

Denominational Doctrines – Part 4

Lord's Supper and Finances

Introduction:

- A. In previous lessons three doctrines common to most protestant denominations: Faith only, Instrumental music and social gospel.
- B. We need to notice two more common doctrines before turning to doctrines specific to each denomination.

Discussion:

I. The Lord's Supper Denominational Style.

- A. Most are scriptural in the elements and purpose of the Lord's Supper.
 - 1. The elements: Fruit of the vine and unleavened bread (cf. Matt. 26:26-29),
 - 2. The purpose: Remember the death of Christ (1 Cor. 11:24, 25)
- B. Most are unscriptural in the day and frequency of the Lord's Supper.
 - 1. The only day the week mentioned for the Lord's supper is the first day (Acts 20:7)
 - 2. The language infers a weekly observance (cf. Sabbath frequency)
 - 3. Many denominational commentators recognize the weekly Sunday observance
 - a. Albert Barnes¹
 - b. Matthew Henry²
 - c. Adam Clark³
 - 4. Some monthly, annually, quarterly, on special occasions.
 - 5. Some Thursday night, other nights (Abilene church on Tuesday night)
- C. Only sure course is first day of every week.
- D. Some say Acts 20:7 was common meal (love feast).
 - 1. If so, in violation of 1 Cor. 11:18 ff.
 - 2. Only breaking of bread or eating that church authorized to come together as the church is L.S.

II. Church Finances Denominational Style.

- A. NT congregations raised their funds by contributions on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:2).
 - 1. Another indication that churches met each first day.
 - 2. Each member to give as prospered and purposed (cf. 2 Cor. 9:6).
 - 3. "If 1st day binding, then can be used only for needy"
 - a. Only passage that tells when and how they raised funds.
 - b. Not only passage on how they spent funds.
- B. Most denominations raise funds in many other ways.
 - 1. Business ventures.
 - 2. Car washes, bake sales, etc.
 - 3. Begging campaigns to the general public.
 - 4. Any day of the week collections.

Conclusion:

- A. Two first day of the week activities in early church should be respected by church today.
- B. A church acts presumptuously when it does otherwise.

1. Acts 20:7 [To break bread] Evidently to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Compare Acts 2:46. So the Syriac understands it, by translating it, "to break the eucharist"; that is, the eucharistic bread. It is probable that the apostles and early Christians celebrated the Lord's Supper on every Lord's day. (from Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by Biblesoft)

2. Acts 20:4. They came together to break bread, that is, to celebrate the ordinance of the Lord's supper, that one instituted sign of breaking the bread being put for all the rest. The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ, 1 Cor 10:16. In the breaking of the bread, not only the breaking of Christ's body for us, to be a sacrifice for our sins, is commemorated, but the breaking of Christ's body to us, to be food and a feast for our souls, is signified. **In the primitive times it was the custom of many churches to receive the Lord's supper every Lord's day**, celebrating the memorial of Christ's death in the former, with that of his resurrection in the latter; and both in concert, in a solemn assembly, to testify their joint concurrence in the same faith and worship.

(from Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.)

3. Acts 20:7 [To break bread] To break eucaristia, the eucharist, as the Syriac has it; intimating, by this, that they were accustomed to receive the holy sacrament on each Lord's day....

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