

**Gal. 1:7:** "There be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ." (False teachers in Galatia perverted or changed the true gospel of Christ.)

**Rom. 16:17:** "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them." (Men in Rome were dividing the church contrary to the one doctrine of Christ.)

These early divisions caused by men in the first century have grown and spread to the multiplied divisions today. This is the already divided religious world into which we were born. Shall we join in with these divisions and pass them on to our children? If they were condemned as sinful in the first century, they are just as sinful today.

Jude 3 commands Christians to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints. This means to go back to the one faith, one hope, and one body found in the New Testament. In the same way that I can take the Bible and find the one God, the one Lord, and the one Holy Spirit, I can and I must take the same Bible and find the one faith, one baptism, and one body or church (Ephesians 4:3-7).

Paul warned in Acts 20:28-30 that men would teach different things and lead other men away from the church which was purchased with Christ's blood. Because men have been led away from the original church built by Christ, men must be led back to that church purchased by Christ. If false teaching led them away, true teaching of God's Word will lead them back.

From the beginning denominational division was not so. We must return to God's unity before men corrupted it. "What God has joined together, let not man put asunder." Just because many men for many years have joined in religious division, from the beginning it has not been so. Just because "everybody's doing it" does not make it God's plan from the beginning.

Churches of Christ are seeking to restore the original church of the Bible. They want to go back to Scripture and reproduce Christianity exactly as it was given in the beginning. They are not another denomination, but are pleading with all men to heed Bible warnings against denominating or dividing ourselves by human traditions and inherited doctrines and names.

You can be an undenominational Christian just as Paul was, and a member of Christ's original church just as Peter was. You can be just a Christian without being some kind of Christian. In the Bible there were no kinds - just Christians. Religious division is sin. Come out of it and warn others of it, and help unite all believers in Christ.

# Relig.Division Is Sin!

The religious leaders of Jesus' day asked Him in Matthew 19:3 if easy divorce for every cause were lawful. He answered them, "What God has joined together, let not man put asunder" (verse 6). They replied that Moses had allowed easy divorce for centuries, and "Everybody's doing it."

Jesus then said, "From the beginning it has not been so" (verse 8). This meant that regardless of how men had changed God's plan for marriage, God's will was still the same as it had been from the beginning.

The same is true of God's plan for His spiritual family, the church. From the beginning He joined it together, but through the centuries men have divided it asunder. But "from the beginning it has not been so." We cannot please God in the family or in the church until we return to the unity God intended from the beginning.

The following verses describe God's will for unity from the beginning. They show that what God originally commanded has been corrupted by divisions caused by men. But "what God has joined together, let not man put asunder."

**Gen. 13:8:** "Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen, for we be brethren."

**Psalms 133:1:** "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (This means that it is also bad and unpleasant for brethren to be divided.)

**Jer. 32:39:** "I will give them one heart and one way that they may fear me forever, for the good of them and of their children after them." (How can children obey their parents when one says one way and one another way?)

**Zeph. 3:9:** "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent." (How wonderful if we all served God with one consent!)

**Proverbs 6:16,19:** "These six things doth the Lord hate, yea, seven are an abomination unto him... he that soweth discord among brethren." (God hates discord and division among brethren.)

**Amos 3:3:** "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (It is not real Bible unity when men merge churches together and merely agree to disagree.)

**Matt. 12:25:** "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." (Think of the hundreds of churches and doctrines divided against themselves.)



**John 10:16:** There shall be one fold and one shepherd." (Jesus is the one Shepherd and wills that there be one flock just as there is one Shepherd.)

**John 17:20:** "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." (Jesus is praying just before the cross for all of us even today who believe on Him through the word of the apostles, the New Testament.) Note Jesus' prayer for us:

**John 17:21:** "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (We must be one as the Father and the Son are one so that the world may believe on Jesus. The world laughs at divided Christendom.)

**Acts 14:** "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." (All of us today must continue together with one accord.)

**Acts 4:32:** "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul." (Early Christians were of one heart and one soul -- how different today!)

**I Cor 12: 20:** "But now are they many members, yet but one body." (Christians are many parts or organs in the spiritual body of Jesus, the church, His one body.)

**Col. 3:15:** "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful." (Christians are called in one body, the church.)

**Col. 1:18:** "He is the head of the body, the church." (Jesus as head of the church does not have many bodies.)

**Col. 1: 24:** "I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." (Christ's one body is His church.)

**Eph. 1:22, 23:** "God hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Other verses say that the body of Christ is the church. This passage says that the church is His body and the fulness of God.)

**Rom. 12:4, 5:** "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." (We must be one body in Christ.)

**I Cor. 10:17:** "For we being many are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread."

**Gal. 3:28:** "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus." (If I am in Christ, I must be one with every other person in Christ.)

**Phil. 2:2:** "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." (How unhappy Paul would be at all the divisions today.)

**Phil. 1:27:** "That ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel." (How different our condition is -- striving against one another for many faiths.)

**I Cor. 1:10:** "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (All Christians must speak or teach the same thing and have no divisions among them but be perfectly united in one mind and judgment.)

**I Cor. 1:12:** "Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ." (Today men say, "I am of Luther, I am of Calvin, I am of the Wesley brothers.")

**I Cor. 1:13** "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (Paul says dividing Christians divides Christ. He shows that men's names divided the church in Corinth. The word "denomination" means a "named division." Christians must not be denominated today.)

**I Cor. 3:4:** "For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" (Verse 3 says divisions are carnal or fleshly. The Corinthians were fleshly and sinful because they divided themselves in following different preachers.)

**Eph. 4:3:** "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (The Holy Spirit produced one revelation and one faith in the New Testament, not different teachings and beliefs. Christians in Ephesus are here commanded to keep that unity from God's Spirit -- so are we.)

**Eph. 4:4-6:** "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (To keep the unity of the Holy Spirit Christians must teach one body, which is the church, one Holy Spirit, one hope, one Jesus, one faith, one baptism, and one God. Although many men may believe in many gods, the Bible teaches one God. Men teach many faiths, but God says one faith. Men say many churches, but the Bible says one church.)

**1 Tim. 4:1:** "Some shall depart from the faith." (The one faith in the Bible was divided into many faiths by men's departing from the true faith.)

**2 Tim. 4:4:** "They shall turn away their ears from the truth." (The truth was turned away from, causing many false teachings.)

