

What is a Denomination?

I Corinthians 4:6-7,

“And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another...”

Listen what the Prophet of God said about it:

Now, we have **nothing against other people who are denomination. We have nothing against them,** but I want to explain **why that we never went in with any denomination.**

Now, we are an organization. **We are an organization, recorded here in the courts as an organization,** a group of people that's organized together to worship Christ, **but we're not in a denomination. No one is going to dominate over us.** You see? It's not a denomination. **It's just an organization of fellowship amongst Christian believers.** People come here to the church, and this becomes their home church, if they wish to come as long as they live. [1]

Now, and I've been said that I was a fighter of organizations. Now, I am not. I think that organizations are wonderful, **but when your system of your organization gets corrupt, that's what I'm against.** See? And no matter whether it's Oneness, or it's the trinity, or whatever it is, **the system that when you get to a spot, now to say, "We are the Assemblies of God!"** [2]

Go back, find out where it begin at. Let us go back to the beginning of the picture. **Then if there is no denomination in the Bible,** then denomination had to have a beginning. **It started with the Catholic church.** The Protestants just offsprang from it. [3]

Many people has misunderstood me when I talk of denominational barriers. **It isn't that the denomination is wrong. But to build a fence around it, nobody else can fellowship; that's where the wrong part is... The thing, when we come to think, "We are the only group,"** God goes right over here and blesses somebody else, and shows that we're not the only group. So, God works that way.

[4]

There's only one Church, and that is not a denomination. You can't denominate God's Church. There's one Church and one Body. That Body is the mystical Body of Jesus Christ here on earth, and by one Spirit we're all baptized into that one Body (*I Cor. 12:12-27*).

No matter what a man's denomination is, if he is depending on his church for salvation, he's lost. If a Catholic's depending on the Catholic church to save him, he's lost. If a Baptist is depending on the Baptist church saving him, he's lost. If a Pentecostal is depending on the Pentecostal church saving him, he's lost; **but**

if those individuals are relying on God and on Jesus Christ, "By faith are you saved, and that not of works but of grace." (Eph. 2:8-9). [5]

And so there'll be a unionize amongst the churches, and they'll unite themselves together, **form up the head of the confederation of churches**, which they've already got a big U.N. building **and every denomination is in it. And you'll either have to belong to some of those denominations or be ousted. And that's the time where we have to show our colors** and be sure that we know, not a guess work, but know **THUS SAITH THE LORD** where you're standing. **The little church has always been in the minority; it's a little bitty group that a little thread, like a red string that wipes through the Bible**, but it's the church always. And we want to remember it (*Luke 12:32; Matt. 7:13-14*). [6]

God never did completely bless Abraham until he fully obeyed Him and separated himself (from Lot). And God will never bless an individual or a church, or a congregation, or a denomination, **until it fully surrenders itself in obedience to God.**

The denomination is all right if you'd write it like this: "We believe in this, comma." But when you write up an organization, "We believe this, period. You come to this or you don't come at all."

If you read it, **"I believe this, comma, plus what God will show me," then it's all right.** That's right. "We believe this, plus whatever we can find out of God that's better." See, but you end it, "We believe this."

What happened to Luther as soon as Luther saw **the Pillar of Fire?** Why, he followed It. But what did he do? After Luther's day, **they organized a church called Lutheran. Then it died right there on the organization**, 'cause it's just like the Catholic church.

Then, the first thing you know, along come Wesley. **The Pillar of Fire moved right out of the organization and went on.** Wesley saw it, and away he went after it. And as soon as the first round died out, **they organized it, called it the Wesleyan Methodist, or the Methodist church.** When they organized it, it died right there.

