus, up to this point preached and taught Jesus' gospel, .. doctrine,... there was a true

UNITY . (One w/ Jesus' teachings)

...now,... Remembering , how Jesus prayed for them,..and us.

Jn. 17:11,

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

Jn.17:22,

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

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Up to this point, we find nothing of 'The Church'™ being called ONLY,..The Church of God™ which is a STATEMENT that is being made,.. and it never changes from just being a statement, throughout The Word,.. The Bible.... and then once I see it ,the churches of Christ salute you' (a statement) meaning: it truly is 'The Church of God'™,... (God, being The Word).... meaning: The Church of the True Word of God,... God ordained. ie,.. His Church.

I came across this that Paul is saying,..

Acts 20:28-32,

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed THE CHURCH OF GOD™ ,which he hath purchased with his own blood.

29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

32 ¶ And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

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Paul said, ...

Acts20:27,

For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

*denominations,... why ?

Did the 'unity'™ that these had, not last ?

Did some men in the world, long ago, ...on many occasions, choose a verse of Scripture and form a whole new thing,.. 'denominations'™ out of it ? ... a new message ? ... and then w/ that came one by one many followers ?

Thoughts,...

â€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆ-öŸ™•
elizabeth

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/11/18 15:57

Elizabeth:

Clearly the example in the earliest New Testament church (Biblically) was the church in the city. Paul wrote to one church in Ephesus. They may have met in small gatherings throughout the city, but the church was one and his letters were passed around. However, Paul writes about factions beginning already within the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 1, chapters 1 and 3.)

I would imagine factions would be found starting in the time of the ante nicene fathers. I have not scoured their writings, but I would imagine you would find disagreements about teachings and schisms developing from those. Clearly by the time of the Nicene council there were factions.

In my personal experience I see 1 Corinthians chapters 1 and 3 playing out so often in the body of Christ. We tend to focus on a man and his unique take on doctrines. If you read the first three chapters of 1 Corinthians carefully you will see this playing out. Paul talks about the carnality and immaturity of following a man, and contrasts that with his own spiritual ministry.

We have a tendency to latch onto a way of seeing things, often because a man we respected saw it that way, and then we attempt to defend our unique view to the death. It divides us into camps, and it is all due to the carnality of man. Born again men are being led around by the flesh (their own minds, wills, and emotions) rather than being led by the Spirit of God.

I am encouraged though by people I meet from different denominations that are blurring the lines because they have a genuine heart after God and are seeking to know Him in truth at the expense of their tradition. If a man is humble and desires only to know God and His word in truth, that man will be willing to forsake the traditions of his denominations in whatever areas they are found to fall short of or conflict with the word of God. He will listen to the Holy Spirit, and will be taught of God rather than men.

I am not suggesting that people flee denominational churches and go rogue so to speak or band together as one more disillusioned group claiming to be a remnant. Far from that. I am suggesting that the heart after God's own heart will spend time in His presence, allowing Him to shape their hearts and minds. I find when I meet these people, no matter what denominational church they fellowship in, they are growing in truth and in many cases having the effect of bringing a sweet savor into their churches. I really believe that as we see Christ's return nearing, we will also see the true church emerge with many different "names" on their billboards, but one heart and truth burning on the inside. Others will reject Christ for the sake of tradition and fall away.

Just my perspective.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/18 18:07

Hi Elizabeth,

I found it shocking when the Holy Spirit (This is not a regular everyday occurrence) pointed out to me years ago now that the only time unity is mentioned from Acts on is in connection to the gifts. There are two obvious lists and another not so obvious mention of the gifts and on all three occasions unity is mentioned in one form or the other. What I took from the study I did at the time is that the gifts are very important when it comes to unity.

I don't want to get away from your post too much. It is important to note that denominations no matter where they came from or how they were formed, no matter what their background or history is exist and one denomination differs from another because of various emphasis on differing doctrines. Denominations are not a division or structure from God although God uses them because God uses all things for the Good for those in Christ Jesus.

It is important to note also denominations exist at this point in history and we cannot and probably should not do anything about it.

When God chooses to do change the existing arrangement he will use proper doctrine to achieve this. Correct doctrine is the antidote to incorrect doctrine.

Can I be boring and give one example:

The Sadducees in their wisdom came to Jesus and asked whose wife would it be in the resurrection if a woman married 7 brothers and one brother died after another. They asked this because the doctrine of resurrection divided them from the

e Pharisees as the Sadducees didnt believe correctly about the ressurection. Jesus addressed their wrong doctrine by cl early giving the correct teaching i.e their is no marriage in heaven and more importantly their is a ressurection. So by correcting their doctrine in effect Jesus was saying "their is now no reason for the Sadducees to even exist". This is how a denomination will be dealt with in the future,urs staff

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/11/18 20:59

Thank you, Brother Travis,

I see that now,... yes, the Churches were already beginning to have problems early on in Paul's time.

's'

1Cor.1:10,

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

's'

Yes Paul was calling them into 'unity',... the unity that we have in Christ, in that 'one' mind,.. and unity w/ each other in the Church,... in the truth that Paul and the others that had been taught by God. I.e. the truth of the gospel.

's'

,,, yes, They were already having problems in the church of God.

's'

Glad you brought that up,...

Interesting,...

's'

....now in our time, ... in the denominations, are they preaching the same thing that these men preached, ...having the same mind,.. guarding the truth of the gospel ?...and so on and so forth ?

Please, I am in a thought process,... a waking up,.. a time to consider, for us, all... a time for prayerfull study and thought

A time of drawing closer to God in Truth.

(Not that many are not,... forgive me, but I just have this desire to encourage)

I am doing this out of 'pure care' and concern,.. nothing else.

The Word in Rev. Says that Satan deceiveth the whole world.

The Word says for us to WATCH.

Satan has his devises for deception .

's'

elizabeth

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/11/21 20:17

Re: Travis writes:

Paul writes about factions beginning already within the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 1, chapters 1 and 3.)

's'

And Yes , I certainly agree, Travis, and I appreciate your time and interest in pointing this out. And the (2) Words you pointed out, 'factions' and 'schism' ,

And so I ask, is this , would you say when denominations got started ?

's'

Brother Greg said, that there are over 42,000 denominations worldwide now. Oh my !

You also said,

The main driving force of some people to start house churches is the strong belief that the entire Church, by and large, apostatized shortly after or during the life of the Apostle John.

's'

To that , I was wondering , and then we can readily see it ,in Paul's time to?

's'

Looking back to Paul,...

..on the "unity" when he first began ... as a whole, as Paul so desperately tried to work out the on-going problem s in the Church,.. now working it out, is it all but lost...and so,... is this when the denominations began and continues even until this day,... by many well meaning men,... by studied men,...?

But , I believe , one MUST be taught by The Spirit teaching or taught and guided along, as did Paul to Timothy.
" " "

So, can we look at the life of the Disciples, and Paul, that was directing, the Church in his day

The Disciples that walked w/ Jesus, here on this earth, and was taught by Him, ..

and instructed to go out and preach the "gospel of the kingdom of God", ... didn't he ?... Their accounts and teachings we have in the New Testament.

And Paul came later, after Pentecost, ...after The Holy Spirit is sent down, and The Lord taught him THE SAME, (gospel, doctrine) (the gospel of the kingdom, ... things pertaining to, and concerning the kingdom of God, ...yes !

The same as the Disciples that were taught by Jesus., (they had the unity that Jesus talked about, and had prayed that they would have, ..the same Word, and gospel) No new doctrine that I can see, except being sent to the Gentiles, ..

The same Gospel of the kingdom of God, that Jesus instructed them to preach, ... then we read what Jesus says, the kingdom of God must be preached throughout the whole world, and then shall the end of the world be, ... (paraphrased)

" " "

It was not too long before Paul, was writing letters, and going to these different churches ie. gathers of the Church, Paul was laboring to keep the "unity" and The truth that was laid down to them of The Word of God.... that, ..which makes us "one" w/ Him.

" " "

UNITY: the same Word that made Jesus and His Father ONE, .. same Word that Jesus taught His Disciples, .. then taught Paul by The Spirit of God, ..and will / does

for us, ...true unity. ...

* Referring to Jesus' prayer for them and for us on unity, ... "Father make them one, as we are one."

" " "

Let's to consider,

" " "

Elizabeth

Re: nonsense - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/11/22 11:54

There are not 42000 denominations in the world anymore than I have \$42,000.00 in my pocket.

off the top of your head the vast majority of us will not recognize more than about 20 and if you're really in the know you might get 30.

The details of course are always left unsaid, namely;

What is the definition of a denomination that is being applied here?

Since no definition is being defined, just vague assumptions that can have another 42000 variances of definition.

By the way...as anyone bothered to ask these 42000 so-called denominations if they even consider themselves a 'denomination' that stands over against another Christian group?

If someone actually did any homework on the subject, they might find a percentage of that so-called 42000 denominations actually consider themselves aligned with the top 20 denominations to begin with. Therefore nullifying a true denominational boundary.

the only way to get 42,000 or in the past (literally just a few years ago it was 25000) is to count every independent church or a church that has a 501(C)3 status with the US government.

