

DO YOU AGREE WITH JESUS?

QUESTION: Do all churches exist with God's approval?

The world around us has almost any "flavor" of religion that one might desire. If you were to consult the yellow pages, you would find numerous religious bodies that claim allegiance to the Savior. There are some 2500+ denominations that are in existence today. This veritable cornucopia of churches teaches all sorts of conflicting doctrines. In spite of the teaching of opposing doctrines, denominations "agree to disagree," and all feel as though they exist with the approval of God. Does the prevalence of religious division mean that we should just come to accept it? Does every church enjoy the divine favor of God?

Jesus stated to his disciples, "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). Notice that Jesus did not say he would build his "churches." He spoke of building only one church. No doubt as our Lord looks down from heaven and surveys the religious landscape, he must be disappointed at the division that exists among those who profess to follow his word. We know how our Lord views division, for he prayed, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:20-21). In the shadow of the cross, our Lord felt it necessary to pray for the unity of believers! The world will never come to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God so long as division prevails in Christianity. Christ built only one church that enjoys God's approval; all others will be condemned: "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matthew 15:13). While the passage above speaks of individuals who refuse to do God's will, it certainly could be applied to any religious system or group which shuns the will of God.

Let us lay aside all of the doctrines and commandments of men (Matthew 15:9), and stand solely upon the word of God! Let us endeavor to be a member of Christ's church, and no other! Then, and only then, can we be united as our Lord desires.

Do you have a question that you would like for us to consider together, or a comment regarding what has been written? If so, please email us at sixthavenue@bellsouth.net, or write to us at the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama, 35501.