



# The Day the Church Began

- ▶ Acts 2:36-47
- ▶ It is possible today to be part of a church just like the one the Lord authorized the apostles to build.
- ▶ It is possible to worship the Lord together just as the church did on the day it began.
- ▶ It is possible to be saved the same way that people were saved on the day the church began.

# What Is A Sound Church?

Introduction

# Rules For This Study

- ▶ Jesus has not changed His will for the church.
  - Heb. 13:8 - "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."
- ▶ We will follow the pattern He authorized.
  - 2Tim. 1:13 - "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus."
- ▶ We will not consider changing His plan.
  - 1Cor. 4:6 - "That you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written."

# What Does "Sound" Mean?

- ▶ Sound - "Free from flaw, defect or decay; undamaged, unimpaired healthy, firm strong safe, trustworthy, stable, founded in truth and rightness, not fallacious or faulty; showing good judgment or sense; thorough, orthodox in religion."
- ▶ Sound body, sound health - "Free from injury, damage, disease; healthy, to be robust, well; uncorrupt."
- ▶ Sound judgment - "Complete, sensible, valid."
- ▶ Sound advice - "Having no defect as to truth, justice, wisdom, or reason."
- ▶ Sound morals - "Of substantial, enduring character."
- ▶ Sound reasoning - "Following in a systematic pattern without any apparent defect in logic."
- ▶ Sound sleep - "Uninterrupted and untroubled."
- ▶ All carry the concept of a complete and unadulterated pattern - 2Tim. 1:13.

# How Is The Word "Sound" Used In The New Testament?

- ▶ Luke 15:27 - "And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.'"
- ▶ Acts 3:16 - "And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all."

# How Is The Word "Sound" Used In The New Testament?

- ▶ 1Tim. 1:10-11 - "And if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, 11 according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust."
- ▶ 2Tim. 1:7 - "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."
- ▶ 2Tim. 4:3-4 - "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables."

# How Is The Word "Sound" Used In The New Testament?

- ▶ Titus 1:9, 13 - "Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict... This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith."
- ▶ Titus 2:1-2, 8 - "But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: 2. That the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; 8. Sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you."



# What Is A "Sound" Church?

- ▶ A church that follows the doctrine of Christ in a thorough, valid, uncorrupted, systematic pattern without any defect as to truth.
- ▶ The proof text for this study:
  - 1Cor. 4:6 - "That you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written."

# What Is A "Sound" Church?

- ▶ Over the next few Sundays, we will study the New Testament doctrine regarding the nature of a sound, faithful church.
- ▶ Elements of a sound church: the organization, work, worship, name, and spirit.
- ▶ Considering the impact of digression: institutionalizing Christianity by erasing the line between individual and collective responsibilities.



# What Is A Sound Church?

The Organization of a Sound Church

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Proper leadership - through elders
- ▶ Proper fellowship - by members
- ▶ Proper fellowship - from preachers

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper leadership

- Phil. 1:1 - "Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons."
- The elders are the servants of Christ and His church.
- The deacons serve under the guidance of elders.

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper leadership

### ■ Appointing elders

- ▶ 1Tim. 3:1-7 - "This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; 3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); 6 not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper leadership

### ■ Appointing elders

- ▶ Titus 1:6-11, 13 - "If a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. 7 For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, 8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, 9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict. 10 For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. ...13 This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith."



# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper leadership

### ■ In every church

- ▶ Titus 1:5 - "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you."
- ▶ Acts 14:23 - "So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper leadership

### ■ The work of elders

- ▶ Acts 20:28 - "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."
- ▶ 1Peter 5:1-3 - "The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: 2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; 3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper leadership

### ■ Proper treatment of elders

- ▶ Heb. 13:7, 17 - "Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct... 17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper leadership

### ■ Proper treatment of elders

- ▶ 1Tim. 5:17-20 - "Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. 18 For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,' and, 'The laborer is worthy of his wages.' 19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. 20 Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper leadership

### ■ Appointing deacons

- ▶ 1Tim. 3:8-13 - "Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, 9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. 10 But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. 11 Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. 12 Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. 13 For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper leadership

### ■ The work of deacons

- ▶ Acts 6:1-4 - "Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, 'It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; 4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.'"

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper followship

- The saints (members) make up the local church, and every one has responsibilities.
  - ▶ To the church - Eph. 4:1-3, 7 - "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace... 7. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper followship

- The saints (members) make up the local church, and every one has responsibilities.
  - ▶ To the church - Eph. 4:11-16 - "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ--16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."



# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ► Proper fellowship

- The saints (members) make up the local church, and every one has responsibilities.
  - To each other - Eph. 5:21 - "Submitting to one another in the fear of God."
  - Phil. 2:1-4 - "Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper fellowship

- The saints (members) make up the local church, and every one has responsibilities.
  - ▶ To unbelievers - 1Peter 3:15 - "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ► Proper fellowship

- The preacher is one of the members. As a servant of the word, he provides the accords of fellowship by preaching sound doctrine.
- 1Cor. 2:2 - "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."
- 1Cor. 1:21 - "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ► Proper fellowship

- Rom. 10:13-15 - "For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. 14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper fellowship

- Rom. 9:1-3 - "I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper fellowship

- Acts 20:26-27, 31 - "Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. 27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God... 31. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears."
- James 3:1 - "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Proper fellowship

- 1Cor. 1:10 - "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."
- 1Peter 4:11 - "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God."

