

Is One Church As Good As Another?

By Ron Boatwright

There are many people who say that one church is as good as another. They say that people in all churches are going to be saved. One denominational church is actually as good as any other denomination. But no denomination is as good as the one church the Lord established for Himself. Jesus did not promise to build even one denomination. The word "denomination" means a part of the whole. The Lord's church is not a part of any thing else, but is a complete entity within itself. There were no denominations during the time of the apostles. The Lord did not establish any of the denominations, but man did.

The Lord has only one church. This is an unpopular doctrine with many people who belong to the many differing denominations. But the Bible says, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all" (Ephesians 4:4-6). We might ask, is one God as good as another? No. Is one Lord as good as another? No. Is one body as good as another? No. What is the Lord's one body? Jesus is the "head over all things to the church, which is His body" (Ephesians 1: 22-23). We see that the Lord has only one body and that one spiritual body is His church, the church of Christ. Jesus only promised to build His one church. He said, "Upon this rock I will build My church" (Matthew 16:18). "My" is a possessive pronoun and the word "church" is singular. Ephesians 5:23 says that Jesus "is the Saviour of the body", the church. Jesus has only promised to save those in His "one body", His one church. But the sad and tragic thing is that all others in the many differing denominations are going to be lost.

How does one get into the Lord's one church? People were told to "repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). Jesus says, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). Once people are saved we see "And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47). Here we see the Lord adds only the saved to His church. He makes no mistakes in adding any unsaved people to His church. We also see that in order to be saved so we can be added to His church, we must be baptized for the forgiveness of our sins.

The vast majority of denominations say that in baptism one's sins are not washed away and baptism is not essential to salvation. According to the Lord, if one believes and practices this he cannot be saved. But those in the Lord's

one church enjoy the remission of sins and the Lord has added them to His church. The Lord does not add the saved to a "church of their choice".

Since the Lord does not add the unsaved to His church, the unsaved have to join a denomination. All denominations are the result of the many departures from the teaching of the Bible. Denominationalism is unscriptural since each denomination has a human founder, and not Christ. Denominationalism is plagued with division, conflicting creeds and doctrines, unscriptural worship and other practices, all of which are different from what God has authorized in the Bible. They are doing man's will and not God's will, thus God will not save them in their folly.

Each of the differing denominations cannot be a branch of the Lord's one true church since each one claims to be a distinct church within itself. Jesus says, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted" (Matthew 15:13). And "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Psalms 127:1). It does one no good to belong to a denominational church and worship there. He is wasting his time and will lose his soul. Jesus says, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark 7:7). Vain worship is useless.

The one church for which the Lord shed His blood and died is far superior to all the denominations founded by men. The Lord's church was "purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28). Christ "loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians 5:25). The value of something that is purchased is equal to the price paid. The value of the Lord's church is equal to the value of Jesus Christ Himself. The value of the Lord is priceless, so the value of His church is also priceless. Just as counterfeit money is worthless, denominational churches are worthless counterfeit creations of men.

The church does not save us, but the Lord has placed only those who are saved in His one church. "Christ is head of the church; and He is the Saviour of the body" (Ephesians 5:23). If one expects to be saved, he must be in the Lord's one body, His church, and not in a man made denominational church. So we have seen that each of the denominational churches are as good as the others since they are all worthless and will only cause one to lose his soul in the eternal fires of Hell. But the Lord's one true church is far, far superior to any denominational church. There is no comparison.