

Denominationalism, A Matter Of Conjecture

By Bryan R Braswell

If denominations are of God, then why the appeal for unity in the Scriptures? If doctrinal differences are only matters of opinion, then why isn't God subject to man's opinion? If man decided God was all loving without any justice on His part, defining love as the humanist mindset would set those terms, would it be wrong to punish murderers? Would it be wrong to punish your child for misbehavior?

Denomination's arguments for their existence are all based upon the principle of these questions, justifying their existence based upon a "yes" answer. Division is therefore condoned, not condemned, and they sometimes will even discipline and debate with those who disagree with them. They attempt to defend their actions when confronted with these questions, which make no sense relative to the matter of truth.

If denominations and divisions of man are scriptural, then **scripture is merely a matter of conjecture**. Conjecture is defined as the formation of judgments or opinions on the basis of incomplete or inconclusive information. If one passage of Scripture means anything at all, it is definable and established as fact or objective. If division occurs over a passage of Scripture, that division is not the fault of the passage, but the interpreter's logical deduction. For example: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32). Are Jesus' words truth? If one continues in His word will he be a disciple of Jesus, and will he know that truth? Will that truth make him free? Therefore is it truth that makes one free and a disciple of Jesus? The answers here should be obvious. Furthermore, if truth is relative or subject to the mere opinions of man, **there is no truth!** For more detail on this, when Jesus said: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed **for** many for the remission of sins." (Matthew 26:28): Where is the conjecture on this? I.e., is Jesus' blood imperative for the remission of man's sins, his freedom from such? The grammatical construction of this passage is clear. Jesus' blood is **FOR** ('in order to obtain'-not 'because of') the remission of sins. An equivalent passage (relative to rules of grammar) is found in Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and

be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for** the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." So, in order to obtain the remission of our sins, we must continue in the words of Jesus, which Peter was preaching, and we will be made free from sin and thereby a disciple of the Master when we obey them. If this passage is merely conjecture, then denominations have a leg to stand on, but they do not.

If truth is relative, then this passage can be made to have alternate meanings, and whatever you want it to mean, that will be its meaning. That's the same as being a pragmatist in a very bad way!

Jesus gave what is commonly called the great commission in **Matthew 28** and **Mark 16**. In both instances, baptism was necessary in order to make one a disciple of Christ. Denominationalism has done more damage to this passage, in their attempts to change the mode, purpose, and necessity of baptism. **Denominations will tell you various things on this matter**. They are therefore divided amongst themselves, and thus they attempt to justify that division. If denominations are justified, then the blood of Jesus and baptism are merely matters of conjecture. This is what they base their salvation on, i.e., conjecture.

It is no wonder that so many people who claim to be Christians are complacent and un-convicted. When your entire salvation has been enveloped in your mind as a mere matter of opinion, then nothing substantive is established. When (in reality) there is no absolute truth, then no one can be wrong, and everyone can be right. This is the absurdity of denominationalism and why it is unscriptural. Denominationalism is therefore sinful and must be repented of if one desires to go to heaven.

The churches of Christ are not divisible or denominated. They cannot be because the truth is not divisible. If we have divisions amongst our ranks, we have a **sin problem** or the division must be **one of expediency**, but that is a different matter altogether in and of itself! Denominations are a major tool of the Devil, and he has done much harm through their efforts. We must oppose that at all cost in the churches of Christ!

Please Remember These in Your Prayers:

Justin Barker, Rachel Barker, Doris Bell, James & Sue Browning, Billye Campbell, Gene Campbell, Suzanne Charlton, Randy Cooper, Jim Duncan, Barbara Duncan, Irene Duncan, Gene Garner, LaWanta Garner, Bob Hedges, Wade Miller, Wayne Pickrel, Thelma Reed, and Helen Roper

Also: Ozroe Bush, Carolyn (Katy) Cabell, Odis Duncan, Denise Hess, Cato Jones, Margaret Laurence, Mary Jo Lee, Janice Lineberger, Mike Norfleet, Kristen Powell, Kent Stephenson, Kaitlin Taylor, and Charles Whitney

Congregational Shut-Ins:

Pleasant Springs Assisted Living: Doris Jean Bell, Annah Brown, **Home:** Irene Duncan, **Villa Assisted Living:** Georgia Lide.

HEALTH UPDATES

Wayne Pickrel was transferred to The Villas Nursing Facility (located across from the entrance to the Country Club on Greenhill Road), Room 308, for rehab. On Thursday morning Stephanie reported he was being transferred to the ICC unit at TRMC. He was having difficulty coughing and his oxygen level was dropping. She thought he may be on the verge of getting pneumonia. He has been very weak. Please pray for Wayne and Ann as they struggle with his illness and other things in their lives.

Suzanne Charlton's surgery consisted of four bypasses. The surgery was a success. Wayne posted a "Yea, going home." on **Facebook** on the Internet Friday morning.

Sue Browning continues to recover from her recent heart attack. James states she is doing pretty good. And, so is he. Please pray for them.

Gene Garner was still in Room 411 at TRMC at the printing of the bulletin. He states he is getting along well. Please keep Gene and LaWanta in your prayers.

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

Wednesday Nights this Summer

Congregational Supper 5:45pm
Congregational Singing 6:45pm
Summer Sermon Series 7:00pm

Menu for Wednesday night supper on July 28:

MEXICAN

Team No. 1: Sparks, Robison, Thomas

All are welcome to join us for supper! If you are eating, monetary donations for the chefs are appreciated, but not necessary.

Contact Keely McCary at (903) 563-7895 for more information.

Summer Youth Series

(SYBSNET)

The Topic for the Series is **Fact or Myth**.

Will be at the Blossom Church of Christ on July 26

beginning at 7:00 p.m.

The topic will be:

"Instrumental Music—Just a Tradition?"

**Pick up a SYBSNET schedule in the foyer.*

Summer Sermon Series

(each Wednesday Evening

Beginning at 7:00 PM)

CHECK THE FRONT PAGE IN TODAY'S

BULLETIN FOR ADDITIONAL

INFORMATION REGARDING

WEDNESDAY EVENING

July 28

The Sermon Topic will be:

How Faith Shapes our

Financial Stewardship.

ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST

Prayers: Daniel McCary
Announcements: Bronson Roper
Communion: Rhodney Freeman