

Five Common Failures of Denominationalism

Eph. 4:4; 1:22, 23)

Introduction:

- A. In the New Testament there were no denominations — just the one church.
 - 1. Local churches had a common faith and doctrine (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17).
 - 2. Denominationalism is the result of differences in faith and doctrine.
- B. Denominations share some things in common, but not all things.
 - 1. If they shared all things in common, denominationalism would not exist.
 - 2. They may have some common successes, but they also share common failures.

Discussion:

II. The Failure to Subscribe to God's Plan for Pardon.

- A. God's Plan (Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38; 8:36ff.).
- B. Denominational plans:
 - 1. Faith only (Jas. 2:24).
 - 2. Aliens prayer for pardon (cf. Acts 9:11, 12; 22:16).

III. The Failure to Subscribe to God's Plan for Church Worship.

- A. God Plan (Eph. 5:19; 1 Cor. 14:15; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2).
- B. Denominational alternations:
 - 1. Instrumental music, candle lighting, burning incense.
 - 2. Lord's supper other than every first day of week.
 - 3. Money raising projects.

IV. The Failure to Subscribe to God's Plan for Church Work.

- A. God's Plan (Eph. 4:16; Phil.4:15; 2 Cor. 11:8; 1 Cor. 16:1,2).
- B. Denominational additions:
 - 1. Social services programs.
 - 2. Recreational programs.
 - 3. Political action programs.

V. The Failure to Subscribe to God's Plan for Church Organization.

- A. God's Plan — local organization (Acts 14:23; Phil 1:1; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).
- B. Denominational organizations:
 - 1. Above the local level.
 - 2. On the local level.

VI. The Failure to Subscribe to God's Plan for Church Unity.

- A. God's Plan — One body based on truth. (Eph. 2:16; John 17:19-21; Jas. 3:17).
- B. Denominational concept:
 - 1. "Good to have church of choice" - sanctifies division.
 - 2. "May differ in doctrine, but all are pleasing to God" (Ill: Six night meeting)

Conclusion:

- A. If we follow the New Testament we will be neither Catholic nor Protestant — just Christians.
- B. Christians should be careful not to borrow from denominational concepts.
- C. Christians sometimes make no distinction between denomination and Lord's church.