

Who Does NOT Compose God's Universal Church?

Text : **I Corinthians 12: 12-27**

A. In recent lessons we've looked at some basic fundamentals of God's church. S#1. S#2.

1. We've observed that we must never lose our thirst for God's word.
 - a. **Heb 12:14** .. sanctification without which no one will see the Lord is ongoing process
 - b. **Eph 4: 11-16 / Rom 8: 29** .. Christians strive to be like Jesus as he is revealed.
 - c. **I Pet. 2: 2** – like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,
2. We then observed that Jesus rules His church via His word and elders supervise it.
 - a. The church is not a democracy, but like God's kingdom of old, it's a theocracy.
 - b. **Col. 1: 18** – He (Jesus) is also the head of the body, the church ...
 - c. The Apostle told the elders at the church in Ephesus :
Acts 20.28 – Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

** There are other functions in the church (deacons, teachers) but they are not leaders.*

3. Small changes in God's plan caused large digressions from God's pattern. S#3.
 - a. Naming one elder as the overseer evolved into an unbiblical power structure.
 - b. Honest attempts to reform the corrupted system lead to even further division.
 - c. Attempted restorations fostered over reactions which further fragmented Christianity into the isolated divisions we see around us today.
4. Our last lesson defined God's universal church.
 - a. Many desire to be in God's universal church and think they are, but are not.
 - b. Only those who have established an obedient relationship with God are His. S#4.
Matt. 7: 21 – Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.

S#5.

B. We have seen that God chooses and individually calls all who are in His church.

1. God calls people through the proclamation of a message about Jesus.
2. God knew that most people would reject that message and some think it foolish.
3. But some would receive it in faith, obey it and be saved by it.
4. Their faith would cause them to confess Jesus as Lord and change their lives.
5. They would so want to be in a relationship with Christ that they would solemnize it.
6. Upon being solemnized in baptism, they are added to His body which is His church.

Our lesson today will identify those who are **NOT** included in God's universal church. ... Remember ... Matt. 7: 21-23

S#6.

I. All those who have NOT been called by the gospel are excluded.

S#7.

A. Those who do not have faith cannot be saved, added to Christ's church.

S#8.

1. Everyone needs forgiveness or they will be lost eternally.

a. Rom. 3: 23 – for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

S#9.

b. Rom. 6: 23 – For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. Only those who have faith in Jesus can have their sins forgiven.

S#10.

a. John 8: 24 – Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.

b. Gal. 3: 22 – But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

B. Those whose faith does not motivate them to reject sin cannot be added.

S#11.

1. Gal. 5: 24 – Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (Col. 3: 1-3 ... set you mind ...)

S#12.

2. Act 3: 19 – Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;

C. Those who do not confess their faith in Christ cannot be a part of His body.

S#13.

1. Luke 12: 8-9 And I say to you, everyone who confesses Me before men, the Son of Man will confess him also before the angels of God; ⁹ but he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

S#14.

2. Rom. 10: 9-10 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; ¹⁰ for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

#15.

D. Those who are not baptized are not IN Christ ... thus, they are lost.

S#16.

1. Salvation is only in Christ.

II Tim. 2: 10 – For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

S#17.

2. Baptism is the ceremony which places one INTO Christ. (*formally establish*)

S#18.

Gal. 3: 26-27 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

E. Who is NOT part of God's universal church ?

S#19.

1. Those who are not called
2. Those who have not received the call in faith
3. Those whose faith has not changed their value system
4. Those who have not solemnized their relationship in baptism

*** Remember, the universal church contains ALL saved people.**

S#20.

Acts 2: 47—the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved

F. THEREFORE, those of other religions are not part of the universal church. #21.

1. Muslims do not accept Jesus as the Christ the Son of God.
2. Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist do not even believe in the one God of Heaven.
3. Various animistic religions around the world (*fear spirits in rocks, trees, etc.*)
4. Every single atheists is excluded from the eternal, universal kingdom of God.

G. The scriptures describe people who are outside of Christ in grim terms.

S#22.

1. **Eph. 2: 12** – remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

S#23.

2. It is a terrible thing to die and meet God outside of Christ ... unsaved.

I Thes. 4: 13 – But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.

S#24.

II. Many churches have been built by men rather than Jesus.

S#25.

S#26.

A. Constantine started a church in 310 a.d. and called it the “Universal” church.

1. He organized the church after the pattern of the Roman government.
2. He appointed the bishop of Rome as its head with 4 others ranked just below him.
3. In 606 a.d. the bishop of Rome formally declared that his authority was worldwide.

B. In 1054 a.d. the bishop of Constantinople established the “Eastern orthodox.”

1. Cultural, political and personal differences all figured heavily in the division.
2. There were doctrinal differences that were exaggerated by animosity between popes.
 - a. The Orthodox held a different view of humanity of Christ.
 - b. The Orthodox rejected **the** use of instrumental music and using unleavened bread.

C. Martin Luther started a church in 1517 and fostered a movement.

S#27.

