



## Is Denominationalism A Viable Christian System-3

Last week we noted that denominationalism doesn't recognize the inherent division within its organization because it fails to acknowledge any other doctrine of the Christian faith as truly important and grounds for unity except belief in Jesus as the Christ. On this account, denominationalism fails to realize that there could be any distinguishing marks that identify the one true church of Christ. Hence, proponents of denominationalism criticize any who would claim to be the one true church of Christ. After all, every denomination is part of the "church of Christ," at least, according to denominational thinking. Saying that there are ways to identify the church of Christ through scripture in essence requires that there be more tenets of unity other than mere mental acknowledgement of Jesus as Christ.

When we look into the scriptures, we find that indeed, God through Christ has left us both the teaching and the example that the church is to be found identified through a clear pattern of behavior. That is, that the church of Christ that was established by the apostles and prophets of the first century behaved in such and so a way is clear from the scriptures. Should we seek to behave in such and so a way as well, we should have clear indication that we are the church of Christ as well. The example that we find within the New Testament of what it means to be the church of Christ is available for us today and we ought to emulate that example if we want to be the church of Christ. Obviously, we are not talking about emulating things which are pointed out by the apostles and prophets to be sinful and wrong. We must avoid those things. However, in looking at the things that the apostles and prophets taught the church to be, we ought to be those things as well. This is also known as the seed principle. Luke 8:11 teaches that the seed is the word of God. In reading the context of Luke 8 and understanding the parable of the sower, one discovers that God's word contains within it the same pattern that a seed would contain within

it. When that pattern is sowed, it grows into a plant. When the plant grows in good soil, it produces fruit.

Denominationalism is not a viable Christian system because it fails to offer identifying marks of the one true church of Christ. Denominationalism is not concerned with emulating the pattern of the church as found in the New Testament. Their concern is merely with following after their own church manuals, creeds, confessions of faith, and disciplines. Denominationalism says "attend the church of your choice." That in essence says that there is no one "church" that is specifically following what God wants them to follow. It in essence says that each "church" is just as good as another. What does that mean except that there are no real identifying characteristics of the church of the New Testament? That each "church" has the right to do what it pleases as long as it hangs onto the truth of Jesus as the Son of God? Is that really right? What would be the purpose of the New Testament if it didn't matter what the behavior of the church was? In fact, there is no purpose of the New Testament if the only thing that matters is that Jesus is the Son of God. A large portion of the New Testament is letters sent to churches instructing them how to behave. In those letters, the apostles instructed these churches to behave in certain ways (ex. 1 Cor.16:1). In the epistles, each church was given instruction, but all churches were expected to behave in the same way in key matters (1 Cor.7:17). Such key matters include salvation, church discipline, church organization, the worship of the church, the work of the church, and future hope of the church. It is not just a good idea to teach the same things in these matters, it is commanded (1 Cor.1:10; Phil.2:2; Eph.4:1-5). Can the system of denominationalism be a valid Christian system when it frankly denies that there is a pattern for the church that is commanded and needed? It cannot.

In this series of articles, we have noted three key areas in which denomination-

*(Continued on page 2)*

# Those Old Shoes

**T**here was once a very poor orphan who wanted nothing more in the world than to belong to a family. Finally, his opportunity came. When he was eight years old, a family wanted to adopt him! Introductions were made, papers were signed, and just 6 days after his eighth birthday he left for his new home. He took with him his hope and his possessions - the old worn and torn clothes he was wearing, his tattered shoes with holes in the soles, and a single soft toy. His new parents were excited to have him with them, and wanted him to feel like one of the family. A special celebration dinner was held, he was given his own room, and he was introduced to the other kids in the street.

His new parents took those old clothes, threw them away and bought him beautiful new clothes. They bought him a bike and more toys, and pretty soon he began to feel just like all the other kids in the neighborhood - loved and part of a family. One thing, however, was curious. The young boy's old shoes, the ones with the big holes in them, weren't tossed out with the rest of his clothes. His new father placed them on the mantelpiece. It wasn't long before the newly adopted son found out why. Every time that boy did something wrong his father would go and get those shoes and say "Look at all we've done for you. We took you in when you had nothing, but look at how you've behaved."\*

I'VE GOT GREAT NEWS FOR YOU: God wants to adopt US into HIS family!

