

Continued from Page Three, "One And Only One"

ing that one standard?

Conclusion

Friends, if we spend our years immersed in the works and doctrines of men, we will have wasted our lives. There is one and only one thing that God has given which fills the hungry soul (**Matt. 5:6**), strengthens the weak (**Ps. 119:28**), convicts and exposes sin (**Eph. 5:11; II Tim. 4:2**), purifies the soul (**I Pet. 1:22**), and can lead us to Heaven. That is God's word, our standard for living! Are we follow-

Yes, at times, God allows men options and choices, but on many occasions, God has said there is one and only one option that is authorized to men. May we respect God's will and follow what He has said that we can see Heaven together one day. *Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com* ♦

Are You Like The Bereans?

By Jonathan L. Perz

You might be wondering, "Who are the Bereans?" Though the Bible says little of this people, what it does say speaks volumes!

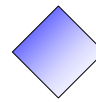
"Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men." (Acts 17:10-12)

- The Bible says they were "fair-minded!" Are you?
 - The Bible says they "received the word with all readiness!" Do you?
 - The Bible says they "searched the Scriptures daily!" Do you?
 - The Bible says they wanted "to find out if these things were so!" Do you?
- The Bible says "many of them believed?" Have you?

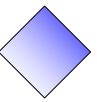
INDEED, THE LORD'S CHURCH NEEDS MORE OF THE BEREAN SPIRIT!

Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

About the Hillcrest church of Christ		
Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew		
How to Contact Us	Our Address	Schedule of Assembly
Telephone: (920)499-5677 E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com  	1621 Hillcrest Drive Green Bay, WI 54313 	Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm* <small>*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month</small>
www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com		



The Voice of Truth



October 10, 2010

The Bible Is Clear
By Jimmy Pettigrew

Recently, I have been having a discussion with a man (belonging to a denomination) concerning the church. He called me a brother, and I pointed out to him how he could become my brother in Christ. His reply, he asked this question in a sarcastic way, "Do you think our Creator cares about the particular denomination one belongs to? He goes on and says, "No... our Lord and Savior wants our hearts, that's what's important to Him." Then he says, "The church of Christ as the bible refers to it is talking about all followers of Christ regardless of denomination."

First, I want to say the use of mechanical instruments of music in the worship to God is sinful because it is not authorized (**Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16**). Denominationalism is sinful because it is not authorized by the Bible. Whatever in religion is not authorized by the Bible is sinful. This the Bible plainly teaches. People need to realize that whatever in religion that is not authorized by the Bible is sinful, and will be rooted up (**Matthew 15:13**). The essential head of every denomination is not Christ, but Satan. There would be no denominations if all men followed the Bible.

The Bible is clear that the church is not a part of the whole; the whole being false religion. We are not to go beyond the things written (**1 Corinthians 4:6**) and when we do, we do not have God (**2 John 9-11**). A denomination is a group of people who formulate their own creed not found in the Bible.

God cannot accept denominationalism because He condemns division (**1 Corinthians 1:10-17**). There is no authority in the Bible for the Lutheran "church," Methodist, or Baptist "church," etc. The man does not live who can prove that the Bible authorizes a man to be baptized into, say the Methodist "church." Such authorization is not in the Bible. The church for which Jesus died (**Acts 20:28**) is the one body of people who have been saved by His blood (**Ephesians 1:7; 2:13-17**). The church for which Christ died is neither a denomination nor a part of a de-

nomination.

Remember Jesus said, "If ye abide in my word, (then) are ye truly my disciples" (**John 8:31**). Then Christ goes on to say, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (**John 8:32**). Truth is from heaven, not from man (**John 1:17; 14:6; 16:13**). It must be known (**John 8:32**), believed (**2 Thessalonians 2:12**), loved (**2 Thessalonians 2:10**), and obeyed (**1 Peter 1:22; Galatians 5:7; Matthew 7:21-23; Hebrews 5:8-9**). It sounds to me that there is more than just the Savior wanting our hearts.

Notice please, that denominationalists claim to be faithful servants of Christ while they **(1)** reject Christ's one plan of salvation and to accept a plan of salvation which has been invented by mere human beings (for example, salvation by grace or faith only), **(2)** reject the one church which Jesus died and enter a denomination, which also was invented by mere human beings, **(3)** to reject the way of worship which has been authorized by the New Testament and to engage in worship which has not been authorized by the New Testament. People, denominationalism is sinful because it is not authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ (**2 John 9-11; Colossians 3:17**).

