

“Uh, oh! My Denomination’s Not In The Bible! *What Can I Do?!*”

(This article is part of a call to unity among those wanting to follow Jesus Christ.)

If your church is in the yellow pages, but not in the Bible pages, there’s a problem! The same Jesus who taught people how to be saved (e.g., **Mark 16:16**) also laid out His plan for the church. Simply stated, God’s church is founded on Jesus, who is God’s anointed (**Matthew 16:16** “Upon this rock I will build My church”), and is guided by inspiration of the Holy Spirit at the hands of apostles and prophets. (**John 16:13** “The Spirit of truth ... will guide you into all truth.”; **Ephesians 2:19-22** “You ... are members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone....”)

You can imagine that it’s not a problem. Your justification may range from making assumptions (“Surely that many people can’t be wrong.” *But, do we need a reminder of how many atheists, pagans, and people in non-Christian religions there are in the world?*) to dismissing the very New Testament which was established by Jesus’ blood. (“I know it’s not in the Bible, but....” *Remember the warnings against adding to God’s word!*)

You can try to ignore the problem. Like a dog, scratch my ears, and I’ll forget I have fleas. But that’s only a temporary fix. In the same way that pesky fleas keep biting, a person’s blessed conscience – a gift from God! – can keep biting until the problem is addressed.

You can try to explain away the problem. In order to justify a denomination’s existence, you’ll have to do some twisting of Scriptures, and you’ll have to overlook plain passages such as **1 Corinthians 1:11-13**: “... There are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, ‘I am of Paul,’ or ‘I am of Apollos,’ or ‘I am of Cephas,’ or ‘I am of Christ.’ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” And you won’t be able to give a satisfying answer to the question that Jesus posed on another topic, “My denomination: Where was it from? From heaven, or from men?”

You can fix the problem. Decide that you want to follow Jesus Christ, no matter the cost. (Luke 14) Study hard. (Acts 17:11) Get your understanding of Scriptures straight. (2 Timothy 2:15) Find the Bible pattern for God’s church. (1 Timothy 3:15) Study with your leaders. Keep demanding solid answers from the New Testament to simple questions such as, “How should the church be organized?” “How should we be worshipping God?” and “What work should we be doing as a church?” If your leaders are more interested in supporting their man-made religion than in finding truth, the study may not go as you had hoped, and you may have to leave. (See Acts 19:9)

However, if people are willing to change their practices and teachings to conform to the New Testament pattern, they’re in good company! After all, every person who became a Christian in the first century (i.e., in every Bible account) had to leave a life of some other religion (or no religion). And since the invention of denominations, a few people have had the courage to *leave* those denominations in order to follow Christ. (For example, in June 28, 1804 several denominational preachers wrote *The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery*, dissolving that man-made organization and accepting “Christians” as their only title.) These people are part of the *solution* to the problem of denominationalism. You can join them in promoting unity among believers, unity based squarely on the New Testament.

We can help you study your Bible and find God’s will for His church. Your communication with us will be treated with great respect and fervent prayer. May God bless you in your spiritual journey.

In Christ,

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