Then the Pentecostal seen it, going out, not from justification, under Luther, and sanctification under Wesley, but they saw the baptism of the Holy Ghost, back to the original blessing. Here they went after it (Oh, my.), went out and begin to speak with tongues and the power of God working through them. But what did they do? **Organized it. It died right there. But now the Pillar of Fire is moving out. It's moving again.** [7]

Now, I pray, God, as I see the day **that the denomination is pressing the believers, excommunicating them**, saying that their name must be upon their book, or they're lost, **have nothing to do with the other group.** It's only the tender hand of Jehovah, leading them to the Tree of Life.

I pray, God, that each one... I know they will, because it's Your Word, and It can't fail. **And may we be led to the Tree of Life, that we might be a possessor of Eternal Life, see the hand of God, and by the eyes of faith, look beyond**

these shadows that we're walking in today, see the promised land laying **just ahead**. [8]

Look here. You take a big fine grain of corn that's hybrid; and you take that hybrid corn. It's a pretty corn. But you plant it. What do you get? A little stalk comes up like this and turns yellow and wilts down. **That's the way every denomination is when it's hybrid with man's words mixed with God's Word.** It'll come up to the signs and wonders and what Jesus said about believing the Word, and it turns yellow and say, "We can't accept it," and go back.

Listen close now. I want you not to fail to get this. No other church, no other sign, no other fellowship, no other government, no other testimony, no other creed, **no denomination is accepted outside of this. God accepts nothing else but that. "Christ in you, the hope of glory"** (*Col. 1:27*), the only thing that God recognizes. No fellowship, no church, no creed, no denomination, no nothing; **everything else is dead.** Its fragments that has to be cut off, pruned off away from the thing **that Christ might live with preeminences in you** (*Col. 1:18*). [9]

But as long as Christ is there, and the Holy Ghost is blessing all the people, we don't care: color, creed, or whatever it is, we're all in one great big pool of Blood, God's blessings, **just fellowshiping under the Blood of Jesus Christ**, and we don't notice it. But when we begin to try to think, **"You know, my denomination is a little better than theirs, a little bigger than theirs. We have more members," that's when trouble sets in.**

So they begin to get that, and troubles arose **when they forgot about Him** being there so much talking about Him, and not recognizing Him being with them (*Luke 24:13-35*). I wished I had some way to nail that down.

Look. The disciples were talking about Him, but had forgot that He was laying in the very ship they were in (*Matt. 8:23-27*). And today, that's what's happened to the churches. **We talk about Him. We have so much intellectual, till men are so trained to the Scripture till they can bring a message that you can't lay a finger on it.** But where is God? That's what I want to know. **Where is that manifestation? See? Intellectual sermons...** [10]

We so hear so much about **this new system** going to bring the **religious system**, you know, **going to bring peace upon the earth, when the Catholic and all the Protestants unite together.** Some of them believe in Divine healing, some don't believe, and some believe this, and some believe that. And you have to forfeit your big fuss you been fussing about all the time, your evangelical belief, **to get into the World Council. And every denomination will have to come in there. So if denomination is cursed, and to belong into it,** what does it do? It throws you right back. **If Rome is the mother of denominations** (*Rev. 17:1-6*), and **she is the beast and the mark of the beast** (*Rev. 13:16-18*), then they made **an image unto it, council, the churches all together make an image to the beast** (*Rev. 13:11-15*), so right straight back to the mark of the beast again. **The system of the world, denominationalism, has brought up a system to bring the mark of the beast.** [11]

So we can see by the Old Testament types where He chose to put His Name and to--where now. Now, as the shadow is a crosses the floor, I said, is the negative, being a type, **so we, the worshippers also can see the shadows of the Old Testament fading into the positive of the New (Heb. 10:1).**

Now, all the feasts, the holidays, all the tabernacle, all the wood, everything in the tabernacle, **everything typed Christ. All the offerings, all the laws, everything was in type of Christ.** We've been through it time after time here at the Tabernacle. Then we see by these **that every creed, church, and denomination is left far behind. It's not even in the race at all.** Every creed, every church, **every denomination is completely left out.** There's no place for them at all. [12]

Now, I believe that Jesus Christ keeps every Word. **All Scripture is inspired.** I don't believe we have one right, and will be condemned for it, if we add one word to It or take one Word from It. *Revelations 22:18-19* says so. I believe He's the same yesterday, today, and forever.

