

Denominationalism or the Church?

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Thoughtful Bible students realize that denominational “churchianity” bears no resemblance to New Testament Christianity. The latter is not only fundamentally **undenominational**; it is **anti-denominational**. Men have so long lived with the abnormality of denominationalism that they almost universally accept it as “normal” (i.e., Scriptural, for those who may still bother with such trivialities).

By definition, a denomination is a religious body having peculiarities that distinguish it from the church revealed in the Bible. A denomination cannot exist without believing, doing, or preaching things not found in God’s Word. While all denominations teach and/or practice some things the Bible teaches, the things they teach that are **not in the Bible** are what make them denominations, of which the Bible knows nothing. Consider some distinctions between denominational and Scriptural concepts of the church:

1. Denominations glory in their **many** churches/religious bodies. Jesus built **one** church (Mat. 16:18), which is His “**one** body” (Eph. 1:22–23; 4:4).
2. Denominations laud their **diversity** of doctrines, practices, and faiths. The Bible demands adherence to the **singular** “doctrine of Christ” (1 John 9–10; cf. Acts 2:42), and insists that there is **only one** faith (Eph. 4:5; Jude 3) and **one Gospel**, to which all must adhere (1 Cor. 1:10; Gal. 1:6–9).
3. Denominations were **founded by a man or men**. Biblical Christianity was **founded by Jesus Christ** upon the fact that He is the Son of God (Mat. 16:16–18; 1 Cor. 3:11).
4. Denominations are subject to **human authorities** (headquarters, president, board, conference, pope, etc.). **Jesus is the sole head** of His church (Eph. 1:22–23; Col. 1:18), and He governs it from Heaven through His New Testament (Heb. 1:1–2; 8:6–13; 9:15–17). Each congregation is autonomous under its own elders/bishops/pastors (Acts 20:28).
5. Denominations admit that sinners can be saved **apart from** them. The Bible teaches that when one is saved, the Lord **adds him to His church**, and that one **must be in it** in order to go to Heaven (Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 15:24; Eph. 5:23–27).
6. Denominations worship according to **human doctrines and preferences**, rendering their worship vain (Mat. 15:9). Jesus’ church worships only as **He authorizes** (John 4:23–24; Col. 3:17).

Denominationalism rests upon the word, whim, and will of men, not upon the Word and Will of the Son of God.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it published in the *Denton Record-Chronicle*, Denton, TX, October 3, 2014.]

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