# The Organization Of A Sound Church

## ► Proper fellowship

- 2John 9-11 - "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; 11 for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds."
- Eph. 5:11 - "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them."



# The Organization Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Any other form of organization for the local church is not authorized.
- ▶ Any organization in this world that is larger than the local church is not authorized.
- ▶ Local churches are entirely autonomous.



# What Is A Sound Church?

The Work of a Sound Church

# What is a Sound Church?

- ▶ A church that follows the doctrine of Christ in a thorough, valid, uncorrupted, systematic pattern without any defect as to truth.
  - Heb. 13:8 - "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."
  - 2Tim. 1:13 - "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me."
  - 1Cor. 4:6 - "That you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written."
- ▶ The Church is scripturally organized with elders, deacons, members, and evangelists.

# The Work Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Evangelism - teaching the lost
- ▶ Edification - teaching the saved
- ▶ Limited Benevolence - aiding disadvantaged Christians

# The Work Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Evangelism - The first and primary work of any local church
  - It is the church's duty to spread the Gospel.
  - Acts 8:4 - "Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word."
  - 1Thes. 1:8 - "For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

## ► Evangelism

- It is the church's duty to develop men for this work.
- 2Tim. 4:1-2 - "I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."
- 2Tim. 2:2 - "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

## ► Evangelism

- To teach and save the lost is the reason Jesus came to this world, died on the cross, and established the church.
- Matt. 28:18-20 - "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen."



# The Work Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Evangelism

- Mark 16:15-16 - "And He said to them, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Edification - The vital work of strengthening the disciples.
  - Acts 9:26-31 - "Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied."
  - 1Cor. 14:15-17 - "What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding. 16 Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say 'Amen' at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say? 17 For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

## ► Edification

- 2Cor. 12:19 - "Again, do you think that we excuse ourselves to you? We speak before God in Christ. But we do all things, beloved, for your edification."
- 2Cor. 13:10 - "Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction."
- Eph. 4:29, 16 - "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers... 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Edification

- Where and when is this edification to be done?
- Heb. 10:23-25 - "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Limited Benevolence - The care of disciples stricken by circumstances.
  - Acts 2:44-45 - "Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need."
  - Acts 4:34-35 - "Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, 35 and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Limited Benevolence

- Acts 6:1-3 - "Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, 'It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.'"
- Acts 11:27-30 - "Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar. 29 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. 30 This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Limited Benevolence

- Rom. 15:25-27 - "But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. 26 For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. 27 It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things."
- 1Cor. 16:1-3 - "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. 3 And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Limited Benevolence

- 2Cor. 8:3-7 - "For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, 4 imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. 5 And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God. 6 So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well. 7 But as you abound in everything--in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us--see that you abound in this grace also."



# The Work Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Limited Benevolence

- 2Cor. 9:1, 7-8, 12 - "Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 12 For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Limited Benevolence

- 1Tim. 5:4-5, 9-11, 16 - "But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. 5 Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day... 9 Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, 10 well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work. 11 But refuse the younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry... 16 If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

- ▶ It is limited by Divinely approved examples of supporting preachers on an autonomous basis only.
  - Phil. 4:10-15 - "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. 15 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. 16 For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. 18 Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Limited by Divinely approved examples in supporting preachers on an autonomous basis only.
  - 2Cor. 11:8-9 - "I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to minister to you. 9 And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep myself."

# The Work Of A Sound Church

- ▶ “Why not use Gal. 6:10 and James 1:27 in justifying the church offering benevolence to anyone in need?”
  - Gal. 6:10 - “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”
  - James 1:27 - “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”
- ▶ These passages regulate individual, not collective, Christians’ duty in benevolence.



# What Is A Sound Church?

The Worship of a Sound Church

# What is a Sound Church?

- ▶ A church that follows the doctrine of Christ in a thorough, valid, uncorrupted, systematic pattern without any defect as to truth.
  - Heb. 13:8 - "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."
  - 2Tim. 1:13 - "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me."
  - 1Cor. 4:6 - "That you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written."
- ▶ The Church is scripturally organized with elders, deacons, members, and evangelists.
- ▶ The Church does its scripturally authorized works of evangelizing the lost, edifying the saved, and offering limited benevolence for the saints.



# The Worship Of A Sound Church

- ▶ The Spirit Of Worship - Psalms 95:1-3, 122:1; Hab. 2:20; John 4:23-24
- ▶ Prayer - Acts 12:5; Col. 4:2-3
- ▶ Singing - Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16
- ▶ Communion - Acts 20:7; 1Cor. 11:18-24
- ▶ Offering - 1Cor. 16:1-2
- ▶ Preaching - Acts 20:7, 2:42, 6:2

# The Worship Of A Sound Church

## ► The spirit of worship

- Psalm 95:1-3 - "Oh come, let us sing to the LORD! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. 3 For the LORD is the great God, And the great King above all gods."
- Psalm 122:1 - "I was glad when they said to me, Let us go into the house of the LORD."

