

*Sermon*  SNAPSHOTS



# THE BOTTOM LINE

**Part 1: Denominationalism**

**This is the first of a series of five lessons on “denominationalism.” Our opposition to denominationalism it is no great secret, yet many do not understand “why.” This series gives some reasons for our opposition. Our first lesson will consider Some Problems with Denominationalism and If One Church is as good as another. After that, we’ll have lessons on where it all began and Catholicism; The rise of Protestantism and Calvinism; Mormonism and Pentecostalism; and then finally, Adventism and the Jehovah’s Witnesses.**

## **SOME PROBLEMS WITH DENOMINATIONALISM**

**Because of a wide variety of apostasies from “the faith” (Jude 3), the New Testament church is challenged by the problem of denominationalism. In this particular lesson, we shall explore some of those problems...**

### **Denominationalism sees “the church” as a divided body**

- They teach that no single church holds all of the saved (1 Cor.12:13; Ep.2:16; 3:6)
- Hence, we often hear (falsely) that “There are saved people in all the denominations”
- The truth is that God only has “ONE body” which is “the church” (Ep.4:4; cf. 1:22-23)
- Further, HIS church cannot be divided! People may leave Christ, but His body remains one!



### **Denominationalism sees “the church” as a legislative body**

- Some churches have “human heads” (e.g., pope, prophet – yet see Ep.1:22-23)
- Some churches have “human creeds or catechisms” (yet see 1Cor.4:6, KJV)
- Some churches have “human founders or builders” (yet see 1Cor.3:9-11)
- Some churches have “human votes” to change their doctrines (yet see Ga.1:8)

### **Denominationalism sees “the church” as a saving body**

- They believe “the church” is the MEANS of salvation – especially Catholicism!
- Thus, a subtle shift occurs: the church saves – NOT Christ! (yet see Ep.5:23)
- But the truth is: the church does not save; it IS the saved! (Acts 2:41,47)
- No, this does NOT “minimize” the church, but puts it in proper perspective!

### **Denominationalism sees “the church” as an organized body**

- The church of Christ is “organized” on a “local” basis ONLY (Ac.14:23)
- In other words, individual saints form independent, local “teams” (1Pt.5:1-3)
- But denominationalism seeks to link local churches into a larger, unauthorized structure (Synods, councils, conventions, ecumenical organizations, sponsoring churches, etc.)

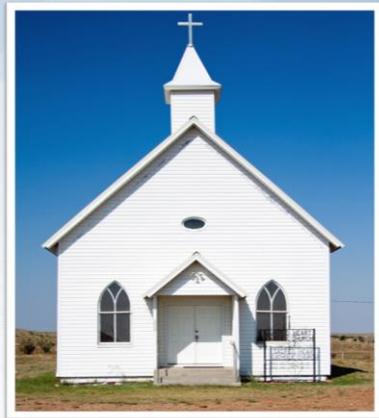
**Perhaps now you can see why we oppose denominationalism. We’re simply trying to practice & teach what the Bible says. Hopefully, as this series of lessons progresses, you will see even more errors exposed...**

# IF ONE CHURCH IS AS GOOD AS ANOTHER...

One of the most common excuses used to justify denominationalism is the worn-out statement that **“One church is as good as another.”** *I believe that is a false statement! Further, those who say this do not really believe it (what about the Church of Satan?). But if it WERE true, what are the consequences thereof?*

## **If one church is as good as another, then the church of Christ is worthless!**

- In other words, the church HE promised to build (Mt.16:18) is NO different from ANY other!
- He did NOT build the Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, or Mormon Church.
- We know He didn't build them, because they didn't exist until many years after Pentecost!
- Can you find the name, work, worship, organization, & moral values of YOUR church in the Bible?



## **If one church is as good as another, then the headship of Christ is worthless!**

- The Bible says that Christ is **“head** over all things to the church” (Ep.1:22-23; 5:23)
- This means that “the doctrine of Christ” should govern the church of Christ (2Jn.9-11)
- But, “if one church is as good as another,” **then a human creed is just as good to govern!**
- This is clearly false! **Christ** must govern, not a human creed! (Mt.7:21; 15:7-9; Lk.6:46)

## **If one church is as good as another, then the blood of Christ is worthless!**

- He purchased the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28; 1Cor.6:20; 1Pt.1:18-19)
- This has reference to His *people* (Charlie, Harry, Ulysses, Renee, Connie, and Helen)
- *Jesus did not purchase ANY denomination!* – If so, which one? And what verse says so?
- So, if another church (NOT blood-bought) is just as good, then His blood is worthless!

## **If one church is as good as another, then the prayer of Christ is worthless!**

- He prayed for a unity like that which He and His Father shared (Jn.17:20-21; Ep.4:4-6)
- However, such a unity does NOT exist among the denominations (many bodies, faiths)
- If unity creates faith in Christ (Jn.17:21), **then DISUNITY creates disbelief!** (2Pt.2:1-2)
- Denominationalism INSULTS the intelligence of thinking people! (Not Everyone's right!)

**Finally, if one church is as good as another, then why are there different churches in the first place? Is it not because someone believed that one church was NOT as good as another? Further, why won't denominations “fellowship” us? And, if one is as good as another, why not join the church of Satan? Could it be that they don't really believe one church is a good as another?**

*-Lanny Smith*

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## Times of Service

Sunday Worship: 10 am  
Sunday Bible Study: 5 pm  
Wednesday Bible Study: 7 pm

## Elders

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