

“I Have My Own Church!”

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Isn't it amazing how many people when asked about religion exclaims, "I have my own church"? Do these people really consider themselves on the same par as our Lord. or do they not realize what they are saying. I believe the latter is generally the case, but these same people need to be taught.

With the division in the city of Corinth, the apostle Paul had to deal with a similar problem. It seems there were some in the church that were lining themselves up with certain individuals.

Paul reminds them that these individuals did not purchase the church, but rather it was Christ who purchased the church with His own blood. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:12-13, "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" In bringing the thoughts about division to a close Paul exclaimed, "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Corinthians 3:21-23). We now see that the church does not belong to us nor any other man because of two reasons.

First, we did not purchase the church — Jesus did. Luke records Paul speaking to the elders in Ephesus in Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Peter says that we were not redeemed with silver and gold but "with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18-19).

Second, we belong to Christ and not to any man. It is only logical that since Christ redeemed us from all iniquity that we belong to Him. To the church at Rome Paul said, "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Romans 14:8). If the church belongs to me. then I set the guidelines for it to follow. But, since the church of Christ (and we as individual members of that church belong to Christ), then the guidelines are set by Him, and we must follow them.

My point is that I do not have my own church, but I am a member of the Lord's church, the church of Christ. If more people would grasp that concept, much division would cease.