

Christianity without Denominations

To what denomination did Peter, James, John, the 3000 on Pentecost (Acts 2:38-47), Cornelius, the Ethiopian eunuch, Lydia, the Corinthians, and the Philippian jailer belong (as well as everyone else we read about in the book of Acts)? The answer, they belonged to none. They were simply members of the body of Christ, which is the Lord's church (Eph. 1:22,23; Col. 1:18,24), yet they were not members of any denomination as we know them today (Eph. 4:4-6). All who were saved became members of this body (Eph. 5:23), the church, by virtue of the fact that the Lord added them to it (Acts. 2:47). Yet they belonged to no denomination. They had been delivered from the "power of darkness", or the world, and were now translated into the "kingdom of God's dear son", which is the church (Col. 1:13, 14, 18), but still they were not members of any denominational church. They had been called into one body (Col. 3:15).

Just so, today, if a sinner believes in Christ, and is baptized, just as the 3000 on Pentecost were, the eunuch, Lydia, Cornelius, the jailer, etc., such would make this person simply a Christian, but nothing more (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:36-41; 8:35-39; 16:14,15; 16:30,34; Rom. 6:3,4; Gal. 3:26,27). This would not make him a member of any denomination. And if a great number should do this, would they not have the same status?

Should this number come together on the first day of the week to worship (Acts 20:7), identify themselves simply by the name of Christ as did the apostles and early Christians, accept and teach the Bible as their only rule of faith and practice, have such leaders to serve as the Bible authorizes, and believe and observe the same teachings in the same way as the apostle and early Christians did, and as are set forth in the Bible, would they not simply be the Lord's church without being a denomination?

-cont.

A Touch of Magic? (3)

(A continuation of last week's article, a reprint from a 1988 article which appeared in the Firm Foundation.)

Still others see the approval of fellow peers as something magical. If worship services are forsaken, just excuse yourself the next time you show up by telling someone how bad you thought the weather was going to be or how that little something just came up at the last minute, and "abracadabra," all is forgiven. It matters little that that same individual offers the same lame excuses from time to time and thus "understands" your situation. It matters little that God's word condemns forsaking of the assembling (Heb. 10:25). It matters little that the scriptures demand public repentance, confession and prayer for such public sins (I Jn. 1:9). Because there is "conscience-easing magic" in the approval (or at least the non-condemnation) of a confidant, the word of God can be set aside. Though such teaching would be condemned if publicly proclaimed, the loud-speaking actions of many herald its soul-condemning message regularly. The idea that any sinful action will be forgotten if someone "understands" and approves of that action without its being repented of is an idea formulated in the halls of hell and based on "magic" (which does not exist). Although faults between individuals must be worked out between individuals (Mt. 5:21-24; 18:15-17), the ultimate forgiveness cannot be obtained by "magic," but by obedience to the will of God.

-Eddy

Teens

December Dates:

12/30—Youth Conduct Evening Services

12/31—Youth Game Night

Winter Youth Devos:

January 5—Radford

February 2—Christiansburg

March 8—Lake Drive

Christianity without Denomination—cont.

We believe this is the position taught in the Bible and that all of us should take. The Bible only makes only New Testament Christians, no more and no less, and as New Testament Christians we are members of the New Testament church, and that alone. If upon repenting and being baptized the Lord adds us to His church, like in the first century, why be joined to anything else? With the possession of the Word of God in its entirety, why think that we must have man-made creeds and rules of faith? Why call ourselves by denominational names? We believe in Christ. He is our creed, and we do what He says. Consequently the New Testament is our only rule of faith and doctrine (no man-made creeds).

Does this sound good to you? Does it sound too good to be true? Most people will say that they actually believe that this is the way it should be, but getting them to implement it is another thing. Really, it is not a matter of opinion or optional. Christ purchased the church with his own blood (Acts 20:28). The church belongs to him. This is a very serious matter, and it is of the utmost importance that we listen and do what he says (Jn. 12:48).

- Via Sword & Staff

Team Events

New teams have been formed and the list will be in next weeks bulletin.

We will be having a Congregational Dinner on January 6 after morning services. This is a pot-luck fellowship with brief planning session after the meal with each new team breaking off into different rooms of the building. Bring your ideas to make this the best year ever.

WOW GROUP

The next meeting will be on January 8, 2008.

Memory Program



We will be starting a memory program for children ages 4 and up. It will begin on January 6, 2008 at 5:40 pm before evening services. If there are any men interested in leading this class on a monthly basis, please see Adam House before December

30.