Once you take the big 20 out of the picture you are left with the independents and/or parachurch ministries.

But, after all that supposed denominational division the orthodox believers are all subscribing to the basic 7 to 10 main tenants of the faith...which unites them as Christians.

This response is not directed at Greg because he used that figure, it's directed to the readers as a whole to question such

h statements and to think for themselves how denominations are defined and why the huge disparity between what we can all claim as a denomination...about 30 and the other 41,970 that seem to have no store front?

Edit to add:

Someone might say..."Marv you are all wet, I did my research and found 1972 denominations...that truly exist!
My response: Thanks for proving my point, that leaves 40,028 bogus denominations and proof that such a large number is a horrid exaggeration.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/11/22 12:41

According to a report published by the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, in mid-2014 there were over 45,000 Christian denominations worldwide.
see: <https://bit.ly/338RKIJ>

"These 33,000 are subdivided into "6 major ecclesiastico-cultural mega-blocs", and ordering them by denomination size we have (I am rounding up or down slightly for convenience, using year 2000 figures) :

Independents (about 22000)

Protestants (about 9000)

"Marginals" (about 1600)

Orthodox (781)

Roman Catholics (242)

Anglicans (168)

So the 33,000 number is from the total of these 6 mega-blocs:

$22000 + 9000 + 1600 + 781 + 242 + 168 = 33,000+$

That's where the 33,000 figure comes from. If you count the "mega-bloc" of "Protestants" only it is $9000 / 33000$ or 27% of the total. However, if you combine Protestants with Independents and Anglicans (/ 33000) it is 94% of the total or 31,000+ . We will see below that most (about 97%) of the "Independent" churches are indeed Protestants. "

see: <http://www.philvaz.com/apologetics/a106.htm>

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/11/22 12:48

I have never seen a man or woman who was truly walking after the Spirit of God that was factious or divisive (had what some call a denominational spirit). I have seen men and women who are walking after the Spirit who did not know if they agreed or disagreed about non-essential parts of scripture such as eschatological perspective or the exact wording to be used in a baptismal service and etc.. But I have never seen spiritual men break the unity of the Spirit that exists between them over issues such as these.

Factions or schisms in the body always come from carnality...always...no exceptions. You cannot be walking according to the Spirit of God, have His heart, and be led of the Holy Spirit and not be in unity with others who have the same heart of God. You cannot walk in the Spirit and be factious. It simply cannot happen.

So the real key here is to seek to have the heart of God through surrender to Him and communion with Him. I have found that when men seek God above all and allow Him to transform their lives in every aspect, the unity of 1 Cor. 1 and 3 naturally happens. They begin to all speak the same thing and be of the same mind and judgment. And, 1 Cor. 2 begins to happen in their midst because now they have God's heart and mind. The Holy Spirit always speaks the same thing. He is internally, eternally, and universally consistent. He is the teacher, and when this is true in our lives, we will come into true unity.

I don't think this is so far removed from the realm of possibility as some might think. I am excited to be seeing this among many believers that I run across and fellowship with, from many different "denominations". The lines are blurring for them.

ose who are seeking Him above all else.

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/11/22 14:41

Brother Marvin,

The definition of "denomination" as I would say, just in thinking about what that word would mean,...

Like:

Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, Pentecostal, Lutheran,

...so forth and so on,...

And then their many, many, many, branch-off's.

.....that were actually started by some man, and grew and grew, until this day.

These are all branch-off of the original.

The original, we know, was the one in the beginning, "The Church of God" (I am not talking about the denomination,) ,I am talking about the Church of God, that originated from Jesus' teachings,...the one He called the church of God, .. where His teachings were about the "gospel of the kingdom of God" .

That we, through The Spirit are born into that kingdom, (we received His Name, which is The Holy Spirit, .. His Name is in us, .. The Word of God in us. (Him)

This, He taught His Disciples, (learners), and then sent them out, (Apostles), to teach, and was then taught by The Spirit unto Paul, ... same, .. no difference, .. totally unified w/ Jesus' teachings, ... a continuum of that gospel in that time.

**The True / Truth Church

'â€'â€'â€'â€'â€'â€'

Brother Marvin, I looked up the definition of the word "Denomination" and this is what I found,...

Denomination:

* "A recognized branch of the Christian Church"

* "A group or branch of any religion."

â€'â€' seems like the key word here is, "branching"

Hope I am speaking w/clarity, ... not sure that I always do that tho.

Thank you for your interest and response, .. I appreciate it.

'â€'â€'â€'â€'â€'â€'

elizabeth

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/11/22 16:03

Brother Travis,

The faction, and schism were in the Church in Paul's time, and do we not believe it is still here, even until now? We know that is why he kept having to try to bring it back to the church back to "the truth of the gospel" .

Some, it seemed knew the right way, which was and is since Jesus' death and resurrection, it is by The Spirit now, ... but men were trying to teach and go back to the law.

Paul was not into Ecumenicalism, ... it was not of just everybody mixed together, .. so we can have "unity", ... NO

The people of God are a peculiar people.... consecrated, .. separate, ...

Now, please don't miss understand me. Jesus communicated with sinners, .. and even ate w/ them, but he did not compromise His teachings that His Father, God gave Him, ... that He gives to the whole world. ...

The Bread from heaven.

Jesus, and His people are a peculiar people, .. the world couldnot and cannot understand, .. they hated and killed Him because of what came out of His mouth.

He loved everyone, but stood only for God, His Father.

'â€'â€'â€'â€'â€'â€'

Brother Travis, is that what you are saying, or am I miss reading you ?
'â€'â€'â€'â€'â€'â€'â€'
elizabeth

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/11/22 16:10

I always appreciate validation even when it's not intended.

Hello Ms. Brown,

Thank you for your inquiry. I can assure you that the figure of 39,000 is in no way inflated. This number represents our most current, up-to-date data. As we are constantly updating this figure, it is not published in print form. The figure of 33,800 from the year 2000 was printed in our book World Christian Trends, (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2001). Part 12 of World Christian Trends (WCT), Table 12-1 gives figures of denominational totals for all 238 countries of the world. These figures are also represented graphically in WCT on page 917, Global Map 14. The definition for denominations used in WCT, and also in our publication World Christian Encyclopedia (Oxford, 2001) is as follows:

"Any agency consisting of a number of congregations or churches voluntarily aligning themselves with it. As a statistical unit in this survey, a 'denomination' always refers to one single country. Thus the Roman Catholic Church, although a single organization, is described here as consisting of 236 denominations in the world's 238 countries."

This above quote has the catholics comprising of 236 denominations...simply because of geography.

That in my opinion inflates the denominational number 236 times what is true.

Thanks Greg for the homework, appreciated.

The whole idea behind inflating denominations...is simply to exaggerate the schismatic divisions that exist in Christianity. In short, I am to believe the whole church is simply one huge human-schism that believes so differently there is really no unity at all.

exaggeration is a lie plain and simple. These folks supplied their version of denominations and now we have well meaning folks using those numbers to perpetuate a lie about the Church.

the above definition provides you with Charismatics...then says it's a denomination if its in another country, therefore if Charismatics are in 200 countries there are 200 more Charismatic denominations. Pure and simple exaggeration...a lie.

Thanks again for those who read what I write even though it calls into question the supposed facts.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/11/24 8:36

I am not sure that is exactly what I was saying, but I agree with everything you said in your last post. I was not trying to talk about ecumenicalism, nor about compromising with the world.

The original post dealt with the origins of denominations and with denominationalism. I was just pointing out that factions or schisms existed in the church since Paul's time, and were always a result of the carnality of man.

Most denominations split over scripture interpretations. They each think that their slant is right and in most cases will argue for the fact that "those other folks" interpretation is wrong. How many, many sermons have I heard that decry the error in another group.

But both groups in this scenario cannot be right, and perhaps both are wrong. The Holy Spirit is consistent, and there is only one truly correct way to interpret scripture.

The mature will recognize this and will not become contentious in defending their own belief where the subject is not an essential doctrine. (Remember, I am not talking about things like salvation by grace or the deity of Christ here. I am talking about a host of small, non-essential issues that we divide over so often.) . The mature will realize that they have ever

y possibility of seeing it wrongly and will seek to understand and know the truth. They will not divide and form factions or if you will denominations over something like eschatology or which Bible version they like best. Instead, they will walk in a unity that always comes from spiritual maturity.

In 1 Corinthians 1-3, Paul says that they are carnal because they divide themselves along the lines of their favorite teacher. Some followed Paul, some Apollos, and some Peter, saying that the teachings of their particular man were the thing they followed after. Paul says that this is due to their carnality. But he contrasts this in chapter 2 when he talks about the fact that a spiritual man can judge other men along spiritual lines because the spiritual man has the mind of Christ.

