

April 1994 Boston, MA  
Denominationalism

2 Tim 4:3,4 is the premise from which the following conclusions are drawn:

Firstly, it is a myth that the Holy Spirit can dwell in a divided body (1 Cor 12:12,13), that is, the various bodies produced by men accumulating teachers for themselves.

Secondly, it is a fable that Christianity is made up of those in John 17:20, and that it possesses the unity He prayed for in verses 21-23 which is observed as the light of the world He said the Church was to be that the gates of hell could not prevail against, Matt 16:18.

Thirdly, Titus 3:10,11 tells us that all denominations were started by the likes of self-condemned, worthless men verse 11 talks about.

Paul scorned denominationalism in 1 Cor 1:10,13 and 1 Cor 3:1. (We want to make a brief article about it for our papers to Christianity.) He introduced the term when he said no one was baptized into his name, verse 15. He scorned denominationalism and scolded the Corinthians for the very hint of it. The antithesis of denominationalism is found in 1 Cor 1:10. Verses 13-15 is when it was born into the church. Paul asked them, "Is Messiah divided?"

The answer is "Yes," if Acts 2:42 is not practiced. 1 Cor 1:9 — Fellowship is essential to salvation. There can be no fellowship without obedience to His gospel (John 3:36). Fellowship: the word sharing in Acts 2:42 is distribution, related to the word *koinonia*. 1 Cor 1:9 is not realized except one meet the demands of the gospel in Luke 14:33 and other places referring to possessions one has to share or distribute to the brotherhood (Acts 2:44 and 4:34), in order to make oneself worthy of Him, Matt 10:38.

To scorn is to find fault with, even to show contempt or disdain. It means he considered it contemptible and despicable. He scolded them for the sin that leads to it, 1 Cor 3:1 and Rom 8:5, and he reprimanded them harshly, upbraiding them because it was so degrading it reduced the Body to a fallen and divided entity (called Christianity). There could have been no spiritual men

among them, because only carnal men can be divided. 1 Cor 3:3 — Jealousy, strife, and division excludes us from the Kingdom (Gal 5:20,21).

Paul considered denominationalism as contemptible and unworthy of the Body of Messiah.

Either the Body or denominations have to be rejected — refused with derision.

Denominationalism is the tendency or propensity (= driving force) to separate . But if there is any separation there is no unity. Unity is unity, there can no outward separation, not even dissension, 1 Tim 2:8. He means business, He is not going to bless us unless we are in "fellowship" with Him. (Fellowship = Participation, contribution, distribution — as Acts 2:42,44 means in the Greek, as it is expressed in Acts 4:32-35. )

1 Cor 1:9 — There is no eternal life except in fellowship with Him. A person has to give up everything for this fellowship, this koinonia. All who have ever believed are as Acts 2:44 say they are. 1 Cor 6:5 — they were reduced (since there were no spiritual men) to something less than what was expected of them. Christianity masquerades unity — Satan was right, the flesh was too powerful to obey John 13:34,35 and John 17:21-23.

The word fellowship in Acts 2:42 is koinonia, which is appropriately applied in verse 44, as the true sense of the word in verse 42, by which all disciples qualify to be called disciples by in Luke 14:33. "All those who had believed..." — Acts 2:44. (Acts 4:32-34)

1 Cor 1:9 — Fellowship, communion, (koinonia) partnership with God's Son. Eph 4:1 — We are called into this koinonia as it is seen in Acts 2:42 and 44 and 4:32,34, illustrated by the preaching of the apostles, Matt 28:19,20. Acts 2:38-41 and Acts 2:42,44 is the fruit of obedience to Messiah's commands in the gospel the apostles were commissioned to preach.

### **Covenant of Absolute Surrender**

Eph 4:1 and 1 Cor 1:9 — We were called into this partnership with the Son of God, Eph 4:2-6. It is actually a covenant of absolute surrender as Luke 14:31-32. It means no longer living for yourself, Matt 6:32,33, 2 Cor 5:15, no longer of the world. (John 17:16) Nor do they love the world or the things of the world, 1 John 2:15. This is the covenant of Rom 11:22, a partnership of absolute integrity. 1 John 2:1,2 meant if one did act without faith in any thing, confession and

reconciliation must be immediate or Rev 3:4 would set in hard and fast as it did in the first church. (1 Cor 11:27-30)

This partnership in 1 Cor 1:9 meant 1 John 5:12,13 — eternal life. Without this absolute surrender to Messiah, Rom 10:9, there was no salvation. One could not be a disciple of His without self-surrender, no longer living for yourself but for Him, Luke 14:31-33. Keeping the fellowship we have with Him requires the utmost zeal, John 14:21, as the Greek says in Eph 4:3. "Keeping," as John says in John 17:11 by using His name.