The Bible teaches that every person who is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ is added by the Lord Himself to the church for which He died (**Acts 2:38, 41, 47; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 12:13**). Those who have done what the Bible authorizes become members of the church of Christ; Christians, and nothing more. They do not become a hyphenated Christian (Lutheran-Christians, Methodist-Christians, and Baptist-Christians); they become just Christians!

Do you see what this person is saying? He is telling me that the body of Christ doesn't matter. The church is not important. If that be the case, then he is telling me the

Continued on Page Two

In This Issue...

Page 1 - The Bible Is Clear
Pages 2 to 4 - "One And Only One"

Page 4 - Are You Like The Bereans?

Continued from Page One, "The Bible Is Clear"

blood of Christ doesn't matter (**Acts 20:28**). How could anyone say the church is not important? Who would say that Christ wasted His blood on the cross? You do if you say the church doesn't matter, as long as you give your heart to the Lord. If the church doesn't matter, God's eternal plan doesn't matter (**Ephesians 3:8-11**). His ideas, his attitude is, "I'm okay, and you're okay." His belief is as long as your religious you're alright in the sight of God. Wrong! Tell that to Cain, Nadab and Abihu (**Genesis 4; Leviticus 10**). I want us to notice what this man is saying, notice: The Baptists teach baptism by immersion; the Methodist by sprinkling; Baptists practice a closed communion with the Lord's Supper; The Methodist an open communion; The Baptists teach one can't fall from grace, while the Methodist can fall. According to this man's teaching, he believes both views on these subjects are correct, because it doesn't matter as long as you give your heart to the Lord. He accepts the view that God is the author of both these views on these subjects. Well God is not a God of confusion (**1 Corinthians 14:33**). Our God is ever a God of order. God demands order! He is not the author of confusion. We are to speak the same thing. "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing and (that) there be

no divisions among you; but (that) ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (**1 Corinthians 1:10**). Here it is specified the need to speak the same thing, thus making it possible that there be no divisions. The speaking of the same things would be possible when all proposing to serve the Christ confined their speaking to "the oracles of God" (**1 Peter 4:11**), recognizing only the Word as authority (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**). This is impossible under this man's doctrine.

We plead with everyone to realize that he can be just a Christian, not some so-called "hyphenated-Christian" – a member of some denomination. There never has been a need for any denomination. There is no present need for anyone to be a member of a denomination. All one needs to do is obey the gospel of Christ, the seed, which is His word (**Luke 8:11; 1 Peter 1:20-25**), as a penitent believer being baptized unto the remission of your sins (**Acts 2:38; 22:16**), and you have the assurance of God, as set out in His word, that you will be a member of the church for which Jesus died (**Acts 20:28**), in which Christ is a Savior of (**Ephesians 5:23**), you will be just a Christian. Obedience to the Bible makes nothing but Christians. And there is no way to become a Christian except by believing and obeying the Bible. ♦

"One And Only One" By Jarrod Jacobs

The story is told of a man who had several apple trees. As the year progressed, he watched the apples grow. He could hardly wait for the apples to be ripe. In watching his apple trees, he also noticed several boys walking past those apple trees, waiting for the apples, themselves. Knowing that if he didn't watch, those boys would steal all his apples, he went out one day and said, "Boys, if you'd like, you can have an apple off of these trees, but you can have one, and only one."

As the days passed, he saw the boys looking and walking around the trees. They were going to choose which apple they would eat. They walked, and looked, and thought, waiting for the time when those apples would be ripe. Finally, the day came when the boys chose which apple they would eat. They did so, and enjoyed every bite. The man also got to enjoy his harvest of apples.

What can we learn from this story? We ought to learn that with God, as with the man who owned the apple trees, there are times when we have one, and only one option.