Denominations, then, boil down to men holding to their own ideas and beliefs with their carnal mind. Unity is a result of spiritual men dying to themselves and their own thinking and learning to walk in the Spirit and hear from God.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/24 12:31

Travis writes

Quote:
-----Most denominations split over scripture interpretations. They each think that their slant is right and in most cases will argue for the fact that "those other folks" interpretation is wrong. How many, many sermons have I heard that decry the error in another group.

But both groups in this scenario cannot be right, and perhaps both are wrong. The Holy Spirit is consistent, and there is only one truly correct way to interpret scripture.

The mature will recognize this and will not become contentious in defending their own belief where the subject is not an essential doctrine. (Remember, I am not talking about things like salvation by grace or the deity of Christ here. I am talking about a host of small, non-essential issues that we divide over so often.) . The mature will realize that they have every possibility of seeing it wrongly and will seek to understand and know the truth. They will not divide and form factions or if you will denominations over something like eschatology or which Bible version they like best. Instead, they will walk in a unity that always comes from spiritual maturity.

In 1 Corinthians 1-3, Paul says that they are carnal because they divide themselves along the lines of their favorite teacher. Some followed Paul, some Apollos, and some Peter, saying that the teachings of their particular man were the thing they followed after. Paul says that this is due to their carnality. But he contrasts this in chapter 2 when he talks about the fact that a spiritual man can judge other men along spiritual lines because the spiritual man has the mind of Christ.

Denominations, then, boil down to men holding to their own ideas and beliefs with their carnal mind. Unity is a result of spiritual men dying to themselves and their own thinking and learning to walk in the Spirit and hear from God.

Couldn't have summed it up better. I'd add to the examples of non-essentials continuationism vs cessationism and Calvin vs Arm vs non-Cal, which some are insistent on defending and upholding at the cost of unity. It's one thing to respectfully share and discuss one's views on these types of non-essentials, and quite another to demand that others see these things their way else they cannot have close fellowship in Christ with others. The latter has been the main cause of denominationalism within Evangelicalism.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/11/25 8:03

Oracio: Agreed. discussing these issues is not only completely in order, but I think important and necessary. But the discussion should center around both people coming to a knowledge of the truth and should be entered into prayerfully. The discussion should never be about defending my own point of view. What good is a discussion if, in the end, I am not drawn closer to Christ and made to conform more into His image and likeness?

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/27 9:43

Hi Travis and Oracio,

As I have said on the thread I put up earlier the difference between denominations is teaching or doctrine or scriptural interpretation which ever way you want to put it.

To suggest that "maturity" will somehow solve the problem of bad teaching does not make any sense. "Maturity will not cause denominational Christianity to cease.

When Jesus was confronted by the "Sadducees" regarding their problem with resurrection he didn't say if you are "mature" or if you are "graceful" or if you "love" one another this division will go away.

No Jesus fought fire with fire, they came to him with poor teaching or doctrine and he used correct doctrine to respond to

their ignorance.

He didnt say if only you were "mature" and it will all be ok.

Also as a footnote as I have said without response previously "who decides what is essential and what is non essential" ? and why bother teaching at all the "non essentials" even if you can agree what they are.

Denominations have to go and go the will in God's timing not mans. Personally I think talk of "maturity" is just an excuse so we can rationalize why we have denominations and make ourselves feel better about this totally unscriptural practice, staff

Quote:

The mature will recognize this and will not become contentious in defending their own belief where the subject is not an essential doctrine. (Remember, I am not talking about things like salvation by grace or the deity of Christ here. I am talking about a host of small, non-essential issues that we divide over so often.) . The mature will realize that they have every possibility of seeing it wrongly and will seek to understand and know the truth. They will not divide and form factions or if you will denominations over something like eschatology or which Bible version they like best. Instead, they will walk in a unity that always comes from spiritual maturity.

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/11/27 11:33

Travis and Oracio make good points, godliness leads to a harmonious unity between believers.

But Staff is also correct in that the reality of our Church does not consist of non-denominational mature Christians and denominated immature Christians, it consist of both maturity levels...and history has shown godly mature men have been schismatic...and with great approval from the Church in general.

In short, being mature is not a qualification for having a 'set of doctrines'. The youngest believers have 'doctrines' and like myself think those doctrines are handed down by stone tablets to them personally.

The exact same thing may be said of those in leadership positions. My point...what the congregations hear/taught is coming from those in authority, but that authority is not always admixed with spiritual maturity.

In fact, all we (who walk in the Spirit) know that God gives us responsibilities and calling way in advance of our Spiritual maturity and God calls us into them way in advance of Spiritual manhood/womanhood.

Staff: I hope you don't take this as excuses for denominationalism, it's the reality of what it means to walk in the Christian faith.

I'll go ahead and say it...it seems...that God has cared more for our love and service despite our short-comings, maturity or schismatic differences than he has removal of any denomination.

Oracio and Travis are offering what they believe to be the surest way to end denominationalism...but that solution has it's own caveats...but so does 'apostolic doctrine' handled and lived out by the immature.

For the sake of those confused as to where I am going; I am saying that denominationalism can be and has been an enemy to the growth of the Church...and to reiterate earlier statements it has also been a blessing to it. World-sized fixes need a bigger-than-world God to solve them. Until then on our own personal level we offer solutions to schism and factions for a platform of doctrinal purity and love towards one another.

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/11/27 15:58

Re:

Travis says,

Most denominations split over scripture interpretations. They each think that their slant is right and in most cases will argue for the fact that "those other folks" interpretation is wrong. How many, many sermons have I heard that decry the error in another group.

But both groups in this scenario cannot be right, and perhaps both are wrong. The Holy Spirit is consistent, and there is only one truly correct way to interpret scripture.

â€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆ

To this Travis I certainly agree,

Also,...you said,

In 1 Corinthians 1-3, Paul says that they are carnal because they divide themselves along the lines of their favorite teacher. Some followed Paul, some Apollos, and some Peter, saying that the teachings of their particular man were the thing they followed after. Paul says that this is due to their carnality. But he contrasts this in chapter 2 when he talks about the fact that a spiritual man can judge other men along spiritual lines because the spiritual man has the mind of Christ.

â€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆ

I wonder could denominationalism have started from about this time, or soon thereafter? And what about today? ...when man got off into the carnal.

We know the opposite of being carnal i.e.,... carnally minded, ... the opposite is to be in The Spirit and to be Spiritually minded.

>>> We listen to man, ... but with our ears tuned toward The Spirit of God,...

To be Spiritually minded, is to set our minds upon The Rock,.. the solid foundation.

Yes, it was because of carnality, as Paul has said, and you, Travis, have pointed out.

Paul knew carnality when he saw it.

Did Paul choose a denomination,... I am a Pentecostal, ... because his ministry came some time after Pentecost,.. but what did He point out to these people,.. but to look always to Jesus,..The Holy Spirit,..

just as God told the disciples that were on the mount w/Jesus. God said, "This is my beloved Son, Hear Him"

â€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆ

Paul had, and taught that solid foundation, and yet he told them "if I or anyone else preach to you another gospel, let them be accursed."

>>. So, how are we going to know the gospel,.. what is meant by "the gospel", except by The Spirit of God that teaches us....taught by The Spirit of God,Himself ?

*another example,...

Mt.16:12,

Jesus,

asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

And Peter answered and said, "Thou art The Christ The Son of The Living God" (Peter was being Spiritually minded)

And Jesus told him, "...blessed are you,... (blessed are you ??),...that flesh and blood had not revealed that unto Him, But my Father which is in heaven.

* and Jesus goes on to say, that upon this revealed Word of God,.. The Rock,.. this solid foundation, He would build His Church.

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

* But What is "the keys to the kingdom" ?

** But then , just a few verses down, Peter became "carnally minded" ,....desiring and speaking out of a fleshly mind.

Mt.16:22-23,

"Jesus began to tell them that he going tobe killed, and be raised again the third day.

22 ¶ "Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee."

23 ¶ "But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men"

+Rom.8:5-14,

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."

6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

7 "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

8 "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

9 ¶ "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

11 "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

12 ¶ "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh."

13 "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

14 "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

"-"

Now ! , after doing this study, do I believe in denominations, or do I believe there should have been, or should be "denominations" ?...No,.. or do I believe in a continuum of Paul's day ,teachings and way,.. ?..yes,.. ...conclusion came because of considering what Paul these that were saying,...

"1Cor 1:12-13,

"Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ."

13 "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"

So, really, Paul were telling them , just like God was saying on the mount ,

"To hear Jesus,His Son"

"-"

Please note that,...

I AM NOT SAYING , that if one goes to a denominational Church,that they do not hear God speak to them and are not following Him,..I AM NOT SAYING THAT, AT ALL !

Because we know that it is our relationship w/ Him, that is meaningful.

And that the word "denomination" is only "a name" to many, that are in these gatherings of people... that, that is the way we have always known it..... excepting in The Word.

The Word says, for us to "hear ye Him" ,... and "my Sheep hear my voice and they follow me"

â€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆ

Heb. 13:7,

â€œRemember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, â€ˆ
CONSIDERING THE END OF THEIR CONVERSATION,â€ˆ

Note:

If we wish to, ...The Word has much to say about â€ˆconversationâ€™™ that we can look up and see how it is used.