The Greek says is in Eph 4:3, "Be eager and strive earnestly to guard and keep the harmony and oneness as the oneness between the Father and the Son (John 17:21), which is produced by the Spirit in the bond of peace." Shalome is what we who are doing this greet each other with every morning and evening sacrifice. We are saying that Eph 4:2 is how we lived before our Father and our brothers and sisters this day — without hypocrisy, 1 Cor 4:5.

### **The Fruit of the Holy Spirit**

In Eph 4:2 the word *forbear* means we, by the Spirit, practiced self-control and restraint in the face of provocation and we were victorious over the enemy because we were abiding in our Master Yahshua, 1 John 3:6 and we did not sin. We overcame by His grace and we give glory, honor, and praise to Him at the evening sacrifice. Even if we sinned, we have confessed and renounced our sin and have prevailed upon our brother or sister to be forgiven by them if we sinned against them. (Matt 5:23,24; 1 John 1:9; Prov 28:13)

Only in this way will we be able to resist the great tendency to denominationalism. Phil 2:2-4, 12-15; 1 Cor 3:1-3 — Verse 4 proves the point. They were carnal or even natural, unchanged men, not the spiritual men they claimed to be, 1 John 1:6, but as Gal 5:20,21. They were not the spiritual men of 1 Cor 1:10, and they were not as verse 9 says. Therefore there was no proof they had passed out of death and into life. (John 5:24 connects with 1 John 3:14,16,23. That is, if someone believes you will see these things in their life because they have passed out of death into life, John 13:34,35.)

John 15:8 — They had no proof of the fruit of the Holy Spirit — which is love and unity. 1 Cor 1:9 — Paul said that they were called into *partnership*, a special relationship with the Son. 1 Cor 1:8 — This relationship was to make them guiltless and irreproachable, give them the confidence they would need not to shrink back when He comes again. But verse 11 says that there was contentions and factions among them. He asked them, "Could Messiah be divided?" (Verse 13) 1 Cor 3:3 — *They were divided*, and verse 4 proved that they were not as 1 Cor 1:9. They were out of *fellowship* with their Master they had covenanted to follow and obey. 1 Cor 3:3 is irrefutable and indisputable proof that it is impossible for them to be the Body of Messiah if there was divisions among them. They were a "house divided" according to Matt 12:24. The Corinthian Church was unspiritual; their prayers were not being heard and most were as Rev 3:4.

### **For You Are Still Fleshly**

1 Cor 6:5 — There was not even one wise man among them. "For you are still fleshly..." (1 Cor 3:3) Rom 13:13 — The worse sin was strife and division, jealousy. (Prov 6:19) For as long as jealousy and strife was among them can it be denied that they were unspiritual and natural men of the world? What was the proof that they weren't?

John 15:8; 1 John 3:14; Gal 5:20,21 — They were not producing the fruit of the Spirit, they were not abiding in the vine of love. 1 John 4:7,8 — As verse 8 says, "He who does not love has not become acquainted with God, does not and never did know Him — for God is love," as verse 7 says. This is the truth. 1 John 5:13, because verse 12 says if they had the Son they would have the life of love. (1 John 3:23)

John 13:34,35 — All men would surely know that they were His disciples. But 1 Cor 3:3,4 betrays them as imposters. Verse 4 says it plainly. Gal 5:21 was and did come upon them. 2 Cor 5:10 will reveal this plainly before all. 1 Cor 3:15 — is their only hope if they will go to the second death of Rev 2:11. Their names will be blotted out of the Book of Life, Rev 3:5. Gal 5:21 refers to this life of the Kingdom and says they will not inherit it. They, like the worthless slave of Matt 25:30, will experience the outer darkness — the death that produces the weeping and gnashing of teeth of remorse and regret Mt 18:34,35; 6:14.