Even though "ALL of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags" due to our SIN (Isaiah 64:6), God wants us to be a part of His family.

Our "adoption" has been made possible through God's Son, Jesus. When the time was right, God sent his Son to "pay the price" for our redemption that that we might receive the adoption as sons (Galatians 4:4-5). God "adopts" us when we: place our trust in Him (Hebrews 11:6), repent of our sins (2 Corinthians 7:9-10), confess Jesus before men (Romans 10:9-10), and are baptized (immersed) in Jesus' name for the forgiveness of our sins (Acts 2:38).

Once adopted into His family, WE need to remember where WE were without Him! With grateful hearts, we should CONTINUE to live obediently to the will of our Father. We also need to remember something very important: When God adopts us into His family, he throws away ALL of OUR "filthy rags" (our sins) - even those old, tattered shoes! God says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember NO MORE" (Hebrews 8:12).

Longing for a family? Allow God to add YOU to His family through your trust and obedience.

God bless you!

David A. Sargent

*(Continued from page 1)*

alism cannot provide viability as a Christian system. Denominationalism cannot be viable because it promotes the doctrines of men above the word of God. Denominationalism cannot be viable because it promotes divisions instead of unity. Denominationalism cannot be viable because it fails to offer the identifying marks of the New Testament church as the New Testament expects the church to have. Dear friends and neighbors, it is time to leave the shackles of denominational Christianity. We must unite upon God's truth, the Bible, and simply be Christians and Christians alone. Not Baptist-Christians, Methodist-Christians, Presbyterian-Christians, and etc, but simply Christians. Surely we can agree upon this. Surely we can take the word of God as our only standard of authority to accomplish this task. Surely we can unite based upon the truths therein. Surely we can read those truths and recognize the one true church that exists today. Let us work and endeavor toward the unity that God wants us to have as His children. Let us respect the wishes of our Lord Jesus in these matters. Let us seek to be the one true church of Jesus, the church that belongs to the Christ, the church of Christ today upon the earth.

Kevin Cauley

## Sermons and Study Topics

Week of 5/02/04

Morning .....	The Faithful Christian Woman
Scripture .....	1 Cor.11:2, 3
Evening .....	The Faithful Christian Man
Scripture .....	1 Cor.11:2-9
Sunday Morning Bible Study .....	The Book of Hebrews
Wednesday Evening Bible Study .....	How To Study the Bible

## Weekly Record

Week of 04/25/04

Sunday Class .....	67
Sunday A.M. ....	82
Sunday P.M. ....	60
Wednesday .....	59
Contribution.....	1785.00
Budget .....	\$1778.13

## Potpourri

---

**A** churchgoer wrote a letter to the editor of the newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. "I've gone for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me I can't remember hardly any of them. So I think I'm wasting my time and the preachers are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote, this clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for more than a few of those meals. But

I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me those meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be Spiritually dead today!"

No comments were made on the sermon contents anymore.

### Kids Letters to God

Dear GOD,

Maybe Cain and Abel would not kill each other so much if they had their own rooms. It works with my brother.

--Larry .

Dear GOD,

I went to this wedding and they kissed right in Church. Is that okay?

--Neal

Dear GOD,

We read Thomas Edison made light! But in Sunday school they said You did it. So I bet he stole your idea.

--Sincerely, Donna

### One Second Sermons

- The tongue weighs practically nothing, but few can hold it.
- We stand tallest when we stoop to help others.
- The best way to have the last word is to apologize.
- When you're green with envy, you're ripe for trouble.
- If you can't see the bright side, polish the dull side.

## Kevin's Korner

---

**S** finished up my second computer class at the community center this past week. The first one was held last week on Tuesday evening at 6:30. I was very excited about these classes. Someone showed up for each class, so that is always a plus. Admittedly there were more at the first than at the second class, but that is to be expected. Regardless, it was a great opportunity to get to meet some people and learn more about them. There is an interest in the community for learning about computers and I was very grateful to the community center for providing that opportunity for me to teach the class. I certainly hope that there will be more opportunities in the future for something like that.

