

# The Messenger



“... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans 10:15

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Evangelist and Editor:  
Dempsey Collins

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## What Denomination?

What Denomination did These Early Christians Belong To?	Peter James John	Paul Silas Timothy	Mark Barnabas Luke	The Answer  <b>None</b>
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TO WHAT DENOMINATION did Peter, James, John, the 3,000 on Pentecost, Cornelius, the Ethiopian eunuch, Paul, Lydia, the Corinthians, and the jailer belong? They were members of the body of Christ, which is the Lord's church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18, 24; 3:15), yet they were not members of any denomination. All who were saved became members of this body, the church, by virtue of the fact that God added them to it - Acts 2:47. Yet they belonged to no denomination. They had been called out of the "power of darkness" or the world, and translated into the "kingdom of God's dear Son", which is the church (Col. 1:13-14, 18), but still they were not members of any denominational church.

Just so, today, if a sinner believes in Christ, repents and is baptized, just as the 3,000, the eunuch, Lydia, Cornelius, the jailer, etc., such would make him a Christian, but nothing more (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:36-41; 8:35-39; 16:14-15; 16:30-34; Gal. 3:26-27). This would not make him a member of any denomination.

If a great number should do this, would they not be Christians? Should this number come together on the first day of the week to worship, Acts 20:7, call themselves by the same name as did the apostles and early Christians, accept and teach the Bible as their only rule of faith and practice, select such servants as the Bible authorizes, and observe the same commands in the same way as the apostles and early Christians did, and as are set forth in the Bible - they would be simply New Testament Christians, members of the body of Christ, or the New Testament church, assembling for worship without being members of any denomination on earth.

This is what we are humbly trying to do as a professed church of Christ. If you want to be simply a New Testament Christian - no more and no less - then study your Scriptures and be a member of the church you read about there (and that alone). May we forget denominationalism and divest ourselves from it to be one in Christ. Let us humbly and carefully search out the Scriptures.



A woman repeated a bit of gossip about a neighbor. Within a few days the whole community knew the story. The person it concerned was deeply hurt and offended. Later the woman responsible for spreading the rumor learned that it was completely untrue. She was very sorry and went to a wise old sage to find out what she could do to repair the damage. "Go to the marketplace," he said, "and purchase a chicken, and have it killed. Then on your way home, pluck its feathers and drop them one by one along the road." Although surprised by this advice, she did what she was told. The next day the wise man said, "Now go and collect all of those feathers you dropped yesterday and bring them back to me." The woman followed the same road, but to her dismay, the wind had blown the feathers all away. After searching for hours, she returned with only three in her hand. "You see," said the old sage, "it's easy to drop them, but it's impossible to get them back." So it is with gossip. It doesn't take much to spread a rumor, but once you do, you can never completely undo the wrong.



## Practicing the "Golden Rule" Truth Prevails

I have a deep and abiding belief that truth always prevails. The truth may not always be apparent but will become clear sooner or later. The Scriptures plainly teach that *"a false witness will not go unpunished, and he who pours out lies will perish"* (Prov. 19:9).

Our judicial system in America assumes that a man is innocent until proven guilty and grants a man the right to face his accuser(s). Can Christians do less than this and be pleasing to God? It is a sin to lie; it is devastating to believe a lie and we bring God's judgment upon ourselves when we bear false witness (Prov. 16:19). False witness is given when gossip, rumors, or inaccurate reports are passed on as "fact". Sadly, we must observe that a great deal of this is being done even within our own brotherhood, and it often leads to misunderstandings, suspicion, division, and strife. BUT TRUTH WILL EVENTUALLY PREVAIL: *"Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only for a moment"* (Prov. 12:19). Let us always seek to know the truth that will make us free (John 8:32) - the truth about God, the truth about ourselves, and the truth about others.

*"To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 'He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.' When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats"* (I Peter 2:21-23a).

*by Chuck Lucas*

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Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

*"...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."* James 5:16