

WHICH GROUP?

WAS YOUR DENOMINATIONAL CONVERSION O.K. WITH GOD?



SUMMARY: With our eternal fate at stake, it is not reasonable to follow a denominational teaching further from the New Testament pattern than the first century churches which were condemned for not following the pattern.

PRESUMPTION: You have followed a denominational plan of salvation which was not in complete submission to the New Testament pattern, but was sincerely considered to be an acceptable alternative.

DEFINITION OF "DENOMINATIONAL" WITHIN THIS CONTEXT: There are specific instructions and examples given in the New Testament regarding conversion (See lesson 3.1). As men see the Word and elect to follow portions of the Word and do other things which they perceive to be acceptable to God, the various combinations become "denominations" of Christianity.

SINCERITY:

Your sincerity nor that of anyone who taught you is not being questioned. Rather using sincerity or the "quality" of your conversion being a judge of whether it will be acceptable to God is being questioned. The following examples are of people who were sincere, but not acceptable to God:

1. Cornelius who was judged to be a devout man who feared God, but still needed to be converted (Acts 10:1-48)
2. Saul who was extremely zealous in persecuting Christians before his own conversion and becoming the Apostle Paul. (Acts 22:3-21) The Apostle Paul did not consider a clear conscience to be proof of righteousness even for himself. (I. Cor. 4:4)

The sincerity of these men did not justify them when they were contrary to God's will. Will you be in any better condition?

NEW TESTAMENTS EXAMPLES WHERE ALTERNATE TEACHINGS ARE CONDEMNED:

1. Starting denominational sects within the church was condemned as soon as A.D.50-54 in the church at Corinth (I Cor. 1:10-13)
2. Teaching for doctrine the precepts of men was condemned (Matt. 15:9)
3. Bringing God's own old law into the new church was condemned to the point of saying that the people doing it were falling from grace (See lesson 10.1, Gal.5:4)

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLES WHERE ALTERNATE TEACHINGS APPROVED:

I can find none. Every case I know of where people did what they perceived to be O.K. rather than God's instructions was rebuffed.

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WOULD RE-CONVERSION FOLLOW A NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN?

Acts 19:1-7 tells of first century Christians who learned that they were not baptized properly and were immediately re-baptized. Their problem was not that of following something which a church council decided to approve. They were following the official old "John's Baptism". (John baptized Jesus) If they needed to be re-baptized, and you were baptized by sprinkling into a denomination which doesn't follow the New Testament pattern, would you not be under the same obligation?

With your eternal fate at stake, are you comfortable following a church pattern further from the scriptures than those which were displeasing during the first century? Become a simple New Testament Christian today!