

Every once in a while you may
hear the old folks say, “There
was a time when all churches of
Christ agreed and nothing
divided them.”

That person was just unaware of
what was going on.

Gal 1:6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;

In the US division raged
1850-1910, instrumental music; missionary society.
1915 to 1949, premillennialism
The “war question” between 1935 and 1952
The institutional question between 1951 and 1965
Racial questions divided brethren from 1850 to the present.

It's true that the church that Jesus established is not divided as certain people are in it and certain people never went in or decided to leave.

Smaller divisions still exist over the cup, Bible classes, women's covering, the role of elders, marriage, remarriage and divorce

Today, the battles of the early 1800's are being refought – is baptism required, may women preach, lead singing, lead in prayer, be shepherds of the flock. What provides entrance into that church?

We must all remember it is
Christ's church – not ours!

Matt 16:18 "And I also say to
you that you are Peter, and upon
this rock I will build My church;
and the gates of Hades shall not
overpower it.

What provides entrance into that church?

Acts 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" 38 And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:41 So then, those who
had received his word were
baptized; and there were added
that day about three thousand
souls. ... 47 praising God, and
having favor with all the people.
And the Lord was adding to their
number day by day those who
were being saved.

Those who are baptized for the remission of their sins, based upon their belief in Jesus as Christ were “added to the church.”

Gal 1:6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

9 As we have said before, so I say again now,
if any man is preaching to you a gospel
contrary to that which you received, let him be
accursed. 10 For am I now seeking the favor
of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please
men? If I were still trying to please men, I
would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

Those who deviate from the Scriptures are not
a part of the Lord's church.

Heb 6:4 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame.

There are men today who follow the
Scriptures in falling away.

Acts 20:29 "I know that after my
departure savage wolves will come
in among you, not sparing the flock;
30 and from among your own selves
men will arise, speaking perverse
things, to draw away the disciples
after them.

There are those within the church
telling us that law has been done
away with and there are only 4
commands we have to keep – all
of them dealing with love.

The fact that the Law of Moses
has been done away with does
not mean there is no law of
Christ.

Rom 10:4 For Christ is the end
of the law for righteousness to
everyone who believes.

We are now under the law of
Christ.

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit
of life in Christ Jesus has set you
free from the law of sin and of
death.

There are those within the church
telling us that the church is a
denomination just like the other
religious groups around us.

1 Cor 1:10 Now I exhort you,
brethren, by the name of our
Lord Jesus Christ, that you all
agree, and there be no divisions
among you, but you be made
complete in the same mind and
in the same judgment.

We cannot twist the scriptures
without bringing on our own
destruction.

2 Peter 3:15 ... just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, 16 as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

There are those within the church
telling us that the elders of one
local church may oversee the
work as a “second location.”

1 Peter 5:1 Therefore, I exhort
the elders among you, as your
fellow elder and witness of the
sufferings of Christ, and a
partaker also of the glory that is to
be revealed, 2 shepherd the flock
of God among you,

There are those within the church
telling us that instrumental music is
authorized by the silence of the
Scriptures.

Col 3:17 And whatever you do in
word or deed, do all in the name of the
Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him
to God the Father.

Luke 6:46 "And why do you call Me,
'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?

47 "Everyone who comes to Me, and
hears My words, and acts upon them, I
will show you whom he is like: 48 he is
like a man building a house, who dug
deep and laid a foundation upon the
rock; and when a flood rose, the torrent
burst against that house and could not
shake it, because it had been well built.

49 "But the one who has heard,
and has not acted accordingly, is
like a man who built a house
upon the ground without any
foundation; and the torrent burst
against it and immediately it
collapsed, and the ruin of that
house was great."

There are those within the church
telling us that the Lord's Supper
is a “fellowship meal” in which
they fill their stomachs rather
than a sacred memorial of
Christ's death.

1 Cor 11:20 Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, 21 for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. 22 What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? 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 will not praise you.

1 Cor 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. 27 Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly.

You might ask if I am sure that
“they” are “in the church.”

God is the one who judges such things. In the Revelation, John wrote of churches where sin was rampant and the churches were warned.

Rev 2:4 'But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 5'Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you, and will remove your lampstand out of its place — unless you repent.

We need to remember that each one of us has a responsibility to “walk worthy of the calling wherewith you were called” (Eph 4.1)

If you’re here and you haven’t started the battle, remember how to get into Christ -- Gal 3:27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.