

# **The Lord's Church Is Not A Denomination**

*By Ron Boatwright*

It is clearly taught in the Bible that the church of Christ is not a denomination. Christ only promised to build his one church. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus says, "I will build my church". The word "my" is a possessive pronoun expressing ownership and the word "church" is singular meaning one. Christ never promised to build any of the hundreds of different denominations we see in the world today. These are creations of men. A denomination is a part of a whole. The church that Jesus built is not a part of anything, but is complete within itself. The Lord's one true church is not divided or denominating. None of the many various denominations in the world today make up the church Jesus promised to build.

The church belongs to Christ. It is his. Romans 16:16 says, "The churches of Christ greet you". The term "church of Christ" is a descriptive phrase, not a denominational title. Jesus built the church that carries his name. It is the only church the Lord claims. The church of Christ does not wear a denominational name and its members are called only Christians. Even by their names the various denominations do not even claim to belong to Christ. Their names glorify other men, places, and things. They seem to be ashamed of the Lord. No glory is given to the Lord. We do not have the right to wear a religious name of one who was not crucified for us.

Jesus purchased the church with his own blood. The apostle Paul told the elders of the church in Ephesus to, "Feed the church of the Lord, which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28 ASV). Christ did not die for any of the denominational churches we see in the world today. He only died for his one church. Since Christ only purchased his church with his own blood, then whose blood purchased the many different denominational churches? The church, which Jesus bought with his own blood, is not a denomination and is not made up with any of the denominations. It is to have no fellowship with any of the denominations because we are commanded to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them" (Ephesians 5:11). We are to give no help or encouragement to the denominations as they promote their false doctrines. "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds" (2 John 10-11).

There is but one church for which Christ died. The Bible says, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were call in one hope of your calling"

(Ephesians 4:4). The one body is the Lord's one church. God gave Christ "to be head over all things to the church, which is his body" (Ephesians 1:22-23). The Lord only has one church. The church of Christ is the bride of Christ (Revelation 21:9). If Christ has more than one bride then he would be a polygamist.

How does one become a part of the only church that belongs to Christ? We read in Acts 2:47, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved". The Lord has never added saved people to a denomination. The Lord adds only those who are saved according to his terms to his church. Also the Lord adds no unsaved people to his church. What are the Lord's requirements for one to be saved and added to his church? Jesus says, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). The denominational world laughs at Christ's requirement to be baptized (immersed) in order to be saved. Because of this the denominational world remains lost and cannot be a part of the Lord's church. The Bible says, "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it" (Psalms 127:1). There are many people who are laboring in vain in their denominations.

"For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and he is the Saviour of the body" (Ephesians 5:23). Christ is not the head of the many different denominational bodies, but if he were he would be a freak of one head with many bodies. Also notice that Christ is "the Saviour of the body", his one church which is the church of Christ. Christ has only promised to save his one body. Jesus says, "Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up" (Matthew 15:13). All those who are in the many different denominational churches will not be saved since they do not belong to Christ. There will be many surprised people on the Day of Judgment who will be lost, but it will be too late then.