â€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆâ€ˆ

I tremble to put this out there....

â€™™†, •

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elizabeth

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2019/11/27 16:06

I think another hindrance to unity is the fact that there is no concrete or clear-cut agreed upon list of essential and non-essential doctrines. Some are obvious essentials such as the Deity of Christ, salvation by grace through faith in Christ apart from works, and recognizing certain sins as being blatant and intolerable within the church (e.g. fornication and homosexuality). But then there are certain doctrinal topics that some may consider to be dealing with essentials, that may in fact be non-essential in terms of affecting salvation and/or fellowship.

As I look back, Iâ€™™m convinced that the Lord has shown me that I erred in considering certain topics as essential for either salvation or fellowship or both. Iâ€™™ll give some examples.

When I first came to Christ, I became convinced of eternal security and had a hard time accepting that true believers can â€œknowinglyâ€ˆ disagree with that doctrine. I was also convinced of cessationism and considered modern-day tongues to be demonic. I was also a Calvinist and had a hard time believing one can be a true believer and â€œknowinglyâ€ˆ believe they could â€œplay any partâ€ˆ (i.e. make a choice) in their salvation. But afterward I became convinced I was being immature to reason as such and to be divisive in my thinking over those issues.

In recent times, I believe the Lord has shown me I shouldnâ€™™t divide over the issue of the meaning of hell or eternal punishment. For a long time, I was convinced that one couldnâ€™™t possibly be a true believer and deny eternal conscious torment, even though I knew John Stott had held to annihilationism and was well-respected within Evangelicalism. When I found out that David Servant (who heads up Heavenâ€™™s Family ministries) embraced annihilationism, I placed a block on his email newsletters. However, once I started listening to Steve Greggâ€™™s verse by verse Bible teachings and learned that he had a disdain for the doctrine of eternal conscious torment-he says he hasnâ€™™t made up his mind on which view to hold, but to me it seems he leans toward annihilationism), I began being more tolerant of Christians who disagreed with eternal conscious torment and came to see that too as being non-essential for both salvation and fellowship.

So I can understand why some of us may be intolerant of certain views which we consider to be dealing with the essentials of the faith.

Again, I think denominationalism has hindered Christians from maturing in this area of essential vs non-essential doctrines. Too many treat non-essential doctrines as essential for either salvation or fellowship or both.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/11/27 18:23

Quote:
-----I think another hindrance to unity is the fact that there is no concrete or clear-cut agreed upon list of essential and non-essential doctrines. Some are obvious essentials such as the Deity of Christ, salvation by grace through faith in Christ apart from works, and recognizing certain sins as being blatant and intolerable within the church (e.g. fornication and homosexuality). But then there are certain doctrinal topics that some may consider to be dealing with essentials, that may in fact be non-essential in terms of affecting salvation and/or fellowship.

Staff also spoke to this issue of essential and non-essential doctrines, as well as to the point about maturity. But Elizabeth pointed out the difference between carnality and the person who is spiritual (walking in the Spirit).

Maturity is not an age nor a number of years passing since being born again. Maturity is not about how many people one influences, nor about the position one attains in a church, however high in the leadership structure that may be.

Maturity is a spiritual pursuit. I have seen men five years old in the Lord that far exceeded the spiritual maturity of men that have been saved for 30 years. Paul tells us in Eph. 4 that maturity is growing up into the stature and measure of a full grown man of God. Maturity comes from being transformed into His image from glory to glory as we behold him with an unveiled face, fellowshiping in deep intimacy with Him. Maturity comes as we die to self and learn to live only through Him.

Paul's description in 1 Cor. 2 is that of a mature man of God. He is a man that is taught by the Holy Spirit. He is a man that is in such intimate fellowship with God that he knows the mind of the Spirit, that he has the mind of Christ.

I have never seen two such men that were not in unity, both of attitude or heart and of doctrine. I have never seen two such men who could not differentiate between those teachings that are essential and those that are ancillary.

Paul is really very clear. These divisions come only of carnality. Paul did not say these people were not saved. He did not say these people did not love God, did not have valid ministries, and did not legitimately lead people to Christ. He simply said that these people who divided themselves among different teachers were carnal, and acting as mere men.

I would even go so far as to say that there are many men of God who are leading large ministries today and are doing great things for the kingdom, but are carnal in that they retain a divisive spirit where their particular pet doctrines are concerned. While they may be winning many to Christ, their potential is reduced by their own intellect. They have a human or fleshly understanding that has not been surrendered to God where doctrine and teaching are concerned. Remember, the Holy Spirit does not put many interpretations out there. There is one right perspective, and that is God's.

That is why I can say unequivocally that I have never seen a man totally surrendered to the Holy Spirit that has a divisive or denominational spirit about him.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/28 14:55

Hi GloryandGrace,
Hi I hope you don't mind for the sake of speed I pick out the one line that I disagree with! But I see a lot of the good points too.

Your Quote:

Oracio and Travis are offering what they believe to be the surest way to end denominationalism...but that solution has its own caveats...but so does 'apostolic doctrine' handled and lived out by the immature.

Waiting for "maturity" or "Love" will not end denominations as they are not the reasons why we have the denomination to begin with, the reason is differing doctrines. So the only way to get rid of denominations is by correct doctrine with a recognized Authority behind it.

Apostle Doctrine has no pitfalls and I repeat we should not try to restore it ourselves but wait for God's timing as that would have pitfalls.

May I add as a footnote "Maturity" is linked clearly to the working of the "gifts" as the NASB says "to a mature man". Basically its saying here is the point of the "Apostolic Structure" is to help the Church grow to full "Maturity".

My point is what about the saved members of a denomination who doesn't believe in this structure. How do they gain "maturity" in the first place? And even if your denomination does believe it you still don't have it because it hasn't been restored yet!

So I therefore I reiterate that Apostolic structure has to be restored by God in God's timing, your staff

13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

KING JAMES VERSION

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 fullness of Christ:

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/11/28 16:59

Staff,

You are talking about "Apostolic Doctrine" and "Apostolic structure"

Question :

Are you talking about the Apostolic Denomination of Pentecostal preachers of our day, ...or Apostolic as of Jesus, Paul, and the other disciples/apostles teachings ?

In most cases, there is much difference.

In our day, they branch, off into many, many different denominations under different names, calling it "Apostolic" doctrine.

If a "doctrine" is not a doctrine that makes one WHOLE, as Jesus taught, ... is it really the "doctrine" of Jesus, ...? Also the same doctrine that Paul and other disciples were taught by Jesus, ... he then told them to go out and teach ? ...that is our guidelines .

I am not sure I understand...

We speak the truth in love, as The Lord shows us, ... teaches, ..plus our life, but it is only The Lord, we know, that can work the heart.

We mature, as we "put His yoke upon us and learn of Him".... always being learners / disciples by Him. And that is a continuation.

Because The Word was given to Jesus without measure, but unto us , it is given by measure.

Please show me if I am not reading you right.

'-
elizabeth

Added:

Heb.13:8-9,

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

9 "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."

Re: - posted by CalvaryCom (), on: 2019/11/28 17:54

All Christians who hold to the Bible as the plenary, inspired Word of God agree that water baptism is an essential doctrine. Where the divisions occur are over full immersion vs. sprinkling, and infant baptism vs. baptism after conversion. I do not regard these latter points as non-essential in doctrine, but there are many who do (for those interested, I hold to full immersion & baptism after conversion).

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2019/11/28 19:19

I haven't heard this verse fully quoted ,

1 Corinthians 11:18-19 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized.

God's intent was to have faction, and Paul himself was a proponent of a faction that was approved by God, in regards to challenging Peter and others who never understood the depths of revelation given to Paul for the Gentiles

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/29 10:35

Hi Elizabeth,

Ok so to be perfectly clear

I am not talking about the "Apostolic Denomination of Pentecostal Preachers of our day".

I am talking about Apostolic as of Jesus/Paul and the other disciples/Apostles teachings.

Also to be clear I am not saying we should do anything to make it happen only realize that it is coming and pray for it to happen.

Most of the conversation about "Maturity" and "Grace" and the like is to do with problems and divisions within a church or even an individual denomination but the bigger picture is that denominations are a fact and we can't do anything about it but God does not want denominations but one Church in the end. Denominations are not from God and so he does not bless them but he does bless movements, staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/11/29 10:39

Hi Bro,

I made comment on this on a previous thread.

This division is to do with misbehaviour within an individual Church not caused by any huge difference in doctrine and deals with factions rather than a teaching that differs one group of Churches from another. One faction had to be approved by their good behaviour and show up the other as false and not genuine, staff

Re: Denominations ,.. ? - posted by dspks, on: 2019/11/29 10:50

Ephesians tells us:

Keep the "unity of the Spirit" IN the "bond of PEACE"

The Holy Spirit UNIFIES ALL true believers... no matter what denomination you may be involved in...

