

# “Is One Church As Good As Another?” (III)

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**Text:** Ephesians 5:23-32

**Theme:** Who is following Christ?

## **Introduction:**

1. Theme: Today there are in the world over 400 hundred religious bodies, all claiming to be followers of Christ. Each has a different system of government, each has a different person in control of the respective churches, each has a different purpose or goal for which it strives, each has different ideals. But most significantly and most importantly facing us in our consideration of the church is that each one has its own particular creed book and system of faith. When one observes the religious division about him, he must be constrained to inquire, “Is one church as good as another?”
2. The Bible must be our guideline - II Timothy 3:16,17.
3. Our attitude towards the scriptures must be right.
4. What the Bible decrees we must accept.
  - a. I Peter 4:11 - restoration mottoes:
    - 1) Speak where the Bible speaks - remain silent where the Bible is silent.
    - 2) Do Bible things in Bible ways and call Bible things by Bible names.

**Discussion:**

- I. How many churches does the Bible recognize? - One -
  - A. The church is compared to a flock of sheep with Jesus as the great shepherd.
    1. John 10:11-17 - One fold, one shepherd - one shepherd does not watch over many folds, but one.
    2. I Peter 5:1-4 - Jesus the chief Shepherd.
  - B. The church is the body of Christ - Ephesians 4:22,23; Colossians 1:18.
    1. How many bodies does Christ have?
    2. How many bodies do you have as an individual? - Ephesians 4:4-6? If more than one body, then there's more than one God.
      - a. The church is the body - Ephesians 4:22,23.
      - b. The body is the church - Colossians 1:18.
      - c. There is one body, therefore there is one church - Ephesians 4:4.
    3. The church is compared to a human body - I Corinthians 12:12-20.
    4. Other illustrations could be offered; e.g. The bride of Christ; family of God.
    5. The church is commanded to be one -
      - a. I Corinthians 1:10-13.
      - b. John 17:20-22 (Reason for unity).
- II. Is the church you read about in the New Testament better than all the other churches? The church you read about in the New Testament has to be better than all others.
  - A. It had divine origin - better founder.
    1. Matthew 16:18,19 - comment.
    2. In Acts 2 we see the fulfillment.
      - a. All churches other than the one in the New Testament are of human origin.
      - b. How does human compare with divine?

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- B. It has a better name - Not only the church, but also the members of the church.
1. Romans 6:16 - the church is the bride of Christ - the bride wears the name of the groom.
  2. Acts 2:12 - fulfillment of a prophecy of Isaiah - Acts 1:26.
  3. Christians are those that have been saved - The church is the body of the saved - Acts 2:47 - Names on contracts, etc.
- C. It has a better creed.
1. Denominations, bad creeds written by humans.
  2. The church of Christ has the Bible as its creed -
    - a. From God - II Peter 1:20,21.
    - b. The Bible is perfect - James 1:25.
    - c. Anything of human compilation has to be imperfect.
- D. The church of Christ has a better system of government.
1. Ruled by elders - Hebrews 3:7.
  2. Elders are assisted by godly deacons.
  3. Elders and deacons are subject to Christ.
    - a. Ephesians 1:22,23.
    - b. Colossians 1:18.
    - c. Contrast with denominations, ecclesiastical monstrosities.
- E. The church of Christ is better than other churches because its form of worship is based on the New Testament.
1. John 4:24.
  2. Spirit and truth.
- F. The church of Christ is better than all other churches because it represents the wisdom of God.
1. Men have a different idea about what the church ought to be.
  2. It's God's method of telling the world about Christ - Ephesians 2:10.
  3. It's the pillar and ground of the truth - I Timothy 3:15.
  4. The foolishness of God is better than the wisdom of men - I Corinthians 1:25.

- G. The church of Christ is better than all other churches because of the price paid for it.
1. Ephesians 2:25, Acts 20:28 - emphasize the cross.
  2. First century martyrs.
  3. Sacrifices of restoration leaders.
  4. What does denominationalism have to offer?

### **Conclusion:**

1. One church.
2. The church of Christ offers:
  - a. Divine origin.
  - b. Better name.
  - c. Body of the saved.
  - d. Better creed.
  - e. Better system of government.
  - f. Better form of worship.
  - g. Wisdom of God.
  - h. Price paid for it.
3. Denominationalism stands condemned of God.
4. We have already noticed Christ's prayer for unity and Paul's petition for it.
5. Matthew 23:13-19.
6. Why would anyone want to divide the church that the Lord built?
7. United, we can carry the gospel into all the world; divided we will not be able to carry it across the street. That is how serious it is.

### **Invitation:**