I certainly honor the Lutheran for their stand in their day, the Methodists for sanctification in their day, and the Pentecostal for their stand in their day; **but we're living in another day. We're living when there's been stalk, tassel, shuck, almost like the wheat, but the wheat's inside the shuck.** The shuck has just supported the wheat, kept the hot sun from burning it. **And now the denomination is pulling away from it, so It can lay in the Presence of the Son to get ripe.** There won't be no more organizations rise up. **This is the end of it.** We've had, always about three years, when a message starts, they organize it.

This has been going on for nearly twenty years and no organization. It can't. **We're in a wheat time, a harvest time.** I can hear the great combine coming. **We're going home one day.** Right. "He's the same yesterday, today, and forever." (*Heb. 13:8*). [13]

See now **who is the leader of this modern, religious, evil age? It's the devil taking that tree of good and evil and placing it out there (Gen. 3:1-7; 2:15-17), bringing his beautiful church bride to the ecumenical council for a wedding,** his beautiful scientific church with all the degrees that can be gotten, the Ph.D's., out of the Church of Christ, the Ph.D's., out of the Baptist, Presbyterian, Pentecostals, and all, bringing them all with their decorated fineries and big churches, **all to the ecumenical council, "We are one." It'll never be forgiven them. To wear the brand of a denomination is the mark of the beast.** We've done been through it on here to do it. **Flee it, children, flee it.** See? **Great beautiful church to the ecumenical wedding, wearing his mark!** Shorts (Sure.), **worldly dress, sexy, paint, really good disciples of the devil** to catch the sons of God--marry a good full-born boy off into some old reprobate like that. That's right. [14]

There's always twins. And that's the reason... **Don't forget this, little flock. The church in the last days is going to be twins, so close that'd deceive the elected: Matthew 24:24.** See? **It's a Pentecostal move. It's so much like the real thing, till it would deceive the very elected if it was possible.** And a little later

on, if I get the chance, I want to explain what, **how that election comes**. See, **it's going to deceive them, because it's almost like the same thing**. See, **just two fathers**, that's all; **same mother, same church, same movement**, same thing. The bedding ground is the same, where the Word falls; but one of them, like here, is perverted. You understand? See, one of them is a perversion, because it's the wrong father. Which, I will prove someday, if God will let me, **that denomination is the mark of the beast**. See, **it's a wrong father. He's steering people to an organization instead of to the Word**. See? **It's the wrong father. It's a Cain move**.

When I go home this time, I'm preaching on the subject, **"The Trail of the Serpent": the beast at the beginning, and the beast at the end, and trail him right through the Bible**, and show how he heads up. See? And now, just watch how cunning that fellow is, how he's just exactly... Well, they're just like **Judas and Jesus** there, both brothers in the tribe, just like **Esau and Jacob**. And like the crow and the dove setting on the same roost. And everything is a twin in this great warfare that we're in. [15]

Wait till you hear "The Trail of the Serpent." All right. Now, think now **that their denomination is the only one that registers with God**: "God won't hear you 'less you're a Methodist, or a Baptist, or a Trinity, or a Oneness," or something like that. **That's wrong**.

But remember in all that, if there's something in a man's heart or a woman's heart that they believe that that is right, **then there's got to be somewhere that is right**. As I've often said, "When the deep calleth to the deep, there's got to be a deep to respond to that call." (*Psalm 42:7*).