It was also my pleasure to serve the school district this past Friday in the

capacity of sign language interpreter. Many of you have met Mary Lynn's and my deaf friend in the community and I was able to assist her and the school in communicating with each other this past week. I am so thankful that this is yet another opportunity in which I can serve and help our community. I received several good comments from the school staff in that regard. I mention this only in that it is a reflection upon the work of the church here. The elders desire us to be involved in our community and we as the members are so doing. The community knows this and sees this and they appreciate this. This will open doors and we will have the opportunity to teach the truth. Thank you, each one, for supporting me in my work here as well as for each of you who volunteer in our community as well.

It is May! On June 12th and 13th, we will have our VBS and 3rd annual

friends and family day. This is a big weekend for the church here. It is our day to tell our friends and family that we love them. Please invite them and let them know that we want them to come and be with us. Our theme for these days will be God's Treasures. We will also have a gospel singing that afternoon at 2:00. Let's invite everyone and please make your plans to attend too!

#### Elders:

Clay Bozarth, Leon Duncan,  
Bruce Foster, Bill Fort, Glenn  
Quigley

#### Deacons:

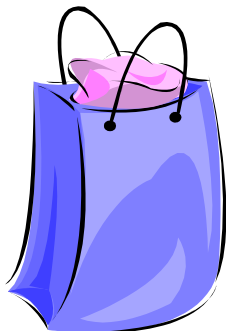
Ken Smith, Brent Stevens,  
Rusty Windle.

#### Preacher:

Kevin Cauley... 870-423-6707

# News, Notes, and 'Nouncements

- We extend a warm welcome to our visitors. We are certainly happy that you are here with us this morning.
- We are truly thankful to God for the wonderful new Lord's day that he has given us today to worship him in Spirit and in Truth!
- Let us remain constant in prayer for the following individuals: Lucille Fort, Glen Quigley.
- Please remember our shut-ins in your prayers: Curits and Opal Hull, Edith Mischler, and Art Roberts.
- The monthly elders and deacons meeting is this evening. Please see one of these men if you have a need to discuss any item.
- Our monthly men's breakfast will be this coming Saturday. Please make your plans to attend.
- Our monthly question and answer night is next Sunday evening. If you would like to have a Bible question answered, please put that question into the box in Kevin's office.
- Cassville is hosting a gospel meeting this week. If you wish to attend one night, a car will be going on Tuesday evening. This meeting continues through May 6th.
- Don't forget our upcoming VBS on June 12th—God's Treasures. Let's invite everyone we know.
- Our friends and family day is soon too! Let's get those flyers out to invite everyone.
- The pantry item for this week is Hair Gel.



## Welcome!

To the Berryville church of Christ.

### Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:..... 9:30 AM  
 Sunday Morning Worship: ..... 10:30 AM  
 Sunday Evening Worship: ..... 6:00 PM  
 Ladies Bible Class: ..... 10:30 AM  
 Wed. Evening Bible Class: ..... 7:00 PM

### Serving Each Other

	May 2nd, 2004	May 9th, 2004
<b>Sunday Morning</b>		
Songs:	Ken Smith	Brent Stevens
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Glenn Williams	Clay Bozarth
Scripture Reading:	Ray Duncan	George Eddings
Lord's Table	Bruce Foster	Clay Bozarth
(assist)	Rusty Windle	Glenn Quigley
	Hugh Atchley	Perry Foster
	Jerry Roller	Jack Gentry
Closing Prayer	Bill Fort	Bruce Foster
<b>Sunday Evening</b>		
Songs:	Larry Elliott	Clay Bozarth
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Brent Stevens
Scripture Reading:	Brent Moore	Dale Pinkley
Lord's Table	Leon Duncan	Bruce Foster
	Brandon Foster	Cody Moore
Closing Prayer	Bruce Foster	Dan Hand
<b>Wednesday</b>		
Songs:	Glenn Quigley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Bob Moore	Dale Pinkley
Invitation:	Bill Fort	Leon Duncan
Closing Prayer:	Clay Bozarth	Cody Moore

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.  
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.