The whole church will be cast out, not worthy of the Kingdom, 2 Thess 1:5, and will spend the whole thousand years with the brother in 1 Cor 5:5. It was too late for him to repent, but the others had the opportunity. But as 2 Cor 13:5 reveals, they were still carnal and unfit for the Kingdom of God. Rev 2:26; 3:21 — Did they obey 1 Cor 5:7 or did it permeate the whole loaf? Just a little yeast corrupts the whole of the dough and makes it a worthless loaf.

The whole branch was cut off and thrown into the fire, John 15:6. The whole branch with all its limbs and twigs could not produce the fruit of the vine. Every household and probably the clans around it were corrupted also. The Corinthians had a great lesson to learn, 1 Cor 3:18, if they were not destroyed first. Verse 17 if they did not repent would without doubt come upon them. And when the Judgment Seat of Messiah came all that they had ever done in the Body would be wasted effort and wasted labor, for the flesh profits nothing, John 6:63.

1 Cor 3:15 — Every work burned, Eph 2:10, because of the lack of discernment and fear of YHWH. (Eph 4:12; Prov 2:3-5) The Corinthians lacked what Paul was promising them in 1 Cor 1:8 because, as he told the Colossians in Col 1:22,23 they did not hold firmly to the faith, etc. Heb 3:6,7 — That house was divided beyond remedy. They did not hold firmly to the end the confidence faith produces in those who could hear from the Holy Spirit. (Rev 3:22) For faith comes by hearing the Spirit speak to us, even from the beginning, Rom 10:17. Which one lives by Rom 1:17?

### **Called Into Partnership**

Rom 1:16,17 — Our salvation depends upon faith and continues to produce faith, by which we endure to the end and are saved, Matt 24:13. So, if we are righteous we will live by the faith that comes by hearing Messiah continue to speak to us. So, 1 Cor 1:9 — God is ever true to His promises and it was by Him that we were called into fellowship with His Son Yahshua, the Messiah, our Sovereign. This fellowship is a partnership. It is literally *into partnership*. A partnership is a covenant or contract entered into by two persons or more in which each agrees to furnish their part of the capital and labor for a business enterprise and by which each (shares) in some fixed proportion in profits and losses.

This is just as our partnership with Messiah is a covenant relationship with Him and with His Body. All do their part, Eph 4:16. This covenant and partnership is the bond of common purpose and devotion that binds the Body together into oneness as the Godhead is one, John 17:21. All must be joined to the vine in fellowship or as Prov 21:9 says contention will result and divide and destroy the temple or house. The house is made up of partners and partners must be in fellowship.

They can not be as Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1-10, which would have destroyed the house very early if the had been allowed to go on, or have been undetected in the Body even after they had sinned that sin unto death. (James 5:19,20; 1 Jn 5:16,17; Heb 10:26-31, Mt 18:6,34,35; etc.)

### **Fellowship**

Fellowship in Hebrew is 2266 in the Strong's Concordance. It is used in verses like Ps. 94:20 — compact, to couple together, join into one. Fellowship in Greek is 2842 and 2844.

Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 1:9 (2842) — Participation, partnership, communicate, communion, distribution — Acts 2:42; 4:32-35 (verse 35). Acts 2:44-45 — Distribution is (1239) in Acts 2:45 and means they divided their possessions to all as any one had need. Acts 2:45 — Distributed to each as anyone might have need. There was no holding back among those who had FAITH and abundant grace upon them, verse 33, of those who were spiritual.

Acts 5:1 — tells the story of those who were natural minded and who had to be eliminated as a proverbial lesson to all. They were just as Achan was in Joshua 7, a proverbial lesson to all Israel.

Acts 2:42 — Fellowship, literally distribution, as 1 John 3:17 was the way one demonstrated the love that one is known by, John 13:34,35, as one having passed out of death and into life. 1 John 3:14,16,23 — All disciples were known by this kind of love that gave all one had for the sake of Messiah's Body, as He gave all for our sake, John 13:34,35; Mark 8:35; 10:28-30; Luke 12:30-34, which separates the world from the people of God — His holy nation.