God is not an author of denomination, because denomination is Babylon, and He's not the author of confusion. You don't have to be even intellectual to see that. It's Babylon. [16]

Jesus said that when He went away He would send His Spirit (*John 14:15-18*). Which the world could not receive. That is right. **The world, or world systems could not receive Him. That is what organization is--it is world system**. Show me a world system church that is full of the Holy Ghost. I want to see it. If you can show me such a church you are finding a mistake in the Word. No sir. Not one of these messengers was organized. Either they were **put out or got out** because they were convicted of the sin of organization. **How can the Holy Spirit possibly be in organization when it is organization that takes the place of the Spirit and denominations take the place of the Word?** Remember, **"Organization" is "death"**. It just can't be any other way. **If the world takes over, the Spirit departs**. [17]

Now, now, **you cannot mix denomination creed with the Word**, because they're too contrary, one to the other. **That's exactly what Satan tried to do with his intellectual conceptions to Eve**. He admitted that God said it, but he said, "Surely you'll not die." (*Gen. 3:1-7*). See, and they believed that, and that's what

creed has done tonight. **Denomination has separated the people from the Word of God.** Didn't Jesus say when He come, "You, through your traditions, have made the commandments of God of no effect to the people"? (*Mark 7:6-9*). And through our creeds, we have disassociated the fellowship of the Holy Spirit to anoint the Word of God that's laced out for this generation. **We have separated the people so by denomination that they cannot have a chance to see it.** [18]

Remember, **Israel walked, day and night, by the Pillar of Fire.** When that Pillar of Fire moved, they moved with It. And remember, It was a Fire at night, and a Cloud at day. So It might come, day or night, any time. But, wherever It was, there was a propitiation made, that they would not fail to see It. It was a Light at night, and a Cloud in the day time, and they followed It. Yes, sir. The same thing! (*Exod. 13:21-22; 14:24*).

Martin Luther saw It. What did he do? He come out of Catholicism. But what did they do? They built a little fence around, said, "We're Lutherans. This is it."

The Wesley saw It moving away from there. He went. What'd they do? Built a little fence around it, said, "This is it." What'd the Light do? Moved right on, again.

Pentecost saw It. What'd they do? Moved out of the Wesleyan and Nazarenes, and so forth. What do they do? They build little fence around it, called, "We are oneness," and "We're trinity," and "We're the United," and all this. What did He do? God moved right on out of it.

See, we cannot do that. We've got to follow every day, every hour of the day, every step of the way. **We've got to be led by the Lord Jesus Christ. If we don't, we take an organizational life. And a life that doesn't follow Christ daily is not worthy.** [19]

Reference:

- [1] "Why Are We Not A Denomination" (58-0927), par. 15-16
- [2] "Godhead Explained" (61-0425B), pg. 13
- [3] "Baptism Of The Holy Spirit" (58-0928M), par. 105
- [4] "Hear Ye Him" (59-0424E), par. E-4
- [5] "It Wasn't So From The Beginning" (60-1127M), par. E-26
- [6] "Patmos Vision" (60-1204E), par. 57
- [7] "Jehovah Jireh" (61-0209), par. E-47-48
- [8] "Third Exodus" (63-0630M), pg. 7
- [9] "Christ Is The Mystery Of God Revealed" (63-0728), pg. 41, 69
- [10] "Go Wake Jesus" (63-1103), par. E-41
- [11] "The World Is Again Falling Apart" (63-1127), par. 157
- [12] "God's Chosen Place Of Worship" (65-0220), par. 37-38
- [13] "Does God Change His Mind" (65-0427), par. 212-214
- [14] "God Of This Evil Age" (65-0801M), par. 145
- [15] "Power Of Transformation" (65-1031M), par. 135-136
- [16] "God's Only Provided Place Of Worship" (65-1128M), par. 66-67, 92
- [17] "Sardisean Church Age", CAB pg. 251
- [18] "Invisible Union Of The Bride" (65-1125), pg. 11
- [19] "Is Your Life Worthy Of The Gospel" (63-0630E), par. 72-76

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[Bro. Branham in „Conduct-Order-Doctrine“, page 724]