

Your Church Alone?

Luke 13:22-30

I. Establishment of NT Churches

Jerusalem

Acts 2:36, 41, 47 (8:1)



3000

They joined no denomination.

Did this please God?

What if . . .

600
Bap.

600
Pres.

600
Meth.

600
Cath.

600
NT

Stay as they are (Ac.2).
Separated from other groups.
Are they a denomination?

Samaria, Acts 9:31

Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.

Samaria, Acts 8

Acts 8⁵ Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ

12

They did not join a denomination.

pl

Did this please God at that time?

G

were baptized, both men and women.

13

Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles performed, he was amazed.

Corinth, 1 Co.1:2

To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.

Corinth, Acts 18:8

Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.

- They did not join any denomination.
- Did this please God at that time?

I. Establishment of NT Churches

II. Apostasy Was Predicted

NT Predicted Apostasy

1. Acts 20:28-30, authority
 - Traditions; “pope”
2. Acts 20:28-30, organization
 - One elder; bishop; “pope”
3. 2 Thes.2:4, worship
 - LS; mass; incense; images; music
4. 1 Tim.4:1, teaching. 2 Tim.4:3
 - THD; infant sprinkling; purgatory; holy days

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II. Apostasy Was Predicted

III. Reformation Was Attempted

John Wyclif

- First English translation
- Roman Catholic Council of Constance (1415) ordered his writings burned, body exhumed (1428), bones dug up and burned

Martin Luther, 95 theses, Oct.31,1517

- Objected to Catholic practices
- Augsburg Confession (1530)
- Lutheran Church – first in long line of protestant denominations
- Reformation leaders did not want to start new denominations

Martin Luther

- “I ask that men make no reference to my name, and call themselves not Lutherans, but Christians. What is Luther? My doctrine, I am sure, is not mine, nor have I been crucified for anyone
- ...No, no, my dear friends; let us abolish all party names, and call ourselves Christians after Him whose doctrine we have”
(Hugh Thomson Kerr, *A Compend of Luther's Theology*, 135)

John Wesley

- “Would to God that all party names, and unscriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world, were forgot and that the very name (*Methodist*, rd) might never be mentioned more, but be buried in eternal oblivion” (Edward Pace, *Universal Knowledge, A Dictionary and Encyclopedia of Arts, Science... Religions*, 540)

Charles Spurgeon

- “I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living! I hope that the Baptist name will soon perish, but let Christ’s name last forever”
(Spurgeon Memorial Library I, 168)
- Evaluation of Reformation: Instead of one church in error, now hundreds, divided against each other

Denominations produced...

1. Attitude that rejects authority of God

– Jn.17:21-22

– Mk.16:16

– Philip Schaff

Philip Schaff (I, 352)

- Roman Catholics know no church but their own, and refuse all religious fellowship with non Catholics; yet many of them will admit the action of divine grace and the possibility of salvation outside of the limits of the papacy
- Some Lutherans: “Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran ministers only; Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only”
- High church Anglicans
- Baptists and pedo-Baptists

Denominations

- No existing church can find any pattern or platform of its government in the first century, and thus strongly contrasts the apostolic and post-apostolic organizations (Dean Stanley, Sch. I, 487)
- “It is as sure that nothing like modern Episcopacy existed before the close of the first century as it is that nothing like modern Presbyterianism existed after the beginning of the second” (Sch. I, 488)

Fruits of the Reformation

1. Attitude that rejects authority of God
2. Changes in organization of church
 - SBC
 - Pastor system
 - Denominationalism

Fruits of the Reformation

1. Attitude that rejects authority of God
2. Changes in organization of church
3. **Perversion of true worship**
 - Annual LS
 - Mechanical music

Fruits of the Reformation

1. Attitude that rejects authority of God
2. Changes in organization of church
3. Perversion of true worship
4. **Variety of unscriptural teachings**

Hiscox, p.22

- “It is most likely that in the Apostolic age when there was but ‘one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,’ and no differing denominations existed, the baptism of a convert by that very act constituted him a member of the church, and at once endowed him with all the rights and privileges of full membership. In that sense, ‘baptism was the door into the church.’ Now, it is different...” —*The Standard Manual for Baptist Churches*, Edward T. Hiscox, D.D.

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IV. Kingdom Is Reproduced
By Its Seed

Law of reproduction

Gen. 1¹¹ Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth” and it was so.

- Destroy every corn plant . . .

Eggs, etc.

Gen.1²⁰ Then God said, “Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens.” ²¹ So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Mankind

Gen.1²⁸ Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

- Gn.4:1; 5:4

Consistency

Lk.8¹¹ “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.”

- Acts 2 – Peterites? . . .
- Crow drops an acorn . . .
- If baseball were forgotten . . .
- If religion were forgotten . . .