1. He was a priest and a teacher of catholic theology and learned he was wrong.
2. He challenged the authority of the catholic church and called for “**sola scriptura.**”
3. Luther did not want to start a different church, just to reform the catholic.

D. King Henry VIII established the Church of England in 1534 a.d.

1. He declared the King of England to be the head of the church in England.
2. He wanted a divorce and the pope in Rome would not grant it.
3. His successor, Mary Tudor (*bloody Mary*) tried to return to catholic, but ...

E. John Calvin and Huldrych Zwingli fostered the “Reformed Church.”

1. They accepted the teachings of Luther and carried them further.
2. Calvin developed the **T.U.L.I.P.** which remains a convenient error today.
(**T**otal Depravity, **U**nconditional Election, **L**imited Atonement,
Irresistible Grace, **P**erseverance of the Saints (*Once Saved Always Saved*)

F. Many churches grew out of the “reform” movement for example :

1. The Anabaptist – “re-baptize” (*Amish .. Jacob Amman, Mennonites .. Menno Simons*)
 - a. Rejected infant baptism.
 - b. 529 law against adult ... Many Anabaptists were put in sacks and thrown in river.
 - c. Amish and Mennonites saved from extinction by William Penn.
2. The Baptist was started by John Smyth in 1609. (Anglican / Anabaptist)
3. The Church of Scotland which later became the Presbyterian. John Knox (+ *Holland*)
4. The Puritans (separatist) also came out of this movement. (*reform Anglican - bible*)

G. Political strife and religious intolerance gave rise to some churches.

1. Charles & John Wesley started the Methodist church because of English intolerance
2. Many went to America and started churches because of religious persecution.
 - a. Puritans & Presbyterians
 - b. Amish & Mennonite
 - c. Episcopal & Congregationalist (Church of England)

H. Many of those who brought religion to America were active in politics.

G. They came for freedom so All of them wanted to keep politics out of religion.

S#28.

III. We have grown up in this world of many religions all claiming Christianity.

S#29.

A. All of the religions claim to be part of the one universal church that Jesus built.

1. We all believe in the same God.
2. Doctrine isn't really important as long as we all believe in Jesus.
3. We're all going to the same place; we're just taking different routes.

S#30.

B. The common term for this religious division is "denominationalism."

1. Defined in an article on Wikipedia :

Denominationalism :

S#31.

the belief that some or all Christian groups are legitimate churches of the same religion regardless of their distinguishing labels, beliefs, and practices

2. The belief that though all Christian religions are different they are all the same.

a. Steelers, Packer and Rams are all different, but they are all football teams. S#32.

b. A \$20 bill, a \$5 bill and a \$1 bill are all different, but they are all money. S#33.

C. This is an erroneous concept when applied to God's church.

S#34.

(*Not speaking ill of those in other religious bodies .. honest, love God, untaught*)

1. God built only one church.

a. **Matt. 16: 18** ... Upon this confession of faith "I will build My church." S#35.

b. **Eph. 4: 4** – There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism ...

2. God requires that unity must be maintained in His body which is that one church.

a. **Eph. 4: 1-3** – Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,
2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. S#36.

b. **Rom. 16: 17-18** I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. **18** For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. S#37.

S#38.

D. We want to be accepting, but doctrine matters; we can't just "agree to disagree."

1. The elders have been charged with the responsibility of keeping the doctrine pure.

Titus 1: 9 – holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. S#39.

2. All Christians must remain faithful to the teachings of God's word. **S#40.**

II John 9-11 Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; 11 for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.

3. We must make sure that every generation is taught to teach the correct doctrine.

II Tim. 2: 2 – The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. **S#41.**

CONCLUSION :

S#42.

A. We are living in an era when there are many churches that teach wrong things.

1. Some change their doctrine to adapt to the changing culture. (*popular appeal*)
 - a. There are churches that perform marriages for perverts. **I Cor. 6: 9**
 - b. There are churches that use women leaders. **I Cor. 14: 34-35, I Tim. 2: 11-12**
2. We have seen how one is added to the church, but many churches don't follow the ...
 - a. They pick a passage and ignore the rest leaving people just outside the gate.
 - b. For example, "*All you have to do is believe in your heart and you will be saved.*"
 - c. Also, "*Once you have believed, you can never be lost no matter what.*"

B. God's body is not divided.

1. **I Cor. 1: 12-13** Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ." 13 Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?
2. People are added to the Lord's body as individuals.
I Cor. 12: 27 – Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

C. Denominationalism is a work of Satan.

1. Satan is trying to make finding salvation like playing a shell game.
2. **Matt. 7: 21-23** ... is his favorite passage.

D. One must place his faith in the truth .. **John 8: 32** .. the truth will make you free

II Thes. 2:7 – and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. **S#43.**

INVITATION : You and I must sound God's call. Are you confessing Jesus ? **S#44.**

Lesson Text :**I Corinthians 12:12-27**

12 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. **13** For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many. **15** If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. **16** And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. **17** If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? **18** But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. **19** If they were all one member, where would the body be? **20** But now there are many members, but one body. **21** And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." **22** On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; **23** and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, **24** whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, **25** so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. **26** And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.