# The Worship Of A Sound Church

- ▶ The spirit of worship
  - Hab. 2:20 - "But the LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him."
  - John 4:23-24 - "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

# The Worship Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Prayer

- Acts 12:5 - "Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church."
- Col. 4:2-3 - "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; 3 meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains"

# The Worship Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Singing

- Eph. 5:19 - "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."
- Col. 3:16 - "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

# The Worship Of A Sound Church

## ► Communion - How?

- 1Cor. 11:23-26 - "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.' 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes."

# The Worship Of A Sound Church

## ► Communion - When?

- Acts 20:7 - "Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight."
- 1Cor. 11:18, 20, 33 - "For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it... 20 Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper... 33 Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another."

# The Worship Of A Sound Church

## ► Offering

- 1Cor. 16:1-2 - "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come."



# The Worship Of A Sound Church

## ► Preaching

- Acts 20:7 - "Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight."
- Acts 2:42 - "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."



# What Is A Sound Church?

The Name and People of a Sound Church

# Previously

- ▶ What is a scripturally sound church?
- ▶ What is the organization of a sound church?
- ▶ What is the work of a sound church?
- ▶ What is worship in a sound church?

# Today

- ▶ What is the name and membership of a sound church?
- ▶ Answering departures from sound doctrine (Part One)

# Rules For This Study

- ▶ Jesus has not changed His will for the church.
  - Heb. 13:8 - "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."
- ▶ We will follow the pattern He authorized.
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# The Name Of A Sound Church

- ▶ If we must use Bible authority for all of these other things, we must use it in identifying the church.
  - Rom. 16:16; Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:22-23, 5:23-25; Col. 1:18; 2John 9
- ▶ Whose name should a sound church wear?

# The Name Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Rom 16:16 - "The churches of Christ greet you"
- ▶ Matt. 16:18 - "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church..."
- ▶ Acts 20:28 - "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

# The Name Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Eph. 1:22-23 - "And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."
- ▶ Eph. 5:23-25 - "For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her."



# The Name Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Col. 1:18 - "And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence."
- ▶ 2John 9 - "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son."

# The Name Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Since the apostles called it the church of Christ,
- ▶ Since Jesus promised to build His church,
- ▶ Since Jesus paid for the church with His blood,
- ▶ Since God made Jesus Christ head of the church,
- ▶ Since Jesus is preeminent in the church,
- ▶ And since Christ's doctrine is the only faith permitted to be taught in the church,
- ▶ **Then, whose name should the church wear?**

# What Is A Sound Church?

The People of a Sound Church

# The People Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Are Saved - Acts 2:47
- ▶ Are Sound - Titus 1:13-14, 2:7-8
- ▶ Are Holy - Titus 2:11-14
- ▶ Are Busy - Titus 3:8,14
- ▶ Are Special - Col. 3:1-15

# The People Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Are Saved

- Acts 2:47 - "And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved."

## ▶ Are saved the Lord's way

- Believe - Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6; John 8:24
- Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38
- Confess - Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10
- Baptism - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16

# The People Of A Sound Church

## ► Are Sound

- Titus 1:13-14 - "This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth."
- Titus 2:7-8 - "In all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, 8 sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you."

# The People Of A Sound Church

## ► Are Holy

- Titus 2:11-14 - "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works."

# The People Of A Sound Church

## ▶ Are Busy

- Titus 3:8,14 - "This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men. 14 And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful."

