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:
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.
   (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

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; 1 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.

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