

# The Lord's Church

## Introduction

### 1 Corinthians 1:1-3

1. **Jesus prayed that those who would believe in Him might be “one”**  
**John 17:20-21**
2. **The division that is so apparent in the denominational world cannot be anything but displeasing to Jesus.**
  - A. **Denomination: “a part of a whole” (25 cents is a denomination of \$1.00). Denominationalism is to be part of that which is not the “whole truth.”**
3. **The apostle Paul wrote the following:**  
**Ephesians 4:1-6**

1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

### How did denominations or division come about?

1. **In the New Testament there were not groups of congregations distinguished by a distinctive doctrines and practices.**
2. **The congregations that existed were simply the “churches of Christ” (Romans 16:16).**
3. **Is it not obvious that if nothing had been changed we would still have the unity we read about in the New Testament?**

#### **4. However, changes did take place!**

- A. These departures from the faith were predicted by the apostles of Christ even before the New Testament period came to a close.**

1 Timothy 4:1-2 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

2 Timothy 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

### **How Can the Unity the Lord Prayed for be Recovered?**

- 1. If we got get rid of the cause of the division, would we not get rid of the division itself?**
  - A. If the present division is the result of additions, subtractions, and modifications to the Lord's teaching, would we not be able to have unity if these changes were eliminated?**
  - B. Could we not get back to Christianity as it was in the New Testament if we went back to the teaching of the New Testament?**

#### **2. The Word of God is like "seed."**

Luke 8:11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

- A. One characteristic of seed is that it ALWAYS produces after its kind.**

- 1) **Denominational teachings are also like seed, producing after their kind.**
  - a) **The Roman Catholic *Catechism* will always produce a catholic.**
  - b) **The *Augsburg Confession* will always produce a Lutheran.**
  - c) **The *Book of Mormon* will always produce a Mormon.**
  - d) **The *Book of Common Prayer* will always produce an Episcopalian.**
  - e) **The *Methodist Discipline* will always produce a Methodist.**
  - f) **The *Baptist Manual* will always produce a Baptist.**
- 2) **The *Methodist Discipline* will never produce a Baptist, and the *Baptist Manual* will never produce a Methodist.**
3. **If the only “seed” sown was the New Testament, what would result?**
4. **Because seed always produces after its kind, the only thing that could possibly be produced by the New Testament is a Christian — *nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else!***

### **What is the “church of Christ”?**

1. **In truth, the “church of Christ” is NOT a denomination – it is merely the church that “*belongs to*” Christ, the Lord.**

*Matthew 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*

Romans 16:16 .....The churches of Christ greet you.

**2. Those who make up the Lord's church are not members of any denomination – they are simply His disciples who wear His name.**

Acts 11:26..... And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Acts 26:28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a Christian."

**3. In the New Testament, Christians were not any denominational "kind" of Christian — they were merely the Lord's people, His by virtue of having obeyed His gospel and receiving the forgiveness of their sins.**

1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

Ephesians 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

**4. Jesus warned about adding to His Holy Word.**  
**Revelation 22:18-19**

Matthew 15:13 But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.

1 Corinthians 4:6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written....

Colossians 3:17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

5. **If a person wanted to be a member of a denomination, one would be as good as another — because the thing denominations have in common is that they are all human in origin.**
6. **But just as was true in the New Testament, a genuine Christian today is not a member of any denomination — he or she is nothing other than a faithful disciple of the Lord!**

## **Conclusion**

1. **Jesus clearly specified what must be done in order for us to be saved from our sins.**
  - A. **Notice – that Jesus, who has all authority and who will judge us in the last day (Matthew 28:18; John 12:48), tells us what we must do.**
    - 1) **We must believe in Him (John 3:16; Heb 11:6)**
    - 2) **We must repent of our sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30)**
    - 3) **We must confess Him (Matt 10:32-33; Rom 10:10)**
    - 4) **We must be baptized for the remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38)**
      - a) **On the road to Damascus Saul was told by Jesus what he MUST do. (Acts 22:16)**
2. **When we do the things that Jesus requires to be saved, we are then added by Him to His church**  
**Acts 2:38, 40-41, 47**
3. **As long as we believe and practice only the Lord's will, we will be the Lord's church — and nothing else.**
4. **But if we ever get outside the boundaries of the Lord's will, we will have severed our relationship to Him.**  
**2 John 9**
5. **Won't you be a member of the church that belongs to Christ?**

## Invitation

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*Richard Thetford, June 2007 (Based on a sermon by Gary Henry, 1999)*