Five Common Failures of Denominationalism
Eph. 4:4; 1:22, 23)

Introduction:
A. In the New Testament there were no denominations — just the one church.
   1. Local churches had a common faith and doctrine (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17).
   2. Denominationalism is the result of differences in faith and doctrine.
B. Denominations share some things in common, but not all things.
   1. If they shared all things in common, denominationalism would not exist.
   2. They may have some common successes, but they also share common failures.

Discussion:
II. The Failure to Subscribe to God’s Plan for Pardon.
   A. God’s Plan (Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38; 8:36ff.).
   B. Denominational plans:
      1. Faith only (Jas. 2:24).

III. The Failure to Subscribe to God’s Plan for Church Worship.
   A. God Plan (Eph. 5:19; 1 Cor. 14:15; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2).
   B. Denominational alternations:
      1. Instrumental music, candle lighting, burning incense.
      2. Lord’s supper other than every first day of week.
      3. Money raising projects.

IV. The Failure to Subscribe to God’s Plan for Church Work.
   A. God’s Plan (Eph. 4:16; Phil.4:15; 2 Cor. 11:8; 1 Cor. 16:1,2).
   B. Denominational additions:
      1. Social services programs.
      2. Recreational programs.
      3. Political action programs.

V. The Failure to Subscribe to God’s Plan for Church Organization.
   A. God’s Plan — local organization (Acts 14:23; Phil 1:1; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).
   B. Denominational organizations:
      1. Above the local level.
      2. On the local level.

VI. The Failure to Subscribe to God’s Plan for Church Unity.
   A. God’s Plan — One body based on truth. (Eph. 2:16; John 17:19-21; Jas. 3:17).
   B. Denominational concept:
      1. “Good to have church of choice” - sanctifies division.
      2. “May differ in doctrine, but all are pleasing to God” (Ill: Six night meeting)

Conclusion:
A. If we follow the New Testament we will be neither Catholic nor Protestant — just Christians.
B. Christians should be careful not to borrow from denominational concepts.
C. Christians sometimes make no distinction between denomination and Lord’s church.