

BEYOND “NON-DENOMINATIONAL”

I. OTHERS MEAN “INTER-DENOMINATIONAL” OR “MULTI-DENOMINATIONAL”

The phrase “non-denominational” no longer carries the impact it might have in the past. It’s most common usage at present is to denote that no specific denomination is named and that all denominations are welcome. Hence, most of what is called “non-denominational” is truly inter-denominational or multi-denominational.

A. **1st Corinthians 3:4**

When Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Catholics all participate in the same event, but retain their Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian, and Catholic identities, that is still denominational. It is carnal.

B. **1st Corinthians 1:10; Philippians 3:16**

It is the Lord’s plea that division not exist within the brotherhood, rather that unity of word and thought prevail. Sameness of mind comes through sameness of rule and that is antithetical to the very existence of denominations.

C. **Judges 21:25**

Everyone doing what is right in their own eyes, as in the days of the judges, is a sure way to dishonor God, and that is absolutely the purpose of denominations – for believers to find the brand they like best so they can do what they want while still being religious.

D. **2nd Kings 23:3-14**

When Josiah led his kingdom to take a stand for Jehovah’s covenant, he eliminated Baal, Asherah, Molech, Ashtoreth, Chemosh, Milcom, and all other forms of worship save that which God had prescribed. Taking a stand for the Lord today must involve the elimination of the denominations in much the same way.

II. WE MEAN “PRE-DENOMINATIONAL”

We don't want to be vaguely non-specific about particular denominations. We want to be the church that existed before there ever were denominations. It is possible.

A. Matthew 16:18

Jesus promised He would build His church. We can just belong to that one, not any born from the minds of men.

B. Acts 20:28

The currency Christ used to purchase the church was His own blood, so it must be important.

1. Ephesians 1:7

It's the same cost paid for the sinner's forgiveness, so the existence of the church is tied to salvation.

2. Ephesians 5:23

That fact is explicitly stated here: Jesus is Savior of the body, which refers to the church. If He is Savior of the body, He is not the Savior of any without the body.

3. 1st Corinthians 12:13

The means of entrance to the body is baptism. In view of what baptism does in remitting sin ([Acts 2:38](#)), washing away sin ([Acts 22:16](#)), saving ([Mark 16:16](#)), putting on Christ ([Galatians 3:27](#)), and putting off the old man ([Romans 6:3-6](#)), it is plain to see that being saved and being in the church are the same thing.

By being pre-denominational, we just want to be in the church Christ puts us in when He saves our souls from sin, like He always has.

C. Ephesians 3:10-11, 21

The church's purpose in broadcasting God's manifold wisdom and glorifying God was planned eternally. Denominations are not a part of that plan.

D. 1st Timothy 3:15; Micah 4:1-3

The church is God's house and the establishment of that house had been prophesied since ages past. Let's make sure we are in that house and none other.

III. WE MEAN "ANTI-DENOMINATIONAL"

We really are quite simply opposed to denominations. They should not exist.

A. Romans 16:16

Yes, there are multiple churches, plural, in Scripture, and we need to comprehend the sense in which that is communicated.

1. Revelation 1:4

They were churches of certain geographic locales.

2. Revelation 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14

The churches of Asia were the churches located in the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea – congregations in specific cities, not entire denominational hierarchies.

3. Acts 14:23

Each congregation should have local governance.

4. 1st Corinthians 11:17-20; 14:23

Each congregation should assemble together to carry out specific acts of worship. The worldwide church could not accomplish this, but the local churches can.

5. 1st Corinthians 4:17

Doctrine should be consistent across these congregations.

B. Ephesians 1:22-23

The church is the body of Christ. How many bodies does He need or want?

C. Colossians 1:18; 2:19

When it comes to heads and bodies, there must always be a 1:1 ratio!
Anything more or anything less is a dangerous mutation or mutilation that cannot survive permanently.

D. Ephesians 4:4-6; 1st Corinthians 8:5-6

There ought to be as many bodies as there are Lords and Gods, which is to say only One of each. While there are multitudes of so-called lords and gods, only One is legitimate. Likewise, there may be other bodies, but they are false, too.

E. Psalm 127:1; Matthew 15:13

Why be part of a house Jehovah did not build? Why be part of a plant He will uproot?