Luke 12:15 — Greed is having more than one needs and not giving to one who has needs. 1 John 2:17 proves that Rom 5:5 is not his experience, just as 1 John 2:15 and Luke 12:21. Mal 3:18

refers to the restoration of all things. So, on the basis of faith disciples have a partnership with Messiah (Rom 8:17; 1 Cor 1:9), and are devoted to maintaining this partnership as Acts 2:42 says — by doing everything possible to strengthen and support the apostles in obedience to their word or teaching.

1 Cor 10:16,17 — This fellowship in Acts 2:42 since there is one bread, we who are many are one body. This illustrates clearly Paul's belief that fellowship or partnership with Messiah was to issue into partnership with all disciples who had a common faith to obey the gospel, John 3:36 and Luke 14:26-33; Matt 10:37,38; Mark 8:34,35; Mark 10:28-30. They were devoted to the distribution which fellowship was, and participated in it with a good conscience.

Koinonia with Messiah meant koinonia with His Body, sharing in His sufferings and sharing everything with His Body. (Phil 3:10; Col 1:24) Just as Messiah entered into His glory after He suffered for us, so we will too after we have suffered for Him unto His glory. (Rom 8:17; Phil 3:10,11) Paul thought that koinonia was the term that described the unity and love between disciples, so that the world would know for sure they were His disciples.

### **Ichabod**

The glory of John 17:22 was gone. Division means the glory has departed somewhere. They were reduced in rank and honor. Heb 3:6 — We have to hold on to the confidence we had at first. A house divided against itself will fall, Matt 12:25. If there is no glory there is no house, no unity, nothing. Unless each one of us has His glory there is no submitting to one another out of reverence for Messiah, Eph 5:21. It is very difficult to submit to someone who has no glory. John 17:22 — Oneness, but if Ichabod comes and the glory has departed it is because there is division. (1 Sam 4:21,22)

Denominationalism is the tendency to separate (John 17:21) into religious sects or denominations. By Gal 5:19-21 there is no entry into the Kingdom for those in denominations. Denomination is the act of naming. A name is the designation or name of a group or classification. To refute denominationalism, just consider how many worthless, self-condemned people have started them Tit 3:10,11.

Phil 2:2-4 is the standard of the Word of God, "...do not look out for your own personal interests..." It does away with denominations or any splits or dissensions. Phil 2:14 — There is no grumbling; verse 15 — we have to be blameless. (John 17:11) There should be nothing that would come out later about our lives or the things that we did. All kinds of things are coming out about what Catholic priests did to children 15, 30 years later. There can't be anything in a person's conscience about us Mt 18:7-9.

Every denomination is a result of Titus 3:10,11; started by a self-condemned heretic. (Although this verse, just like the rest of the Bible, was not even written to them. Every time they read it they are condemned.) We are to have nothing to do with denominationalism. Reject such a man and his fruit. (Matt 7:19,20)

Do you think Martin Luther began the "Body of Christ" when he broke off from the "the Church." (Was this the Church of Matt 16:18?) Or what was it then that he started? Where is the Body that he started today? It all goes back to 1 Cor 1:13 (and not being like 1 Cor 12:12). Christianity will masquerade unity some day but it will be white-washed sepulcher — Rev 18:2 — the work of Satan. He will masquerade unity. 1 Tim 2:8 is written to a **collective people**.

Jn 17:22 – speaks of the glory that exhibits a disciples inner worth and demands the respect and submission of others with the same glory. Glory is "Kabod" in Hebrew and signifies weight. Glory is importance – that which exhibits a man's inner worth and demands the respect of others. This is what each individual who has received the one Holy Spirit has received exhibited in love and submission in the Body. Read again Jn 17:22 and judge if you may have been left out when the glory was given. This oneness is an observable oneness – unity. **Togetherness** — community. If you are a functional member in a community in a place God has caused His name to dwell as in 1 Tim 2:8, 1 Cor 1 :10 is an actual reality. If Jn 5:24 is real, then 1 Jn 3:14 will be just as real. If not then you may have been absent also when love was poured out. Rom 5:5 – especially since you still love the world and the things of the world 1 Jn. 2:15; 3:17; Rom 12:2.

But if you are loving as Jn 13:34 says, then His glory is yours as well as His love, and you are part of the unity of all believers Jn 17:20-23.