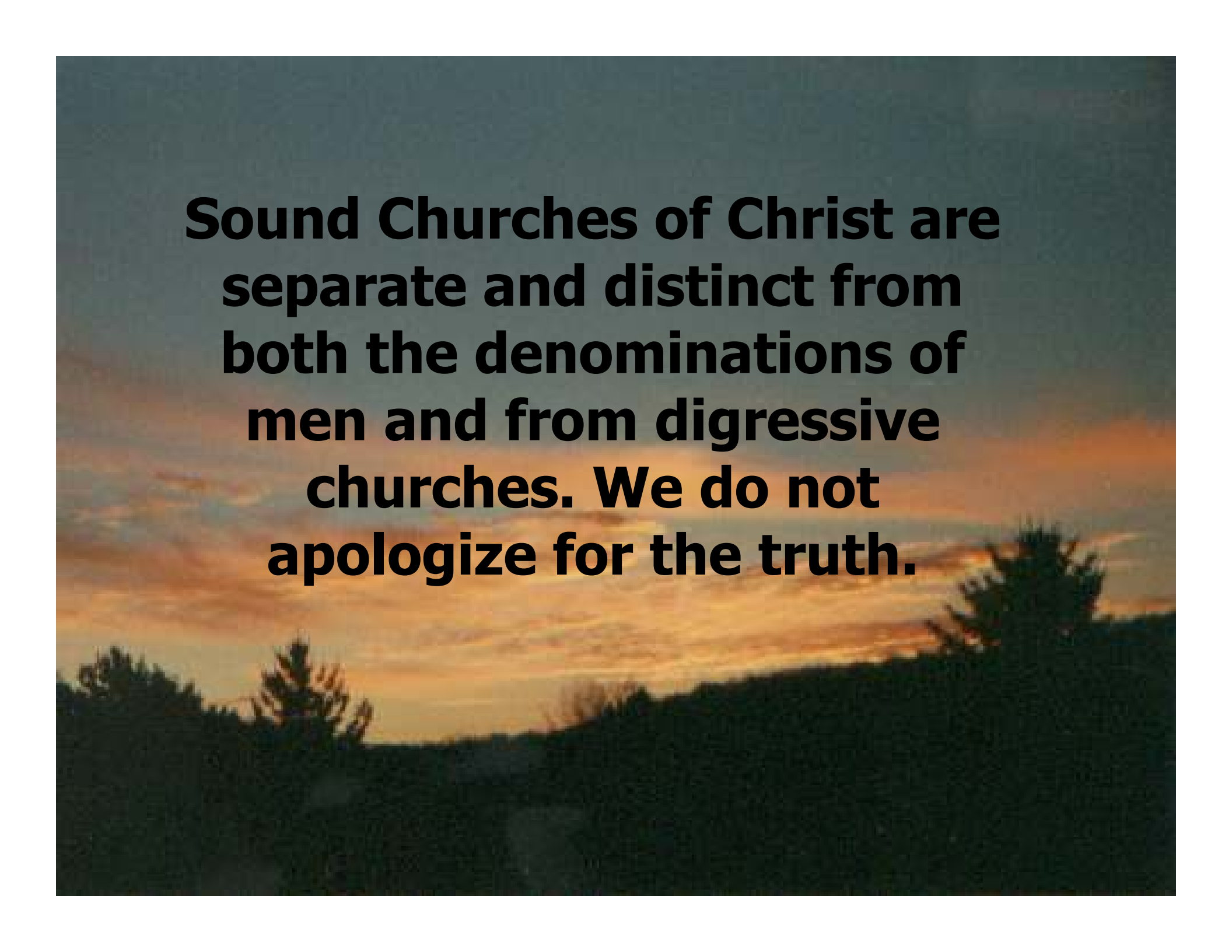


# The People Of A Sound Church

- ▶ Are Special
  - Col. 3:1-15

Col. 3:1-9 - "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. 5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, 7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. 8 But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,"

Col. 3:10-15 - "And have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, 11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all. 12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful."

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# What Is A Sound Church?

Answering the Objections of Errorists

# Previously

- ▶ What is a scripturally sound church?
- ▶ What is the organization of a sound church?
- ▶ What is the work of a sound church?
- ▶ What is worship in a sound church?

# Today

- ▶ What is the name and membership of a sound church?
- ▶ Answering departures from sound doctrine  
(Part One)

# Rules For This Study

- ▶ Jesus has not changed His will for the church.
  - Heb. 13:8 - "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."
- ▶ We will follow the pattern He authorized.
  - 2Tim. 1:13 - "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus."
- ▶ We will not consider changing His plan.
  - 1Cor. 4:6 - "That you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written."



# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

- ▶ "If we just loved one another more, we could solve our differences."
  - Eph. 4:15 - "But, speaking the truth in love..."
  - Love does not precede nor supersede the purity of truth.
  - True love produces honesty; misguided love attempts to justify altering the truth.

# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

- ▶ "We need a new way of establishing Bible authority."
- ▶ Paul taught the same things in every place by the authority of Christ.
  - 1Cor. 2:2 - "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."
  - 1Cor. 4:17 - "For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church."
  - 1Cor. 7:17 - "But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the churches."

# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

- ▶ "We need a new way of establishing Bible authority."
- ▶ Paul taught the same things in every place by the authority of Christ.
  - 1Cor. 11:1-2, 23 - "Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ. 2 Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you... 23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you."
  - 1Cor. 16:1 - "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also."

# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

- ▶ "We need a new way of establishing Bible authority."
- ▶ The word of truth was preached in the entire world.
  - Col. 1:5-6, 23 - "Because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, 6 which has come to you, as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth... 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister."

# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

- ▶ "We need a new way of establishing Bible authority."
- ▶ The faith was once for all time delivered to the saints.
  - Jude 3 - "Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."

# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

- ▶ "We need a new way of establishing Bible authority."
- ▶ The pattern was taught to all and put in letters.
  - 2Tim. 1:13 - "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus."
  - 2Tim. 2:2 - "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."
  - Rev. 1:11 - "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, and, What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia."

# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

- ▶ "We need a new way of establishing Bible authority."
- ▶ They spoke what the Lord authorized.
  - 1John 4:6 - "We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."

# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

- ▶ "We need a new way of establishing Bible authority."
- ▶ The will of God for the Church and the members was universally preached and practiced before Peter died.
  - 2Peter 1:12, 15 - "For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth... 15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease."
  - 2Peter 3:1-2 - "Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior."



# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

- ▶ "We need a new way of establishing Bible authority."
- ▶ The pattern of organization, work, and worship for the Church was established and taught when the Church began.
- ▶ We cannot go beyond what is written.
  - 1Cor. 4:6; 1Peter 4:11; 2John 9

# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

- ▶ "There is no doctrine of Christ, only the doctrine about Christ."
- ▶ Doctrine of the Pharisees; is it the doctrine they taught or the doctrine about them?
  - Matt. 16:12 - "Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees."
- ▶ Doctrine of the Nicolaitans, is it the doctrine they taught or the doctrine about them?
  - Rev. 2:15 - "Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate."

# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

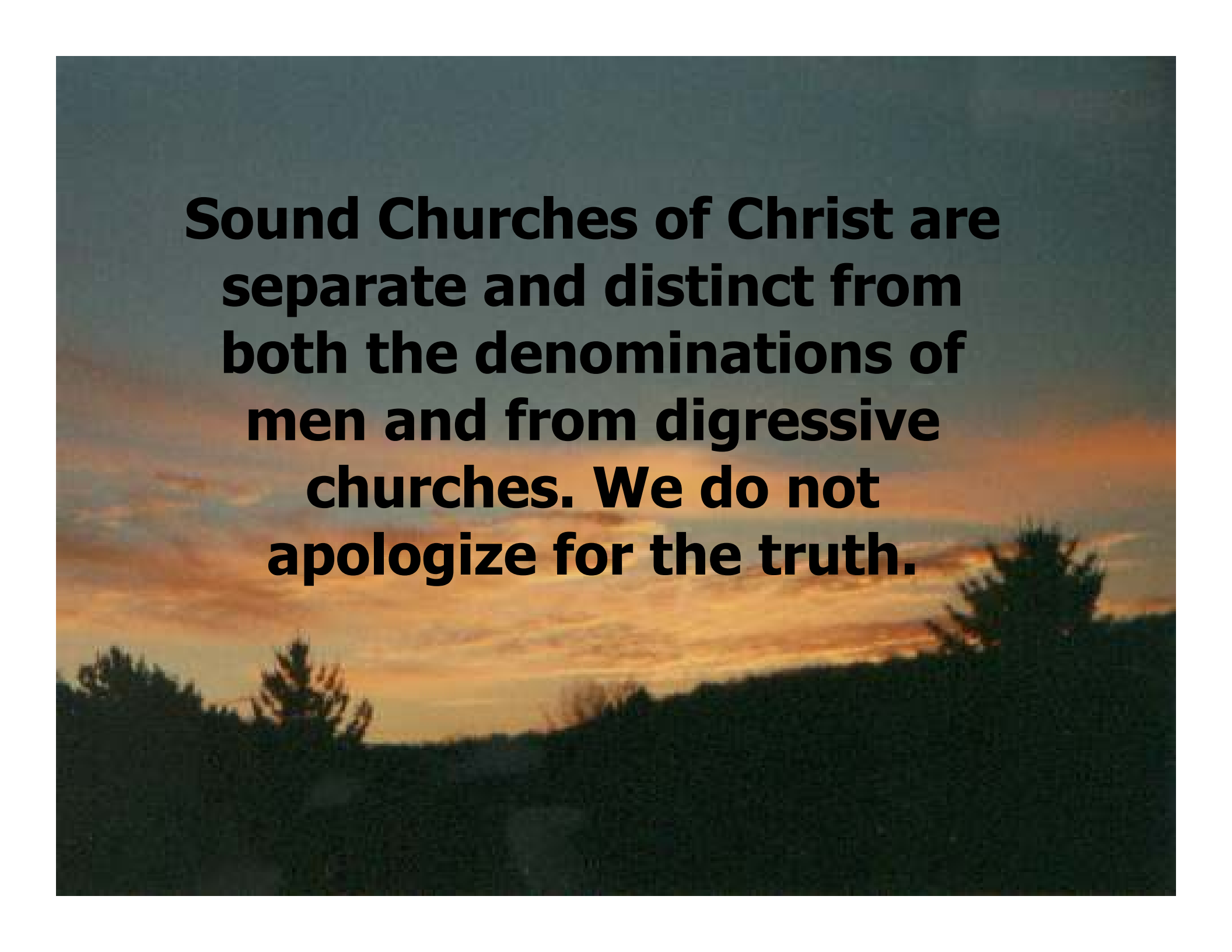
- ▶ "There is no doctrine of Christ, only the doctrine about Christ."
- ▶ What Paul taught came directly from Christ.
  - Gal. 1:11-12 - "But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ" (see also 15-22).

# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

- ▶ "We just need to tear down our fences and include one another."
- ▶ Emotionalism never answered a single scriptural question.

# Arguments Made In Defense Of Institutional Digressions

- ▶ Is Institutionalism a non-issue? Can we ignore our differences?
  - There is no scriptural defense for updating the faith.
  - It won't be long before erring brethren deny the Deity of Christ and the eternal destiny of the soul.
  - They are developing into a denomination of men. We must stop calling the progressively institutional congregations "our liberal brethren."
  - If we don't stand firmly against this heresy in every generation, we will stand with them in Judgment Day awaiting perdition.
  - We don't need a new attitude toward Institutionalism or Bible authority.

