

Danny Matchniff

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## ***Rationalizing Denominationalism***

Introduction: The “church of Christ” is the “body of Christ.” (Eph. 1.22, 23; 5.23; Col. 1.18, 24) . The idea of denominationalism is that various churches with disagreement on key doctrinal things make up Christ’s body. Jesus Christ never built His church upon varying doctrines/belief systems. (Mt. 28.18-20; Acts 2.42).

- I. John 15:1-8: The Vine and the Branches
  - A. Who is the “True Vine”?
  - B. Context: does a branch refer to a “church,” or a particular individual/man?
- II. There are many routes to heaven
  - A. Jesus declared Himself to be the “the way” to the Father. (John 14:6)
  - B. The way leading to eternal life is “narrow and difficult...” (Matt. 7:13, 14).
  - C. Then Jesus emphasized “doing the will of the Father.” (Matt. 7:21-23)
  - D. Christ died and is the Savior of His own body. (Eph. 5:23, 25)
- III. All denominations teach some truth
  - A. We have a responsibility to the “whole counsel of God.” (Acts 20:27)
  - B. Gnostics taught “some truth,” yet were condemned. (1 John 4:1-6)
  - C. To say that all denominations teach “some truth” is to admit that it teaches “some error.” Error condemns!
- IV. There are good people in all churches
  - A. Mere human goodness cannot save! (Eph. 1:7, 22-23; 5:23)
  - B. Examples: Cornelius and Saul of Tarsus (Paul). (Acts 10:1, 2, 22, 47-48; Acts 23:1; Acts 26:9; Phil. 3:6; 1 Tim. 1:15)
- V. It is a wonderful blessing that there are so many churches to choose from in our search for a church that satisfies me!
  - A. Jesus prayed for unity for all His disciples. (John 17:20, 21)
  - B. Paul pleaded for unity & exposed sectarianism. (1 Cor. 1:10-13; Eph. 4:3)
  - C. When men thank God for denominationalism, they thank God for division and confusion. (1 Cor. 14:33)
- VI. One church is as good as another (Eph. 3:8-11; Heb. 8:1, 2)
  - A. Jesus promised to build His church. (Matt. 16:18) Did He accomplish it?
  - B. How many churches did Jesus plan to build? (Eph. 4:4)
  - C. Who died for the church? (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25)

Conclusion: Nearly two-thousand years after Christ established His one church, we can see hundreds of churches that wear different names, teach different and opposing doctrines, yet all claim to be honoring the Lord. Can they all be right?