The Daily Dozen

1. A little patience
2. A minute of unselfishness
3. A kind word—or two or three
4. A bit of self-control
5. A flash of generosity
6. A prompt excuse— for someone else
7. A noble thought—a text recalled
8. A good deed—not left undone
9. A moment of thankfulness
10. A prayer
11. A smile—it might brighten another
12. A joyful song

SICK

Curtis Doss is at RMH. He is to go home today.

Mary Anderson is at Richfield Recovery Center.

Darlene Mellon is now home.

Mary Valentine, **Squeaky's** mother, had surgery on Thursday.

Glen Williams, **Glenna's** father, has been diagnosed with terminal cancer.

Remember the following in prayer: **Betty Jenkins, Collin Gregory, Marguerite Charles, Betty Buckner, Effie Wimmer, Teresa White, Mr. & Mrs. Milton Avery, Don Brown.**

Happy Anniversary this week to:
Oliver & Mariam Majors—12/27



Happy Birthday this week to:
Sandra Neighbors—12/25

Kay Anderson—12/29

Melissa Rogers—12/30

George Mellon—12/30



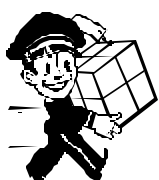
MILITARY

Ty Stricklin—Stationed in Iraq

John Duran—overseas.

Kyle Nester— in Iraq

Erich Felps—in Iraq.



**NOVEMBER & DECEMBER
ITEMS FOR THE STAFFORDS:**
Sweet 'n Low and Degree Deodorant.
Give your items to Jeanny and she
will ship them over!

THANKS

Thanks to all who helped move tables and chairs from the fellowship hall last week.

PINK/BLUE INFO & INVOLVEMENT

The information section of the sheets will be used for new directories that will be in the Plan of Works booklet. **The deadline for this information will be December 26.**

CALENDARS

All upcoming events for January and February, 2008 need to be in the office by December 26. If you have **any events** for the new year please let Jeff or Jo Ann know soon for the Plan of Works booklet.

PRIMARY TEACHER MEETING

The next Primary Teachers Meeting will be on February 24 at 4:30. 4/K teachers in charge of snacks!

ASSIGNMENTS

Next year's assignments for communion, baptismal garments and nursery attendants are posted in the hallway!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Plan of Works—1/20

New Member Dinner—1/26

Education Banquet—2/23

Smoky Mountain Marriage Retreat—2/14&15
SW Virginia Bible Bowl —3/1



**HOPE EVERYONE
HAS A SAFE AND
FUN HOLIDAY!!**

December 2007

Announcements Tom Duff
Song Leader (AM) Jeff Durham
Opening Prayer (AM)
12/2 Charlie Gwaltney
12/9 Eric Earnhart
12/16 Murphy Scott
12/23 Charlie Puckett
12/30 David Brown
Preside at Communion Tom Richardson
Serve Table Herb Baker AC Janney
 Greg Edwards Glenn Gabbard

Closing Prayer

12/2 Paul Mays
12/9 Squeaky Valentine
12/16 Wayne Dixon
12/23 Luke Guard
12/30 Jim Harrington

Song Leader (PM)

Tom Rogers

Opening Prayer (PM)

12/2 Charlie Maness
12/9 Josh Whitlow
12/16 Mike Durham
12/23 George Mellon
12/30 Youth

Scripture Reader

Sam Valentine

Closing Prayer (PM)

12/2 Glenn Hartman
12/9 Fred Altizer
12/16 Roger Mays
12/23 Grat Tucker
12/30 Youth

Serve Table (PM) Preston Duff Garrett Durham

Song Leader (Wed) Adam House

Prayer (Wed)

12/5 Bobby Martin
12/12 Don Pettit
12/19 Richard Simms
12/26 Caleb Guard

Open/Close Bldg Fred Altizer

Open/Close Sun PM David Wilcox

Greeters Keiths Gwaltneys

Nursery Attend M. Earnhart M. Rogers

Ushers N. Gearhart D. Guard

Handouts Mike & Bradford Durham

Alternates David Brown

Prepare comm. Gloria White Marsha Cooke

Cards & Pencils Jimmy Harrington Dylan Tyler

Last weeks attendance 12/5&9/2007

Bible Class— 135 Worship Service—158

Eve. Worship— 129 Wed. Service—152

Contribution—\$5208

Number 2851