Paul tells us... keep THAT Unity IN the "bond of PEACE".

We are not always at PEACE with fellow believers.

The Holy Spirit doesn't need help in unifying believers. (I can be at odds with a fellow believer BUT never dis-unified)

Our problem is being at Peace with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

(Oh by the way, "unity" means "ONE" it does NOT mean "uniformity")

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/11/29 15:23

Staff:

Quote:

..... .I am talking about Apostolic as of Jesus/Paul and the other disciples/Apostles teachings.
.....

So let me see if I understand what you are saying. Please correct any part of this if it is wrong, because I am trying to paraphrase what you have said so I am sure I understand.

You are saying that the main reason for division among the church is that we do not hold to the teaching of Jesus and the apostles, but have strayed from these. So the way back is for the church to be restored to those original teachings, and that is something that God will sovereignly cause to happen and we should be praying for that.

That is what I am hearing. If I am wrong, please let me know.

A question for you.

Are you also saying that there will come a restoration of the apostolic structure of leadership in the church that will bring about this end to factions.

Just wanting to be sure I understand your perspective.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/12/1 14:39

Hi Twayneb,

Point 1: Not splitting hairs here but denominations rather than just division is among the Church not because necessarily we don't hold to the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles in some cases we do and others we don't. Not a lack of trying in most cases. But rather the Apostolic structure of the early Church is not in operation today. Apostolic Structure includes doctrine and authority obviously.

Point 2 : Yes I am saying there will come a restoration of the Apostolic Structure of leadership and this will bring an end to denominations whether this goes down to petty factions I don't know but I expect so.

A word of caution is that we are not to try and bring this about as we are unable and it would only cause heavy shepherding if we did. I hope that answered the question yours staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/12/1 14:59

Hi DSPKS,

By not putting the verse in context "bond of peace" you have skipped the fact that what Paul was saying is that he wants all things to work correctly and in order. So "bond of peace" is directly linked to the correct working of the gifts as they are listed just after the bond of peace verse.

The Holy Spirit is in all true believers that is obviously correct but what you are saying is this "Because all true believers have the Holy Spirit we are unified" and this is incorrect. If that was the case there would have been no need for Paul to write Ephesians 4 or mention the bond of peace at all or write anything about unity. Unity just is a state of "existence" according to your thought process. We don't have to work at it or we don't have to have proper structure because "true believers all have the Holy Spirit". That can't be because if Structure wasn't important then we would not have had the "twelve" or we would not need a lecture on the working of the gifts in order etc.

So I would say on the face of it a few lines taken out of context looks convincing until you put them back in context attached to structure and the working of the gifts in unity and peace, yours staff

Unity and Maturity in the Body of Christ

1As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 4There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 5one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

7But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. 8This is why it says:

“When he ascended on high,

he took many captives

and gave gifts to his people.”

(What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? 10He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) 11So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

14Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/12/1 18:49

Re Staff,

“Hi Elizabeth,

“Ok so to be perfectly clear

I am not talking about the "Apostolic Denomination of Pentecostal Preachers of our day".

“”

appreciate your clarifying

“”

Re Staff,..

“I am talking about Apostolic as of Jesus/Paul and the other disciples/Apostles teachings.”

“”

Yes,...

“”

Re Staff,

“Also to be clear I am not saying we should do anything to make it happen only realize that it is coming and pray for it to happen.”

“”

Me:

I don't think it our place to make it happen either, except to live the Life of Christ in Him and Him in us....it is God that does the work, or can cause the Seed to grow.

“”

***Repeating this phrase you said,... “only realize that it is coming”...

“”

I was wondering, .I don't understand,...(that “it is coming”). how did you come by that statement? Could you point that out to me in The Word?,...Is it no longer here on earth, at all?.... Do you believe that the Apostolic as of Jesus / Paul and the other disciples / Apostles teaching no longer exists here today?..

“”

Re....“maturity”.....

“”

Eph.4:14-15,

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”

15 "But speaking the truth in love, may I grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

(Good to read all of Eph.4,chapter)

"

* re...unity or One:

"

Jesus' priestly prayer,...

Jn.17:11,

"Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one , as we are"

"

But what is The Father's Name , that He kept Jesus in, and wants us kept in ?

His Name is called 'the Word of God' ... His Name is everything that God stands for,.. all His Truth,..all His righteous judgements in all things.so keep them through thine own Name"

But how is Jesus and The Father 'One'?

Would it be the true LIFE of God,.. The whole Spirit / Word of God,lived out in Jesus ?...lead by His Father's Spirit?

.....

Hallowed be Thy Name, in earth, as it is in heaven' ... (Jesus is praying that His Name will be Hallowed in us,.. His Word,.... His Name, The Holy Spirit,,His Name, that was born into us,....to be 'hallowed In us')

"

Eph.4:13,

"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:"

"-

So why denominations,... what happened along the way ?

Paul was here for a long life of preaching / teaching , but stayed in the 'one'

teacher, Christ Jesus,... 'The Way' , and never, took one verse or Scripture and made a new and different Church , as we can readily see that is today,...

If we have 'the mind of Christ, as Paul had, ... should not all Scripture flow to make One Whole?... as Paul and the others that were taught by Jesus, and taught?

Is Christ divided ?

Just taking a close thought and study about >>>> denominations >>>and how they came about and how they continue to grow.

"

2Tim.2:18-19,

"Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

"

** note: ...(the kingdom of God, is the 'resurrection of The Lord in us)

19 "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth 'the name of Christ' depart from iniquity."

"-

Am I wrong to encourage us to consider these things,..... will I rock a boat, so to speak ? That is not my desire, my desire is to promote 'the kingdom of God'... Only,... always'.

I tremble,

"-

elizabeth

Re: - posted by dspks, on: 2019/12/1 20:00

Dear Staff,

I believe the Bible does teach that All true believers Do have the Spirit of God living in them...Therefore, we are all unified by One Spirit. As I said ... unity is not what Paul is calling for... but, he is calling us to keeping that unity in the bond of peace. Not putting my spin on the verse nor taking this scripture out of context... just reading it as it is written. But, thank you for your opinion.

Re: - posted by dspks, on: 2019/12/2 14:17

According to Ephesians 2:20 True Believers...are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

The apostles and prophets fulfilled their purpose years ago (as Jesus did)... they (the apostles & prophets) are the foundation of the true Church... It would be silly to put a foundation on top of a foundation. Apostles are not needed today... they fulfilled their purpose by laying a foundation for the living stones to be laid upon.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/12/2 21:20

Quote:
----- .The apostles and prophets fulfilled their purpose years ago (as Jesus did)... they (the apostles & prophets) are the foundation of the true Church... It would be silly to put a foundation on top of a foundation. Apostles are not needed today... they fulfilled their purpose by laying a foundation for the living stones to be laid upon.

When Ephesians 2:20 speaks of the foundation of the apostles and prophets I don't believe that we can read into it that this means that the work of apostles and prophets in the church has ceased any more than the statement that Christ is the chief cornerstone of that foundation means that we no longer need Christ. If we read into it that apostles and prophets are no longer needed then, to be scripturally consistent, we would also have to read into it that Christ is no longer needed since He is listed as being part of that same foundation.

I believe that the foundation of the apostles and prophets refers to the church being foretold by the prophets and established by the apostles. According to Eph. 4, the apostles and prophets are just as active a part of the leadership structure of the body as are the pastors, evangelists, and teachers.

I would agree with Todd that the leadership structure of the church could have a lot to do with the denominational divisions we see today. If the church is to change, it is going to first require a change in the hearts of the leadership. We do still have apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers in leadership in the church. I don't think we will go back to a small group of apostles leading the church out of denominationalism. I believe we will have elders, which include the five leaders mentioned as well as men ordained as overseers that are not necessarily one of these five gifts to the body, who will be on their faces, seeking God. These men will be of one mind and one judgement because they will all be totally sold out and committed to one God. The true church will be in unity.

However, I don't ever perceive of a time when the nominal church (those who perhaps carry a name but do so without the One whose name they carry) will be without faction and division. I don't think the denominations will ever cease to be. I just think the true church will emerge from the carnality of the nominal church and walk in power and unity.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2019/12/3 6:41

What can an apostle or prophet add to The Words of this Book; the Body of Christ, who's foundation is Christ Himself who gave Paul the fullness of His Grace of the New Covenant and the finished work of Jesus Christ and His body the Church. Are we not to conduct the business of the Body of Christ His Church according to His instructions and the Power of the Holy Spirit in who directs us and guides us into all truth.

Revelation 22:16-21 (KJV) I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall ((add unto these))) things, God shall add

d unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and ((from the things which are written in this book.))) He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

This takes care of the Prophets and there were only 12 Apostles. I certainly don't want anything added or taken away from the things that are written in this Book.

I have only made it into His Kingdom by His Grace and the Blood of Christ. Thank you Father; Amen and Amen.

IN Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/12/3 9:57

Phillip:

I would answer your question quite clearly, and I am sure you would agree wholeheartedly. There is absolutely nothing that an apostle or prophet can add to this book (the written word of God). Nor can pastors, evangelists, teachers, elders, or believers.