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# What Is A Sound Church?

Institutionalizing Christianity



# Previously

- ▶ What is a scripturally sound church?
- ▶ What is the organization of a sound church?
- ▶ What is the work of a sound church?
- ▶ What is worship in a sound church?
- ▶ What is the name and membership of a sound church?
- ▶ Answering departures from sound doctrine (Part One)

# Today

- ▶ Institutionalizing Christianity
- ▶ The Language of Ashdod and Attempting to Have Fellowship with an Unsound Church

# The Rules For This Study

- ▶ Jesus has not changed His will for the church
  - Heb. 13:8 - "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."
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  - 2Tim. 1:13 - "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus."
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  - 1Cor. 4:6 - "That you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written."

# Institutionalizing Christianity

- ▶ How to justify the unjustifiable:
  - Excessively emphasize emotional aspects of issues.
  - De-emphasize the New Testament pattern for the work of the church.
  - Exalt the relative physical good accomplished by the human institution.
  - Condemn anyone who questions liberal practices.
  - Followed carefully this process will justify any error.

# Institutionalizing Christianity

- ▶ The institutional approach to New Testament commands is comforting and convenient to the 21st century errorist.
  - It allows the elders and deacons to avoid their duty in overseeing their stewardship by simply passing the work on to an institution.
  - It allows the members to avoid their duty of being personally involved in the needs of the afflicted, by expecting the church and the institution to take care of the problem. They come to believe they have completed their individual responsibilities the moment they make their offering.
  - Religious liberalism is just like political liberalism... set up a large, expensive, inefficient program, and avoid personal involvement by throwing money at the problem.

# Institutionalism Erases The Line Between Individual And Collective Responsibilities

- ▶ Gal. 6:10 - "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."
- ▶ Is this instruction to be carried out by individual Christians or by the local church as a collectivity?
- ▶ Institutionalists say both.
- ▶ Exegete the context of Gal. 6:1-10 and see.

# Institutionalism Erases The Line Between Individual And Collective Responsibilities

- ▶ Gal. 6:1 - "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.
- ▶ 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
- ▶ 3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.
- ▶ 4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.
- ▶ 5 For each one shall bear his own load."

# Institutionalism Erases The Line Between Individual And Collective Responsibilities

- ▶ Gal. 6:6 - "Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.
- ▶ 7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.
- ▶ 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.
- ▶ 9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.
- ▶ 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."

# Institutionalism Erases The Line Between Individual And Collective Responsibilities

- ▶ James 1:26 - "If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless.
- ▶ 27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."
- ▶ Compare to 1Tim. 5 and support of widows. Some were not eligible to be supported by the church; some by individuals.

