

Preacher's Pen
Sunday, May 21, 2006

Identifying Members Of The Church

"He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. 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 16:15-18)

The sermon this morning will be the third in a series taking a look at the Church of the New Testament through history. This has including defining religion and religious authority as well as a brief look at some of the more significant reasons that account for the very large number of religions that call themselves Christian.

This morning, I wish to address the topic of what makes us different or unique. This opens the door to study from the Bible how the written Word of God declares that one who is found separated from God by sin he/she can be confident on the day of God's final judgment that those sins will be forgiven and heaven eternal is our end.

There are many (in fact MOST) christian religions that dispute what we will read together this morning from the Bible. In general, my respectful response is to simply ask what does Scripture say the lost is to do – NOT what some religious hierarchy or tradition or creed book says.

To have declared our conviction that the sixty-six books of the Bible were inspired by the Holy Spirit and are thus true, complete, and without error puts us "in a box". This is a box that has a clearly (Biblically) defined border. This definition is the starting point for who can expect to spend eternity with God and who needs to make a change.

We will look at the plan of redemption that God put into affect on the first Pentecost after the crucifixion of Jesus, the Christ (Messiah); Son of the true and living God. Each of us then is faced with the decision of whether to disbelieve and be lost or, believe but choose to not obey and be lost – or as we appeal to all the world, to believe, obey and be saved.

Several have asked for copies of the handouts for these three lessons as well as recordings. We have made about a dozen extras and if these run out, please let us know. Your copies are available in the foyer.

In Christian Love and Service,
Lyndal