However there is a lot that apostles and prophets can add to the body of Christ. This is why Paul, in Ephesians 4, said that God placed these five ministry gifts within the body of Christ. They add to the body by being the ones specifically called out to minister to the growth and maturity of the body.

I remember Paul's calling and his ordination into apostleship. "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul." In the church at Antioch there were prophets along with teachers. These men were the ones who laid hands on Paul and ordained him to the work of apostleship.

I actually find a total of 16 apostles in the New Testament that are specifically called apostles. I find the original twelve, obviously. It should be noted that Judas' apostleship was taken away and given to Matthias. The thirteenth is Paul. Then we have Barnabas (Acts 14:14) and Silvanus and Timothy (1 Thessalonians 1:1 and 2:6)

The original twelve were chosen to introduce the message of the gospel to Israel, and to establish the church among them, and they did. Paul was chosen to introduce the message of the gospel to the Gentiles, and to establish the church among them, and he did. Some of the twelve wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit what God intended to be written down as His holy and unalterable word. Examples would be Paul, Peter, Matthew, and John. Others did not do this. Examples would be Thomas, and James and John the sons of Zebedee. Some men were called to write scripture that were not, as far as we have recorded, Apostles at all. Mark and Luke are examples of these.

I know this may be a discussion for another thread, but it really seems inconsistent to me that we would pick three ministry gifts to the body out of Ephesians 4 and label them as continuing while at the same time saying that the other two have ceased to function, when Paul tells us that they are all five placed in the body by God for the maturing of the body.

Re: - posted by dspks, on: 2019/12/3 10:21

The Scriptures speak for themselves... the apostles completed their task as foundation layers.

Christ fulfilled His purpose as being the "Chief Cornerstone".

It's obvious that our Lord AS the "Chief Cornerstone" continues His task as our Lord, Shepherd, etc.

No need for apostles TODAY to lay a foundation... that task is completed AND complete.

I would question the authority of anyone TODAY claiming to be an "apostle".

Such a claim TODAY (apostleship) elevates that person to a position of authority (above written Scripture) ... where they will actually claim to know "truth" that no-one else has known. Dangerous... you will start believing in the "Passion Translation" if you adhere to that thinking!

Re: God's dangerous idea - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/12/3 10:22

A quote from dspks:

"The apostles and prophets fulfilled their purpose years ago (as Jesus did)... they (the apostles & prophets) are the "foundation" of the true Church... It would be silly to put a foundation on top of a foundation. Apostles are not needed today... they fulfilled their purpose by laying a foundation for the "living stones" to be laid upon."

This statement alone serves to prove the need for denominations and it also proves the need for apostolic corrections.

dspks, Im just using your statement as an example, this thread is not about the office of apostles or any eschatology related to them.

My point, some men in the past Joseph Smith is one...who basically said "the churches are all corrupt, there no none that teaches rightly" so...I appoint myself an apostle...I got an angel to vindicate me and some tablets urim and thummin and a cave...now I just need some followers...poof Church of Later Day Saints.

It is upon that statement "the churches are all corrupt and someone's got to step in and fix it" that cults are born.

But the opposite end is equally false, namely "we don't need apostles today". Based on what? Based on a denomination's eschatological position which they teach and forbid anyone calling themselves an apostle...true or not, they are automatically excluded.

My point is when denominations make the rules for "who is considered legitimate and who is not" when in fact their own legitimacy comes from the exact place non-denominational believers come from...God.

It's also convenient that various denominations exclude any prophetic or apostolic office...therefore there is no one to challenge the authority of the pastor/teacher or his interpretations.

The reason of course is an insistence that modern apostles and prophets are non-foundational and are guilty of adding or subtracting from the word of God. This two-fold argument is everywhere in evangelical Christianity...so the very thing Staff and others are saying is automatically relegated to the 'rebellion-file' because their authority is really at the heart of the issue, not whether or not the bible is going to be harmed.

dspks statement" It would be silly to put a foundation on top of a foundation. Apostles are not needed today... they fulfilled their purpose by laying a foundation for the "living stones" to be laid upon."
is as common as dirt in the field, but it contains it's own defeater...namely lack of any biblical warrant for believing it.

There is another option, the modern apostle and prophet do not add or subtract from the scriptures and are not laying another foundation, but as God designs are part of the building of God as living stones themselves.

God's dangerous idea is that men are free to follow the Spirit of God, where God designs the Church himself. When human design trespasses it does so by building new fences on real estate it doesn't own, then runs off anyone claiming God's calling and office.

The denominations structure, boundary, doctrine and leadership by the very nature of being a denomination necessitate it disallowing any authority but its own.

But here again...is it a denomination that is issuing statements like dspks gave? Is that the position of some 40000 denominations that there are no modern apostles or prophets or that denominations are in themselves a lesser form of Church existence? You might be surprised that every single denomination is multiplied by its number of locations in the world.. even if there were only 1 charismatic denomination...its multiplied 200 times simply because of it's locale.

It's my opinion the big-boys on the block with the money and power behind their organizations that have any real influence on "who's going to be an apostle or prophet". They are the gate-keepers, they are the ones who make sure the rest of the teachers maintain party lines and teach party politics. Breaking ranks brings a swift end to denominational authority. It's that very authority...not granted by scripture or the spirit of God, but conveyed upon themselves by themselves that will remain hostile to any 'doctrine' that negates their authority.

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/12/3 12:50

Thank you Travis,
For the research you have afforded us here.
â€”â€”â€”

I ask,... Are we so ingrained in denominational teachings, ?,....Can denominational teachings blind us to Godâ€™™ Truth ? ...

When The â€”Spirit of Graceâ€™™ drew us to God, Who IS The Word ! , ... how long did we stay hungry and searching for truth before we turned to man to teach us ?..OR get alone with The Spirit of God, .. the same One that was drawing us to God,...did we do as Paul, and say, â€œWhat would Thou have for me to do Lord ?â€• He was seeing what The King would direct him to do. Seeking the King of God, and His righteousness ?,.... The One who will teach us by the anointing,...as Mary did at the feet of Jesus,.. that â€”no oneâ€™™ can take His / Word ,.. His teachings from us ? ... The Rock,.. The sure foundation,.... that we through His Spirit, confirming it through The Word, build our lives upon,.. a house to house The Holy Spirit,... The One to fill and lead us by His Spirit.

â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”

Wouldnâ€™™t you believe that (seeking The King of God, and His righteousness, was everyday, always w/ Paul,.. and the other Disciples / Apostles ?

â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”

Please ,..

The Lord sent Paul to a man of God, .. Ananias,..

There are men that has the True Word of God, that has been taught by God,....that are not taught in a seminary, then in keeping w/ that standard teachings , feeding , .. down the years w/ many followers.even until now.

* please!

I am speaking this truth , in the love of God !

â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”

Paul had never heard from God, but when he was drawn to God, by His Grace, he was led / sent by The Spirit of God to Ananias, Paul was seeking,.. and Godâ€™™ will, when He sent him to Ananias,.. not just looking for â€”anybodyâ€™™

â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”

Where is a man, in our day, preaching The Word, as Paul ,Peter, John,.. and the other Disciples / Apostles that were not taught under a denomination, they actually tried to correct that thinking?,... Their teacher was , The Spirit of The Lord,.. and they could see that trying to happen.

They did not have The New Testament,..

We, now, are so blessed,we can be taught discipled by The Spirit, and confirm it by The Scriptures, that were inspired by God.

2Tim.3:16,

â€œâ€” All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:â€•

17 â€œThat the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.â€•

â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”

What will happen to â€”denominationâ€™™sâ€™™ when â€œthe time of the Gentiles have come to an end ? .., Do we know ?,...I DO NOT know,... (just some morning ponderings.

â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”

elizabeth

Re: - posted by CalvaryCom (), on: 2019/12/3 15:08

This discussion is funny...and quite earthbound.

ALL of the saints who have preceded us in death now have a perfect revelation of Jesus Christ in His full glory. They no longer see through a glass darkly. There is no denominational schism in heaven. They all have perfect theology. One day we'll be the same. End of discussion, really.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/12/3 15:59

Quote:

----- . This discussion is funny...and quite earthbound.

ALL of the saints who have preceded us in death now have a perfect revelation of Jesus Christ in His full glory. They no longer see through a glass darkly. There is no denominational schism in heaven. They all have perfect theology. One day we'll be the same. End of discussion, really.

Alec: There is a sense in which I absolutely LOVE what you just said. How true.

But we do live here and there is a unity that has to come to the body, not only emotionally, but also in the area of our beliefs and judgements.

Elizabeth, it is denominationalism that blinds us to truth so often. How many times do we establish a doctrine and then read that doctrine into the scriptures we are reading, rather than having the scriptures read out to us what they say.

