

Which Church Would The Lord Assemble With Today?

By Paul R. Blake

(Developed from a sermon by Sewell Hall presented in Pittsburgh, PA in 1986)

Questions:

- A. What does Jesus want of us today? This lesson is not "What would Jesus do?" which is speculative and subjective, but "What did Jesus say?" which is scriptural and objective.
 - 1. He wants the same thing as His Father.
 - 2. 2Peter 3:9 - He wants us to be saved.
- B. How would Jesus want to accomplish that?
 - 1. The same question was asked in Acts 2:36-37.
 - 2. Peter's sermon caused them to fear retribution and to seek to avoid it.
 - 3. Peter's answer - Acts 2:38-40.
 - 4. It is what Christ wanted him to say - Luke 24:46-49.
 - 5. It's what He told Peter to say about obtaining salvation - Matt. 28:18-20.
- C. How many plans of salvation did Jesus give to His disciples?
 - 1. Jesus did not make exceptions; all people are to be saved by His instructions.
 - 2. If He made exceptions, God would have a double standard.
 - 3. He would be a respecter of persons - Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11
- D. Have conditions changed since then?
 - 1. Does man still need to be saved? - Rom. 3:23, 6:23
 - 2. Has God changed his word? - Gal. 1:8-9; Heb 13:8
 - 3. If that was needed then to be saved, that is what is needed today.
- E. Once we have been baptized and our sins washed away, what do we do next?
 - 1. Most believers know they must become part of a body of believers.
 - 2. Instinctive to become part of a Church - Acts 9:24.
 - 3. Many see that joining with a denomination just divides up the believers.
 - a. John 17:20-21; 1Cor. 1:10
 - b. Different creeds, leaderships, competitiveness, prejudice, etc.
 - c. Fighting among religious groups that profess to be followers of a peaceful Christ!
 - 4. Options:
 - a. Join it anyway, marring their original good intentions,
 - b. Join with the intention to unite all of them together (soon discouraged),
 - c. Give up and worship alone (displeasing to the Lord).
 - 5. There is a fourth option: do what Jesus would do.

I. WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?

- A. What denomination would Jesus belong to today?
 - 1. "There were none in his day." Untrue!
 - a. There were a number of sects or parties in his day, equivalent to modern day denominations.

- b. Sadducees - had a great zeal for the temple, but did not believe in the resurrection.
 - c. Pharisees - had a great zeal for scriptures, but held to human tradition and hated government.
 - d. Herodians - obeyed the government but were morally bankrupt.
 - e. Essenes - believed in abstinence & purity, but were isolationists
 - f. There were denominations within the first 21 years -
1Cor. 1:12-13, 3:1-4
2. Jesus did not become a member of a sect, but was simply a believer and follower of God.
 - a. Did not try to organize all of the sects into one giant super denomination. (No unity in diversity)
 - b. Sought to unite himself with God rather than a sect of men.
 - c. He just did the will of God, His Father -
John 4:23-24, 34, 5:30, 6:38
 - d. What did he accomplish by this? - John 10:30, 37-38
 3. What denomination would Jesus be a part of today? He would not be part of a sect of men! He would be united in fellowship with God.
- B. What next?
1. The next thing Jesus did after uniting himself with God was to get others to be united with God - John 17:20-21.
 2. How; by creating some super denomination?
 3. By doing just what Jesus did - John 4:34, 5:30, 6:38.
 4. Can we know we are united with God?
 - a. When we keep God's will just like Jesus did - 2John 9; Eph. 3:3-4

II. IF JESUS DID NOT JOIN A DENOMINATION AND DID NOT TEACH US TO JOIN ONE, WHAT DENOMINATION SHOULD WE BECOME A MEMBER OF?

- A. Acts 2 - What denomination did they join?
 1. If they were just followers of Christ, why can't we be the same?
 2. What sermon would Peter preach if he were here today?
 - a. The same one he did on Pentecost.
 - b. If the message is the same, the response of the hearers should be the same, too.
- B. If Peter preached at the Local High School stadium and 3000 were baptized in the nearest body of water, to what denomination would they belong?
 1. They would be believers and followers of Christ!
- C. Suppose some formed a denomination; would that make the rest of the faithful believers and followers of Jesus Christ denominationalists?
- D. Now what do these believers and followers of Christ do when they get home? (Forget the matter?)
 1. Do what the believers did in Acts 2:42-47.
 2. The believers were in fellowship with each other.
 3. They assembled together as a body of followers of Christ, as some of the duties they were given couldn't be carried out individually.

4. Some do not want to be part of a body of believers and followers of Christ as they do not want the responsibilities that come with the privileges.
- E. Groups of believers and followers of Christ in a given area were a local church
1. Acts 2:41, 47
 2. That church had a doctrine - Acts 2:42.
 3. That church had fellowship and sharing - Acts 2:43-46.
 4. That church worshipped together - Acts 2:42, 5:42.
 5. That church had a treasury - Acts 4:31-35.
 6. That church had an organization - Acts 6:1-6, 15:6, 11:29-30.
- F. Not a denomination, but a body of believers and followers of Jesus Christ!
1. There is a difference between a body of believers and followers of Christ and a humanly devised denomination of men.
- G. That Church has a name.
1. Christ is the Head - Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23
 2. Christ is the Builder - Matt. 16:18
 3. Christ is the foundation - Eph. 2:19-20; 1Cor. 3:11
 4. Christ's blood bought - Acts 20:28
 5. Christ is Savior of the Church - Eph. 5:23
 6. Christ's doctrine rules it - 2John 9-11
 7. The Church is the Bride of Christ - Rom. 7:4
 8. The Body of Christ - Col. 1:18, 24
 9. All Blessings are in Christ - Eph. 1:3
 10. We are baptized into Christ - Gal. 3:26-27; 1Cor. 12:12-13
 11. We must preach Christ only - Acts 8:4-5, 12; 1Cor. 2:2
 12. Salvation is only in Christ - Acts 4:12; John 14:6
- H. Whose name should the Church wear?!
1. Jesus Christ would assemble with the Church that wears His name.
 2. Col. 1:18
 3. And now, where will you choose to assemble?