

The First Century Church

I received a call recently from someone who took issue with a statement made in this article. Since the person did not leave a name or way to be contacted, I wanted to answer the objection here. The source of disagreement was a statement made to the effect that the church of Christ is one among many denominations whose origin can be traced in an encyclopedia to its man-made founders.

Jesus said, "*Upon this rock I will build my church*" (Matthew 16:18). When Jesus built His church, He only built one. Paul refers to the church as the "*body*" (Ephesians 1:22-23). Paul declared that there is only "*one body*" (Ephesians 4:4). Therefore, there is only one church.

Modern denominationalism claims that the different denominations are merely parts of the whole "Christian church." The theory goes that when these parts are added together, then you have the "church" that Jesus built. But the Bible never allows for this interpretation.

There were men, who in the 1800s, left their denominations and imitated the Bible pattern for the Lord's church (Hebrew 8:5). They rejected salvation by faith only, instrumental music in worship, unlawful organizations, man-made names such as "Baptist," "Pentecostal," "Methodist," and more. If I have the same desire to follow book, chapter, and verse for everything I do (Colossians 3:17), I am still following the Bible, not men.

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