Let me give an example that I sometimes use. Galatians 5:1 says, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has set you free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage." I often stop right here and ask people, "What is the yoke of bondage that Paul speaks of here." Almost every person I have ever asked said, "It is the bondage to sin." But it is not. Paul goes on in the next few verses to show that we are not to be entangled again in the yoke of bondage to trying to please God by the law.

My point in the example is this. We have our focus so much on defeating sin that we read into Paul's words what we already have on our minds. How many times do we do this due to our denominational slants on scripture?

When we think wrongly, believe wrongly, about something in scripture, our belief has consequences in other areas of scripture, and we are forced to try to make it fit. So we read into a scripture a meaning that tries to protect our belief about another area of scripture. It is a form of blindness. The problem is that, in our own carnal minds, we are all susceptible to this blindness. It takes revelation by the Spirit of God to open our eyes.

I hope everyone involved in this discussion can see my heart through my words. I don't like to debate, argue, or be confrontational. I don't think it is fruitful. I do however think frank discussion can cause us to consider our own ideas in a new light. I have had much change in my belief and perspective over the years. My doctrine is not what it used to be years ago.

But I do think that the subject of Apostles is a good example of what I am talking about. There is nowhere in scripture where the job of an apostle is laid out specifically. When scripture says that the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ being the chief cornerstone of that foundation, we cannot derive from that a definition of apostles as one time foundational gifts that were only used for a short period of time. And the fact that some of the apostles (Paul, Peter, John, and Matthew) were used by inspiration to write portions of scripture does not mean that apostles are above scripture. There were men used to write scripture that were not apostles as well. Apostleship does not imply divine ability to write scripture. The problem is the perspective that we bring into that verse, not the plain reading of it.

God used the old testament prophets to foretell the church. He used the apostles as sent ones to bring the message of the gospel to the nation of Israel and to the nations at large. They had a foundational role. Their having a foundational role does not end their function. They are just the ones that God chose to use. Paul's teaching in Ephesians 4 is a teaching for the church in perpetuity. We are always having babes born that need raised to maturity, and these five gifts are God's way of doing that in His body.

I know a couple of men personally that I know occupy the position of apostleship. This does not make them any more special or spiritually significant than men I know who are called to be pastors or teachers. They just fulfill a different role. They are visionaries and planters for the most part. One in particular has supernaturally been used in Cuba (even when it was illegal), Costa Rica, Germany, Africa, Australia, and Argentina as well as here in the US. He is a sent one that brings help to these churches and helps look after their welfare, just as Paul did with the churches he planted. This man would acknowledge his calling, but he is not one who gets his identity from it. He is extremely humble, but carries a weight of the power of the Holy Spirit. But he is just a guy who is used of God.

My admonition would be to hold any kind of denominational doctrines very loosely. Read the word of God without colored glasses. Take it at its word. Be dogmatic only about what it dogmatically states. There is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved other than Jesus. We can be totally dogmatic about this, and we should. There is no other way...period. Be open to change where scripture is not explicit. Will there be a pre-trib rapture and a second resurrection, or will there be one return of the King. I am not totally sure. I see valid arguments on both sides. So there is no room for dogmatism here, and no reason to divide over it.

Re: apostles foundational - posted by dspks, on: 2019/12/4 8:07

twayneb said: "When scripture says that the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ being the chief cornerstone of that foundation, we cannot derive from that a definition of apostles as one time foundational gifts that were only used for a short period of time."

dspks says: "I do derive!"

It's obvious our two derives differ. :)

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/12/4 9:33

Hi Dpks,

It seems to me that correct me if I'm wrong but you will put somethings in context scripture wise and other thing you dont. For instance my point earlier that Eph 4 and unity and the bond of peace are related to the gifts in context rather and also if the foundations have served their purpose then so has Jesus as he is part of the foundation! him being the chief cornerstone.

If you read the two/three areas to do with gifts then you will find that unity is mentioned. It is the only place where you will find unity mentioned. In fact what the bible says is that without the gifts functioning correctly in unity then the church is not fit for purpose.

urs staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/12/4 9:48

Hi Elizabeth,

Just a brief outline on this as the concept isn't hard to understand but it is long scripture wise.

The basic reason why I believe God will restore Apostolic Structure is:

Behold I will send Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord mentioned in Malachi

These are two different days one before Jesus came the first time and one before he comes again.

The two times Elijah came so far included him restoring the twelve to Israel. The first time on Carmel he restored the twelve stones and the second time he restored the twelve stones as in the form of the twelve Apostles. All of the Apostles came under John's Ministry before they came under Jesus Ministry.

In fact we know that it was a requirement that the twelfth stone or Apostle restored by Peter in the line before Pentecost had to have come from Elijah in the form of John The Baptist. We could put it another way if Peter had not restored the twelfth stone or Apostle the Fire would not have fallen on Pentecost.

The explanation gets longer and down to nitty gritty but that's the basic understanding I have urs staff

P.S in answer to ur other question I don't think we have Apostles as of Peter or Paul today. We may have Apostles as in Church planter types but none with the Authority of Paul or Peter to bring the Church in line with his word

Your Quote:

.....
I was wondering, .I don't understand,...(that it is coming). how did you come by that statement ? Could you point that out to me in The Word?,...Is it no longer here on earth, at all ?.... Do you believe that the Apostolic as of Jesus / Paul and the other disciples / Apostles teaching no longer exists here today ?..
.....

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2019/12/6 5:55

twayneb

Acts 1:22-26 (KJV) Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surname d Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Some to be apostles. The apostles were all chosen by Christ. All had to be witnesses of his resurrection (Ac 1:22). They, therefore, could have no successors, but their own office continues. They still remain teachers and in authority by their writings and example.

I don't know of any person who assumes the title of Apostle today that has been chosen by Christ and is a personal reality witness of Christ' resurrection.

Thank you for reminding me of Paul being an Apostle of Christ, for he surely was a witness of Christ' resurrection.

So we do have Apostles today, speaking to us from infallible Word of God. Paul specifically for the Gentiles.

""The gifts mentioned here in Ephesians abide to the end until the Church is complete and removed from the earth. The apostles are the apostles of the beginning. The apostolate of Mormonism and similar cults is an invention. Nowhere does it say that Paul, Peter or John should have successors; all who lay claim to the title of apostle in the church are deceivers (Re 2:2)."" Gaebelein's Annotated Bible

Revelation 2:1-2 (KJV) Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

This will probably start a war, but I got this from the Word of God for His Church; The Body of Christ. KJV

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by CalvaryCom (), on: 2019/12/6 6:26

I have seen many in the "churchianity business" with the word "apostle" plastered on their business cards in front of their name and other titles. These should be rejected outright.

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/12/6 11:53

Hi Alec: I too realize the Church at large has a number of false apostles.

Yet to say if anyone calls themselves an apostle they are false-outright...is going beyond biblical precedent.

Paul was not shy at all about calling himself an apostle. His humility included making the Church aware of his apostleship. That precedent makes way for an 'apostle' to imitate that with every biblical right to do so.

You must know from reading me in the past I make no room for loons and heretics that call themselves apostle or any other title.

To the others:

As I said in an earlier post, there are plenty of good and godly men who clearly forbid anyone existing as an apostle other than those first apostles.

But the scripture itself does not make such limitations explicitly, nor can one say God will not call other apostles in the future.

Such limitations that include "seeing the resurrection" is purely an eschatological invention. Apostleship...as Paul stated was never contingent upon his 'seeing' the resurrection. It was contingent upon his calling and faithfulness to that call.

Apostleship was not contingent upon 'writing scripture' for we do not have 12 different authors for the new testament, we only have a few, therefore that requirement now excludes the other apostles who authored no biblical text.

By the way Mark...was no apostle. Was Luke ever named among the apostles?

As soon as you put this apostolic litmus test to a biblical test you come away with fails in all directions.

It is true apostles write scripture and testify of the resurrection but it is not true all apostles write scripture or see the resurrection.

It gets it that denomination eschatological teachings on the 'end of apostleship' is supposed to be as essential as the inerrant word of God, but in reality it is an overstepping...over-realization of the original 12 apostles.

So, when someone says "apostolic teaching and future apostles" you have a thousand pastors and teachers that immediately conclude ...he's adding to the bible, he's false, he's going to ruin the Church, he's another Joe Smith, he's going to author erroneous doctrines...

and most importantly he's going to undermine my authority, my interpretations and my right to kick out of the kingdom those who are outside my eschatological boundary.

Re: - posted by CalvaryCom (), on: 2019/12/6 18:35

Hi, Marvin,

I enjoy your posts and wasn't replying to you specifically about apostles, but rather to the person who wrote just before me (as an affirmation).

Are there apostles today? Brother Yun is still alive, and was one of the foremost leaders in the underground church in China...yet I have never heard him refer to himself as an apostle. Yes, in the Scriptures Paul certainly did (and rightly so), but he also wrote in 1 Corinthians 4:9: "For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men."

I would be delighted if there were genuine apostles in the earth today, but if there are any ON ACTIVE DUTY we would likely know about it.

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/12/7 8:51

Hi Staff,

I appreciate your response, and the thoughts on "the stones".

