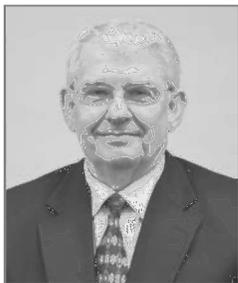


BIBLE TALK



Mike King-Minister

Question: Do various denominations compose the church?

Answer: No! The church, Christ's body (Col. 1: 18), is composed of people, not denominations! I Cor. 12:1-11 is often misunderstood and misapplied to advocate that the church is one body and made up of "*many members*" identified erroneously as denominations. True it is that there is but one body having many members, but they

are bound together by their common obedience to truth and relationship to God (vs. 12-14). The basis of fellowship in this body is that all the members "*walk in the light*" (I Jn. 1:7-9), not "unity in diversity!"

Jesus prayed for unity (Jn. 17:20-21) which is violated by denominationalism for it means to "denote" or to "sect(ion)" themselves from all others due to at least one peculiar or different teaching. Paul forbade the Corinthians to let this happen, but instructed them to "*speak the same thing, be of the same mind and let there be no divisions among you*" (I Cor. 1: 10-13). There is but "*one body*" (Eph. 4:4-6), that being the church (Eph. 1:22,23). Denominations do not present "one body" or "one faith," but advocate "joining the church of your choice." Has Christ ever given us a choice (Mt. 7:21; 16:18)?

Regardless of what creates the division: doctrine, salvation, worship, etc., it is still wrong for it indicates a deviation from God's word (I Cor. 1:10). Paul asked some poignant questions of the Corinthians, "*Is Christ divided?*" "*Was Paul crucified for you?*" "*Or were you baptized into the name of Paul?*" (I Cor. 1:10-13). Unity can only be found in obedience!

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