Marriage

Concerning the subject of marriage, God has told man that he can have one, and only one spouse with which to live for the rest of his life. He established this in the beginning (**Gen. 2:18-25**). Jesus said, "*Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder*" (**Matt. 19:4-6**). Notice please, Jesus spoke of one man and one woman living as husband and wife – one and only one. If people today respected God's will concerning being married to one and only one, perhaps they would not be so quick to jump into marriage in a frivolous manner. Perhaps if they respected **Matthew 19:4-6**, being careful as to who they would choose for their marriage partner, there would not be a divorce rate of 50% in this country! Yes, when it comes to marriage, one can choose one and only one as a spouse for life (**Matt.**

Continued on Page Three

Continued from Page Two, "One And Only One"

19:4-6).

Remember, those boys in our story waited until the right time to choose which apple they wanted. They did not take bites out of many apples, deciding that they were not ripe enough, not big enough, etc. They thought and considered the apples because they knew they could have one and only one. Perhaps a correct understanding and application of God's will would slow some people down and they would be more considerate of who they are marrying before they make a tragic mistake!

Divorce And Remarriage

In connection with the above point, I understand that Christ has given us an exception in **Matthew 5:32** and **19:9**. But, did you notice that He has given us one, and only one exception? Not just anything will sever the bond between husband and wife. Christ said fornication will do it, but that is the only exception to His rule of one man and one woman for life! And, when this tragedy occurs, there is one and only one person who has the right to remarry – the innocent spouse! The guilty has no right to marry another. In the case of divorce, there is one and only one authorized reason for which one can divorce and remarry (**Matt. 5:32**). Let us never forget this, and respect the will of God.

The Church

Paul used the illustration of one husband and one wife to describe the Lord and His church (**Eph. 5:23-33**). Jesus has not joined Himself to, nor did He establish two, three, or any plurality of churches. He established one and only one church, just as the illustration of one husband for one wife declares! A careful reading of **Ephesians 5** shows us that singular words such as "body," and "it," declare that there is but one church. Christ said He would build His "church" (**Matt. 16:18**). He was not building "churches," but one and only one "church."

The church is also described as the body of Christ (**Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18, 24**). Again, we read of one and only one body. This one body has one and only one head – Christ (Col. 1:18). The New Testament speaks only of the Lord's church, and any other church is man-made, is headed by men, and is foreign to what is revealed in the Scriptures. Let us stay away from these, and be a part of the one and only one body of Christ, His church!

Plan Of Salvation

When we discuss the Lord's plan of salvation, we find one and only one plan! To hear most people today, one might think that he/she could get to Heaven any way they wanted! Not so. There is a world of people who think that just being a good, moral person is enough to be saved. Some think that one can just pray to God, and the result will be salvation if they simply ask God for forgiveness. Still others look for their salvation inwardly, thinking that if they could achieve "inner peace," then this is all that is necessary. Besides these, it seems that there are untold numbers of inventions men have offered to bring about salvation. In light of all these things, some will say that it is your "choice" as to what you will do. Is this what the Bible has said?

In truth, none of these things we have mentioned will save men. There is but one way to be saved, and it is the way that has been taught since Christ resurrected. We find that those who follow the Lord's plan for salvation have: 1) Believed in Jesus as the Son of God. 2) Repented of their sins. 3) Confessed Christ as the Son of God. 4) Been baptized for the remission of sins (**Acts 2:36-38, 41; 8:5, 12, 35-39; 10:34-35, 48; 16:30-34; 22:16**). Yes, living a moral life and praying to God are important, but at no time in the Bible does God say a person is saved based on his/her morality. Nor does He tell us to pray for salvation. We find one and only one plan of salvation mentioned in the book of Acts. The question is will we or will we not submit to it?

Standard For Living

In all aspects of life, there is one and only one standard that we must follow, and that is God's word! Paul taught that we are to live in accordance with the authority of Christ (**Col. 3:17**). Of course, this is only possible when we know His word (**Jn. 12:48**). Peter said that if we are going to speak, we need to "*speak as the oracles of God*" (**I Pet. 4:11**). Therefore, such things as the Koran, the Book of Mormon, denominational creed books, Masonic writings, the sayings of Confucius, etc., are not the source of truth, nor are they our standard for living in this world. There is one and only one standard – the Bible! How do I know this? It is because God's word is the truth (**Jn. 17:17**), incorruptible seed (**I Pet. 1:23**), and light (**Ps. 119:1-5**). Nothing else deserves such descriptions. Do we appreciate the fact that one and only one thing has the power to save men (**Rom. 1:16**)?

Continued on Page Four