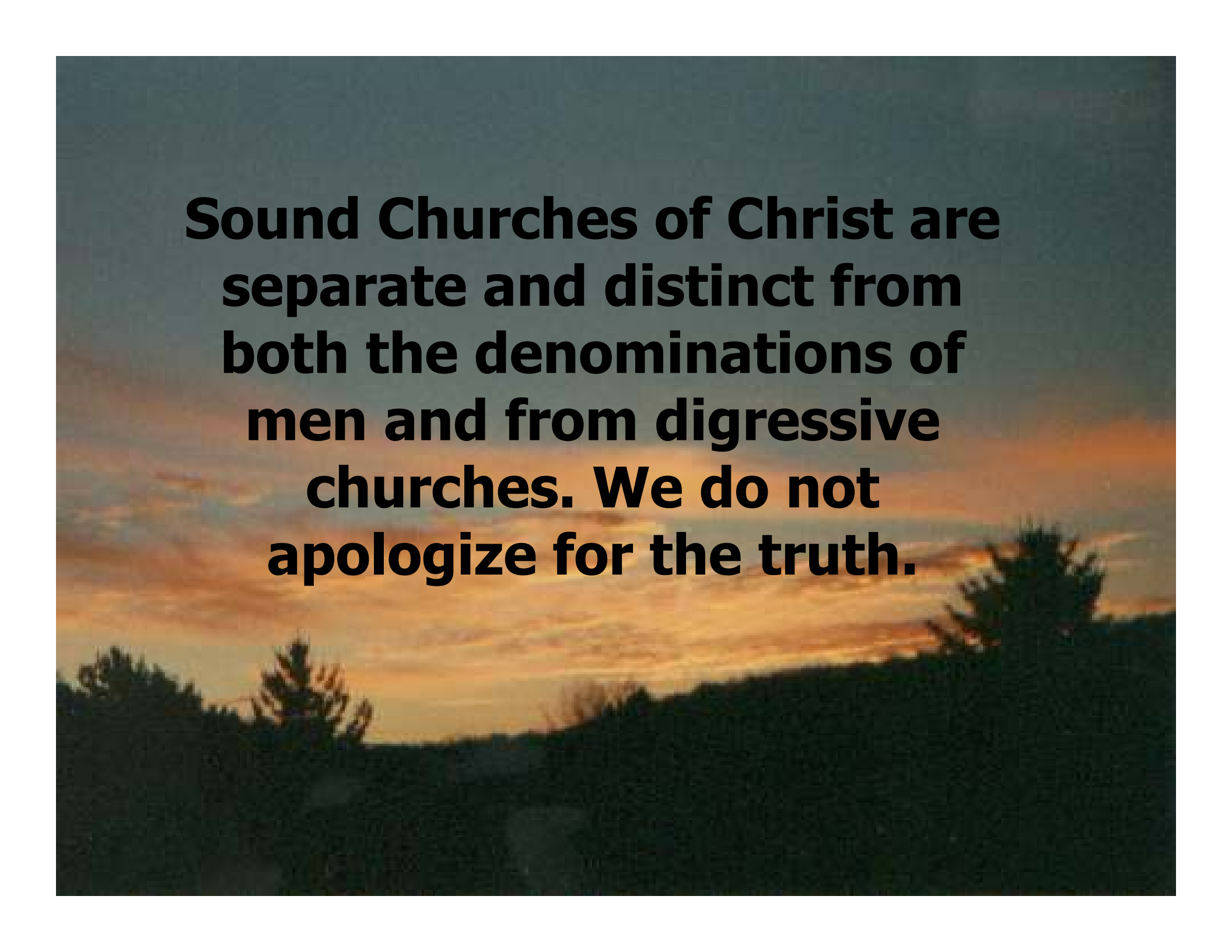


# Institutionalism Erases The Line Between Individual And Collective Responsibilities

- ▶ The illogical nature of the "no distinction between individual and collective action" position.
  - Duties to one's wife and children; can the whole church get involved?
  - 1Cor. 16:1-2 - Can an individual maintain his own personal treasury for the work of the church?
  - 1Cor. 5:4-5 - Can one Christian discipline another without the church being involved?
  - 1Cor. 11:17-34 - Can a Christian hold a communion service for himself alone at home?
  - 1Cor. 11:22 - "What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you."

# Institutionalism Erases The Line Between Individual And Collective Responsibilities

- ▶ The illogical nature of the “You can do anything in the building that you do in your home” position.
  - Can the Church operate a small business in the building?
  - Can the Church sing accompanied by an instrument?

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# What Is A Sound Church?

The Language of Ashdod and  
Attempting To Have Fellowship  
With An Unsound Church

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# The Language Of Ashdod

- ▶ Neh. 13:23-24 - "In those days I also saw Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. 24 And half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and could not speak the language of Judah, but spoke according to the language of one or the other people."



# The Language Of Ashdod

- ▶ Effects of the language of Ashdod on the children of Israel:
  - Separated Israelite children from their true heritage (Deut. 6:1-15)
  - Prevented proper teaching of the Law of Moses (couldn't read it)
  - Prevented proper hearing of the Law of Moses (couldn't understand it)
  - God's will was gradually replaced by idolatry.

# The Language Of Ashdod

- ▶ Language of Ashdod among digressives today:
  - Pulpit minister, youth minister, music minister, worship leaders, retreats, fellowshipping, bus ministry, junior worship, singles ministry...
  - “My church, our church” (It’s the Lord’s church!)
  - Contemporary speech translations of the Bible
  - Casual speech in worship, prayers, songs

# The Language Of Ashdod

- ▶ What will be the effect of digressives speaking in the language of Ashdod?
  - Children will grow up not knowing what a sound church is.
  - They will not hear the word of God taught in its purity and majesty.
  - They will not recognize it when they do hear it.
  - God's sound doctrine is gradually replaced by the teachings of denominational churches of Christ.

# Attempting To Have Fellowship With An Unsound Church

- ▶ **What is the moral condition of an unsound church?**
- ▶ Ephesus was practicing most of the doctrine of Christ; however, they had left their first love, even though they were addressed as a church - Rev. 2:1-4
- ▶ Jesus told them to return to the original faith and repent, or He would no longer recognize them - Rev. 2:5

# Attempting To Have Fellowship With An Unsound Church

- ▶ **What is the moral condition of an unsound church?**
- ▶ Pergamos was a dedicated group of Christians standing fast against opposition; however, they were having fellowship with brethren involved in two religious errors - Rev. 2:12-15
- ▶ Jesus told them to repent or He would stand against them - Rev. 2:16

# Attempting To Have Fellowship With An Unsound Church

- ▶ **What is the moral condition of an unsound church?**
- ▶ Thyatira was a loving and active congregation; however, they were in fellowship with one false teacher - Rev. 2:18-19
- ▶ Jesus told them to repent or He would violently oppose them with suffering - Rev. 2:22

# Attempting To Have Fellowship With An Unsound Church

- ▶ **What is the moral condition of an unsound church?**
- ▶ Sardis had a reputation as an active, strong congregation; however, Jesus said that spiritually they were dead - Rev. 3:1
- ▶ Jesus told them to repent and do good works or He would oppose them without warning - Rev. 3:3

# Attempting To Have Fellowship With An Unsound Church

- ▶ **What is the moral condition of an unsound church?**
- ▶ Laodicea was serving the Lord indifferently and were materialistic; Jesus told them to repent or He would treat them with revulsion  
- Rev. 3:14-19



# Attempting To Have Fellowship With An Unsound Church

- ▶ **What is the moral condition of an unsound church?**
- ▶ In no case did Jesus allow them to remain in error in perpetuity.
- ▶ In every case, they were required to repent and cease the erring practice within a limited period of time, or fellowship would end.

