

# THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS DIFFERENT

Sermon by Donald Townsley

## INTRODUCTION

1. The church of Christ occupies a unique position in the religious world.
  - (1) The church of Christ is different from all other religious bodies in the world.
  - (2) God's people have always been different.
    1. He had a special family in Abraham -- Gen. 12: 1 - 3
    2. He had a special nation in Israel -- Psa. 135:4; Deut. 7:7- 8
    3. He has a holy nation in Christ -- I Pet. 2:9
  - (3) The religious world knows we are different, and we hear the charge "*You people are different*"; "*You isolate yourselves from the great body of Christians*".
2. What it means to be DIFFERENT:
  - (1) To be in the minority -- Matt. 7: 13 - 14.
  - (2) To be unpopular -- I Pet. 4:4.
  - (3) To be misunderstood and misrepresented.
  - (4) To be constantly on the defensive -- Jude 3; Phil. 1:17
  - (5) To be regarded as peculiar -- Acts 26: 24 - 25
3. In this lesson I want to show you how and why we are different.
4. The church of Christ does not fit under any of the modern-day labels man has concocted to put religion under, just as Christ did not fit under any of the labels of His day -- Matt. 16: 13 - 19

## I. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS DIFFERENT FROM PAGANISM

1. The church of Christ is different from Paganism by her faith in the one supreme God.
  - (1) We believe there is but ONE God, and He is the creator of all things -- I Cor. 8:4.
  - (2) The pagan believes in many gods -- I Cor. 8: 5 - 6.
2. Paganism was a problem in the first century:
  - (1) Paul addressed the Epicureans and Stoics on the subject of God -- Acts 17: 16 - 31.
  - (2) Paul at Ephesus stirred up the pagans -- Acts 19: 23 - 28.
3. The refusal of the first Christians to compromise with idolatry is one of the reasons for the bitter persecution against Christians -- Revelation reveals this.

## II. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS DIFFERENT FROM JUDAISM

1. The differences which keep the church of Christ from being Jewish are numerous:
  - (1) We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God -- Matt. 16:16.
    1. The Jews reject Him -- John 1: 10 - 11.
    2. The Jews, by rejecting Jesus, reject God -- Luke 10:16
  - (2) We believe the New Testament is the inspired Word of God -- I Cor. 2:13.
    1. The Jews do not.
  - (3) We believe we are no longer under the Law of Moses -- Col. 2:14.
    1. The Jews believe the Law is still in effect.
  - (4) We believe the Messiah has already come -- Matt. 1:21
    1. The Jews are still looking for Him.

2. Gospel preachers of the first century appealed to the Old Testament when they had a Jewish listener:
  - (1) Peter -- Acts 2: 25 - 31, 16
  - (2) Philip and the Eunuch -- Acts 8: 32 - 35.

### **III. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS DIFFERENT FROM ROMAN CATHOLICISM.**

1. The basic difference between the church of Christ and Catholicism is our faith in the sufficiency of Christ -- Col. 2:10.
2. Catholics believe the traditions of men are equal in authority with the Bible.
3. Two basic questions separate us -- both involve the sufficiency of Christ:
  - (1) Is Christ sufficient as the absolute head of His church? -- Eph. 1: 22 -23
  - (2) Are the Scriptures all-sufficient as a rule of faith and practice? -- 2 Tim. 3 :16 - 17

### **IV. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS DIFFERENT FROM PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONALISM**

1. We are different from denominationalism by our FAITH in the AUTHORITY of CHRIST -- Matt. 28:18
2. We do not believe in the creeds of men -- I Cor. 4:6
3. God has NOT approved modification and change in His church -- 2 John 9.
4. The basic question that separates us is authority.

### **V. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS DIFFERENT FROM THE IRRELIGIOUS**

1. We differ by our faith in the life of Christ -- I Pet. 2: 21 - 22
2. The irreligious ignore the example set by Christ.

### **CONCLUSION**

1. The church of Christ is different because it accepts the New Testament as a verbally inspired blueprint for the church throughout all ages -- Heb. 8: 4 - 6
2. Every warning and rebuke indicates God has a pattern -- 2 John 9; Rev. 22: 18 - 19; I Cor. 11:22
3. Yes, the church of Christ is DIFFERENT.
4. We have a duty to judge every item of worship and every practice by God's Pattern:
  - (1) The action of Baptism
  - (2) The purpose of Baptism
  - (3) What a child of God must do to be forgiven
  - (4) Instrumental music
  - (5) The independence of the local church
  - (6) The work of the church. . .
5. A PLEA: let us keep the church DIFFERENT:
  - (1) First, for our own salvation and the salvation of our children
  - (2) Our preaching must be distinctive -- Jude 3
  - (3) Our practices must be scriptural, not denominational.