



Northside Proclaimer

Proclaiming The Word Of The Lord

1 Thessalonians 1:8

Northside church of Christ Welcomes You!

August 10, 2014

“Are We A Denomination?”

Bryan Garlock

A denomination is defined as “a religious group, usually including many local churches¹.” Each year, new groups open their doors while others close theirs. According to the Center for the Study of Global Christianity (CSGC) at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, there are approximately 41,000 Christian denominations and organizations in existence today². Without a doubt, included in that number is the church of Christ. While it may be true that some religious groups who refer to themselves as the church of Christ are in fact a denomination, or a church of Christ in name only, is that true of the Northside family?

First, the church of Christ is not a denomination of human origin. There are many groups who claim to follow Jesus yet their beginnings are of the wrong time and the wrong place. It needs to be pointed out that Christ never said He would build a denomination, but rather His church. In Matt. 16:18, Jesus declared, “...I will build my church...” and some time later He did just that in the city of Jerusalem ca AD 30 (cf. Luke 24:46-47; Acts 2:5, 41, 47). This creates a problem for those groups established after the Lord built His church. Any religious group, which has its beginnings in another city and at another time, is not and cannot be the church that Christ built. This eliminates the Catholics, Baptist, Lutherans, Methodist, etc. Furthermore, these groups not only branched off the Catholic denomination starting around the early 1500s, they aren’t even found within Scripture! Are we willing to bet our salvation on a church we can’t even read about in God’s word? I’m not. The church that Jesus built is not of human origin.

Next, for the church to exist Jesus had to shed His blood (Rev. 1:5). Yet, not one drop of Jesus’ blood was used to purchase a denomination! In writing to the Ephesian elders, Paul penned, “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained [purchased] with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). *Continued on back...*

Northside
church Of Christ

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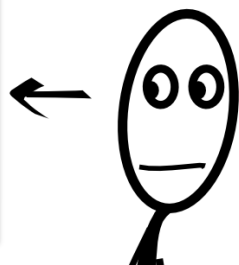
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Announcements

- Tyler Dance is doing well.
- Jack Greenwood / Darryl Easter: recovering from surgery.
- Remember the shut in's.
- Gilliland, Abbott & Bryan family back safe & sound from vacation!
- Pray for the church and one another.
- Men's Bible study starting soon!
- Call or email me to add announcements, thanks.

Teacher's Meeting Tonight

Dave Wyckoff would like all teachers to meet with him after services tonight.



It needs to be observed that Christ shed His blood from His body for His body! This is more evident in that God did not make Jesus head over a denomination, but rather His own body, which is the church (Eph. 1.22-23). Every body needs a head but every head needs only one body (cf. Eph. 4.4)!

Further, for us to be a member of the Lord's body, we must be added to His Church. As we come to Christ in trusting faith, obeying Him in water baptism for the remission of our sins, Christ automatically adds us to the church He built some 2,000 years ago (Acts. 2.41, 47; 1 Cor. 12.13). It needs to be noted, the Lord never added anyone to a denomination nor is He the Savior of any denomination, but of His church only (Eph. 5.23)

Once added to the Lord's church by our obedience, we must join ourselves to a local church (cf. Acts 9.26-28). The local church is not a building, but rather a group of saved, called out of darkness people in one location (cf. Col. 1.13). This is what Jesus meant when He said, "...I will build my church..." Remember, not a building, but a people! We see many local churches of Christ all throughout the Word of God (cf. Rom. 16.16). For instance, when Paul arrived in Philippi in Acts 16 there was no local church. As he began to teach and households responded, there began the church of Christ in Philippi. They were "of Christ" because they were baptized into His name and they belonged to Him. Scripturally speaking, a church that belongs to Christ is a church of Christ. Later we see Paul writing a letter to the local church in Philippi some ten to twelve years later (Acts 16 church founded; Acts 28 epistle written cf. Philippians 1.1).

Essentially, Delbert Gilliland and others did exactly what Paul did in the first century. They taught, studied and baptized people into Christ. Thus, the Northside church of Christ had its beginnings in Hillsboro on February 5, 1950 on the third floor of the Farmers & Traders Bank building. The Northside church is not a denomination, for Jesus is our purchaser, builder, head and Savior. BG

Sources

- 1 Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language
- 2 <http://christianity.about.com/od/denominations/p/christiantoday.htm>