

## **THE IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH**

### **Hebrews 8:3-6**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

- A. Denominationalism. 55 “churches” in Monticello, AR.
- B. “One is pretty much the same as another.”
- C. Consider that statement in light of God’s plan. John 14:6; 17:17

#### **I. “BUILT ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN.” Hebrews 8:3-6**

- A. We are workers or builders together with God. 1 Corinthians 3:5-9
  - 1. We must follow God’s plan or pattern revealed in His word.
    - a. Matthew 28:18-20
    - b. Philippians 4:9
- B. God will refuse to recognize houses built by human plans.
  - 1. Matthew 7:21-23
  - 2. Matthew 15:10-14
  - 3. Psalm 127:1

#### **II. MEASURING THE CHURCH BY HUMAN STANDARDS.**

- A. Various reasons given to justify existence of religious groups.
  - 1. “They are doing so much good.”
  - 2. “There are good people in it.”
  - 3. “It teaches some truth.”
  - 4. “The association and spirit are great.”
- B. To use such standards it to:
  - 1. Dishonor God. Isaiah 55:8-9
  - 2. Disrespect His word. No justification in part of the truth being taught when another part is being disrespected. Acts 20:27
  - 3. Deceive untaught men. 2 Timothy 4:3-4

#### **III. THE CHURCH MEASURED BY THE DIVINE STANDARD.**

- A. God’s word is the standard. Matthew 7:24-27
  - 1. Our efforts are to be judged by the Word as revealed through Christ.
    - a. John 12:47-50
- B. How can I know which “church” is right?
  - 1. NAME – Can you find its name in the New Testament?
  - 2. WORSHIP – Does it follow doctrines of men? Matthew 15:7-9
  - 3. DOCTRINE – Is only the teaching of Christ and the apostles taught?
    - a. Galatians 1:6-12; 2 Peter 1:20-21
  - 4. ORGANIZATION – Is the organization as laid down in God’s word followed?
  - 5. CHARACTER – Does it demand purity of life and character?

#### **IV. LOSING DIVINE RECOGNITION.**

- A. The church is God’s house or family. 1 Peter 2:4-10
- B. Peculiarity must be maintained to be acknowledged and approved. Titus 2:11-14
- C. As good soldiers must not become entangled in affairs of world, the church must not change its message to fit people. 2 Timothy 2:3-4
- D. To corrupt God’s plan in any point is to lose identity. Revelation 2:4-5
- E. To not be identified with the Lord is fatal in the last day. Matthew 7:22-23