# Attempting To Have Fellowship With An Unsound Church

- ▶ Now if Jesus refused to permit these congregations to continue in fellowship with Him while practicing just one or two errors, then what makes contemporary erring churches of Christ think that He will remain in fellowship with them while they continue practicing unsound doctrine in the work, worship, and organization He ordained for His church?
- ▶ Furthermore, what breakdown in reasoning among professed members of sound churches permits them to assemble and worship with congregations with which Jesus has refused fellowship? Are they somehow wiser or more loving than the Lord?

# Attempting To Have Fellowship With An Unsound Church

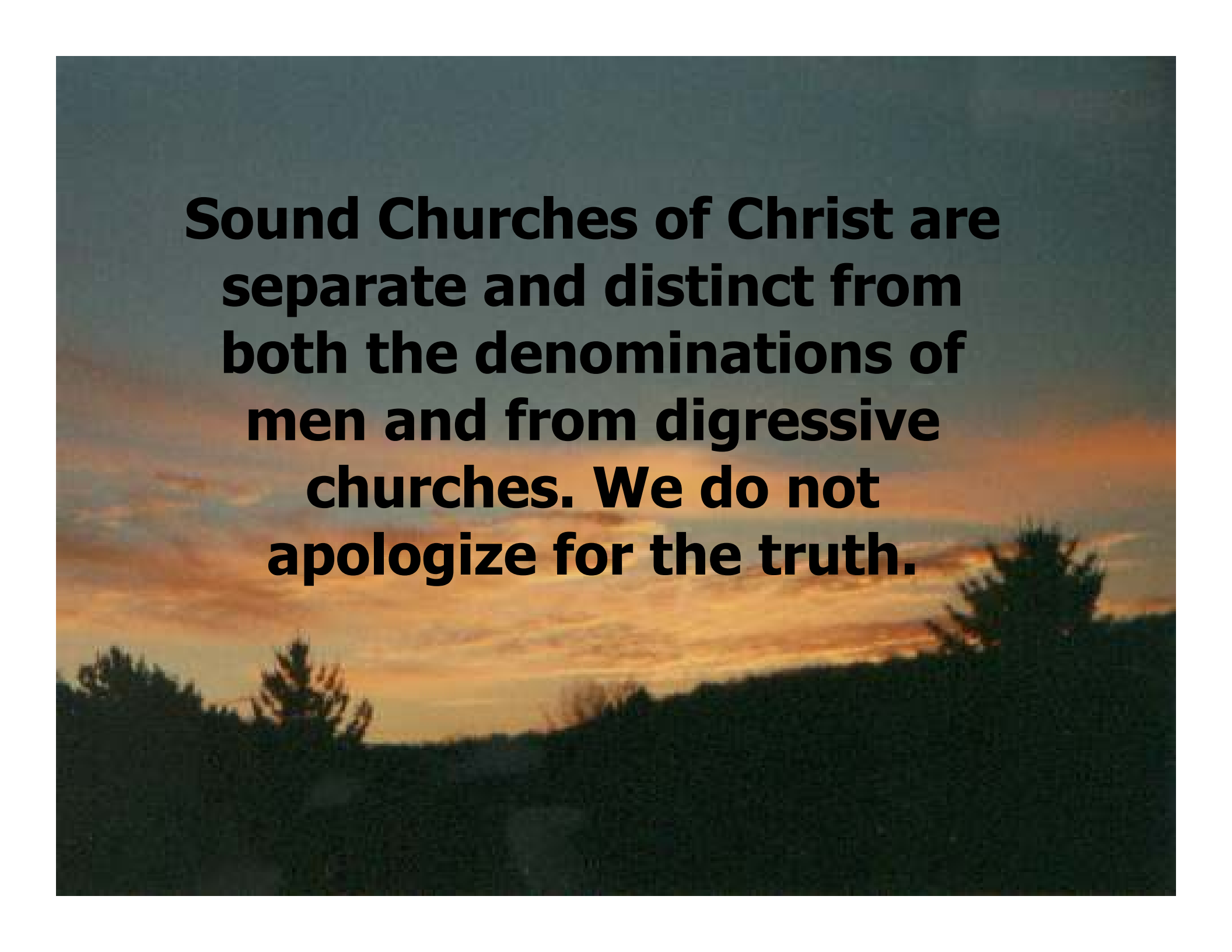
- ▶ Jesus cares whether a church is practicing sound doctrine.
- ▶ It is well past time that His followers care, too.
  - 2John 9-11 - "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; 11 for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds."

# Attempting To Have Fellowship With An Unsound Church

- ▶ Eph. 5:6-11 - "Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), 10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them."

# The Rules For This Study

- ▶ Jesus has not changed His will for the church
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