

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS NOT A DENOMINATION

A denomination is a sect called by a distinctive name and is devoted to sectarian ideas in matters of religion. Denominations are religious organizations that are composed of more than a local congregation and less than all the saved, because no denomination claims to be all the saved.

This is not the picture you get as you read of Christ's church in the New Testament. As we read the New Testament we find that the word "church" is used in two senses: (1) in the universal sense -- including all the saved (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 5:23); and (2) in the local congregational sense -- applying to a group of Christians meeting and working together in a specific locality (Rom. 16:16; I Cor. 1:2). Denominationalism does not fit this picture of the New Testament church. The New Testament church was not a church of division (I Cor. 1:10; John 17: 20, 21) wearing distinctive names and maintaining sectarian ideas. Paul rebuked the Corinthians for such in I Corinthians 1: 10 - 17.

The church of Christ is the saved of the earth (Matt. 16:18) ; she is not denominational in name (Acts 4:12; Rom. 16:16); her creed is Christ and His Word (Matt. 28:18); her organization is not denominational -- the local church (Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23); her worship is uncorrupted (John 4:24); her identity is not lost in any movement. She is free from political and economical involvements; and she has no denominational requirements for membership. People are asked to do only what people were told to do in the New Testament days (Mark 16: 15 - 16).

Friend, we plead with you to leave denominationalism and "*come thou with us and we will do thee good*" (Numbers 10:29).

Donald Townsley

(Article taken from "The Voice of Underwood Heights", June 1975)