

## If Not There - Why Here?

The above title "*If not there - why here?*" may be a little mystifying. You are probably saying what does that mean? I am glad you asked. A few days ago I was having a conversation with some one about the church. She thought the "Church of God" and the Church of Christ was the same thing. I tried to; at least in the short time I had, to explain some of the differences between them. The Church of God is a Pentecostal group or as some prefer, "A full gospel church." Meaning that they believe in speaking in tongues, miracles, a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, just to mention a few of the differences. After having given the afore mentioned explanation, she replied, "Well when we get to heaven there won't be any Baptist, Church of God, Methodist, and Church of Christ, we will just be the same."

To some degree I concurred. There won't be any denominations in heaven. However the church of Christ or the Lord's church will be there. *"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power"* (1 Cor. 15:23). In fact if you are not in the Lord's church, that is, the one that wears his name, follows His doctrine, you won't be there. If there is no need for denominations in heaven, why then, are they needed here on earth? The concept of denominationalism is to divide. The concept of Christianity is to unite. Jesus said, *"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me"* (John 17:21) .

Some have made an attempt to justify the fragmentation of "believers" by saying that when the Scriptures are read, each person gets a different meaning. I agree. People do arrive at different conclusions to the scriptures, but does everyone have a true understanding of the Bible while being in disparity? If two people read the same passage and reach two different conclusions the possibility is that neither one understood the passage or one understood and the other didn't. We can be assured that if there are different judgments on the same verse, both cannot be correct. Many have asked, "Can we understand the Bible alike?" If the Bible is understood it will be understood alike. If people understand a mathematical problem all that understand will be in accord. All who understand how much two plus two is, will agree that it is four. If some one understands it to be five they have misunderstood.

Religious division is a direct result of misunderstanding the Bible. If we can recognize that we won't be divided in heaven, why do some feel the need to divide on earth?

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