I don't know much about the stones at Carmel, linking it to the New Testament Apostles... I would like to study that.

Thank you for stirring my thoughts in that area.

"-"

As per the conversation about The Lord continuing to appoint "Apostles"

In our day? I do not know...but one could NEVER go in "something new"

,...God has given us the example, .. the foundation, the pattern, to confirm His Word, that He speaks to the us by His Spirit,

So if there is Apostles, (sent ones), in our day,.. Wouldn't we believe they could ONLY build upon the foundation already built ?

â€”â€”â€”â€”-

We know,! That The Church is built upon â€”the Apostles â€”doctrineâ€” ,..handed down / taught, â€”REVEALED, unto them by The Lord. it is the pattern,that The Lord has given us for â€”the Churchâ€” ,.. That upon â€”this Rockâ€” ,.. this revealed Word of God,.. seeing it as He seeâ€”s it, is the One Church.

â€”â€”â€”â€”-

Not one of these men, pieced the doctrine up, and made a â€”denominationâ€”

Because of The Spirit of God within, they spoke the same thing for â€”the Churchâ€”

They were continuing with the instructions of Jesus, concerning the the things of â€”the kingdom of Godâ€” . . (The gospel)

Could it be, that the side-trackness, got started when man redefined, what â€”the gospelâ€” s original true meaning was,... is ??

â€”â€”â€”â€”-

@â€”And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;â€”

â€”â€”â€”â€”-

*It was a Church in which we were / are â€”reconciledâ€” to God.

Reconciled : to reinstate us back to ,...WHO ? To God,... (to The Word of God,) ... to be in â€”unityâ€” w/The Father, and The Son.

â€”â€”â€”â€”-

Ephesians 2:19-22 (KJV) ,

19 â€”Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner ;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.â€”

â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”

elizabeth

** we must see Jesus, through the eyes of The Spirit,..

Added:

Matthew 16:15-19 (KJV)

15 â€”He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.â€”

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/12/7 11:52

Another question: .. to consider,.. perhaps , ... is it worthy of our consideration?

â€”â€”â€”â€”

Has man ,..in Times past,.. and even until now,.. who possibly did not acquire The Spirit of â€”eyes to seeâ€” ,... has one by one deviated from the foundation set forth by The Lord, through The Apostles Doctrine for the True Church, and ventured off into different denominations ?

Putting oneâ€”s to sleep through an easy ... a false gate,...and a false hope ?

â€”â€”â€”â€”-

John 9:4-5 (KJV)

â€”el must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.â€”

â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”

He ,... His Light, is in us in the world,...

*The Lord gives us a window of His Light, we work while that Light / Day is in us,.. when it is dark, we cannot â€”seeâ€”
TM how to work.

â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”-â€”ï,•

elizabeth

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/12/7 14:04

Hi Elizabeth,

Revelation mentions Apostles as stones.

21:14

The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb

The typology of the temple is used greatly by the Church and I am just showing the typology of Elijah.

For example.

Old testament:Elijah preaches in the Wilderness of Mount Carmel

New Testament:John The Baptist(Elijah) preaches in the wilderness

OT:12 stones put in place by Elijah

NT:12 stones put in place by Elijah (JTB)

OT:Elijah pours water over the sacrifice

NT:Elijah(JTB) pours water over the sacrifice saying that he was fulfilling something that was right

OT:Mt Carmel had Elijah, twelve stones,wood and water

Nt:Elijah (JTB) WOOD (the cross) Stones(acording to Rev 21:14)The Apostles and Water (Baptism of John)

OT:The Fire fell by Elijah

NT:The Fire Fell By Elijah at Pentecost .Peter says unless the new Apostle had come under the Ministry of John he could not be picked.The Ministry of Elijah was a requirement for Pentecost to happen.

OT:All Israel went out to see Elijah

NT:All Judea and the surrounds went out to see John or Elijah (acording to Jesus)

OT:The fire Licked up everything(Tongue analogy)

NT:Tongues of Fire appeared on the disciples

I could go on but John The Baptist replayed Elijah the Tishbite exactly fulfilling his role in all its aspects .

I have had people say to me that it was a coincidence when I point this out ! It usually because they dont like the fact that I am saying that the Bible says its going to happen again.

Jesus says John was Elijah if you care to believe it.He also said after John was dead that Elijah comes again and restores all things if you read the passage carefully,
urs Staff

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2019/12/7 15:57

Staff,
That is absolutely fabulous!
Thank you for making it so plain.

My spirit is quickened at reading this,
â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”â€”
elizabeth

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/12/8 20:48

Quote:
-----This will probably start a war, but I got this from the Word of God for His Church; The Body of Christ. KJV

Phillip: You won't start a war with me brother. The only war that I am in is to fight the good fight of faith. You are not my enemy at all, though we might discuss things that we disagree about.

There are more apostles, explicitly called so in the New Testament, that were not witnesses of the resurrection of Christ than the original twelve, Matthias, and Paul. Acts 14:14 lists Barnabas as an apostle. "And when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, hear of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out," Barnabas' calling and identity as an apostle is explicitly stated here, and backed up by heavy implication in 1 Cor. 9:5-6. Timothy and Silas were also apostles. The book of 1 Thessalonians was written by Paul, Timothy, and Silas (1:1). In 2:6 Paul says that as apostles of Christ, they (the plural here meaning the authors of the letter) they were not burdensome nor did they seek glory of men.

My point is only to say that we do have record of more than 13 apostles (the original twelve plus Paul) in the New Testament, and not all of them were witnesses of Christ's resurrection. The fact that the original twelve said it was necessary to replace Judas with one that had also witnessed Christ's resurrection does not imply that they were teaching that all apostles after them must also be witnesses of Christ's resurrection. By way of analogy, suppose that the leadership of my local church fellowship prays and feels it necessary to replace one elder who turned away from the Lord and was removed with another who had been part of our body from the founding of the fellowship. That would not imply that we were teaching that in our fellowship it was necessary that all future elders also match this description, and that when no further men with this distinction were left that our fellowship should go without elders.

I don't feel like we can turn what they indeed did do into a teaching about what we should do. We can only teach as doctrine that which is stated as doctrine in scripture. This is not doctrine. This is simply what God directed them to do in this instance. I am not sure who Gaebelein is, but I disagree with his opinion.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/12/9 10:56

Hi Twayneb,
There were more Apostles than the twelve for instance Paul.
The point I was making is that Paul could not be part of the twelve ever as he was not with them from the baptism of John which Peter says is a requirement.
Why?
Because John The Baptist was Elijah in Spirit and All the twelve and even Jesus because he was the sacrifice had to come under Elijah's Ministry in the form of John.
Why?
Jesus says to fulfill all that's right or to fulfill the prophetic pattern in other words.

urs staff

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/12/9 15:24

Staff: Gotcha . :-) Paul's entire ministry was different than that of the twelve. He was sent to the Gentiles. The twelve were sent to the people of Israel scattered abroad.

I did like the exposition of John the Baptist and Elijah who should come and the fact that John came in the spirit of Elijah to fulfill prophecy. I cannot recall that I have ever seen it put together in one place before.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/12/10 10:35

Hi Twayneb

lol I agree with your statement about Paul turning from Jew to Gentile evangelism. My point about Paul though was that Paul had all the qualifications to be of the twelve, he was a Jew of Jews sort to speak but he lacked one qualification that is that he did not come under the ministry of John The Baptist as Elijah so could not be part of the structure. Paul arguably is a greater Apostle than any of the twelve and did greater things than any of the Twelve if to a different audience. So the twelve come first and then Paul and Barnabas etc.

The pattern remains the same then as it will be in the future Elijah, the twelve stones and the sacrifice or in another way "The Spirit of Elijah on the Church" restoring "Apostolic Structure, Teaching and Authority" all lifting up or holding up like a pedestal and altar to the world "Jesus The Sacrifice, The Beast of Burden who burdens our sin once and for all" urs staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2019/12/10 11:06

Hi,

Let me if I may hammer home my point further:

OT: Elijah at the Jordan

NT: John being Elijah at the Jordan

OT: The Evil Woman wants Elijah's Head

Nt: The Evil Woman wants and Gets John's Head

OT: Elijah Ministers to Ahab (an Anti Christ figure)

NT: John being Elijah Ministers To Herod (an Anti Christ figure)

OT: Elijah pours Twelve buckets of Water over the Stones (3 x 4)

Nt: John being Elijah pours water over the Twelve Apostles being stones according to Revelation

OT: Elijah confronts the false Prophets

NT: John confronts the False Teachers and calls them vipers

OT: Elijah appears out of the blue

NT: John appears preaching out of the blue (although we have his childhood account).

OT: Elijah causes the sky to close for 3 1/2 years

NT: John causes the heavens to open for 3 1/2 years (Jesus ministry from his baptism)

OT: Elijah wears a hairy garment

NT: John wears a hairy garment according to Jewish legend the same one

I go to a pentecostal Church but the problem with Pentecostals is that we don't understand Pentecost!

Urs staff